**Interpretation – debate is a game and the affirmative should have to defend the implementation of United States government action grounded in the resolution.**

**This does not require any use of a particular form of argumentation, type of evidence or the assumption of the role of the judge – the resolution is especially meant to limit the form of debate, and that’s pretty neat!**

**Hoofd’07**|Ingrid M. Hoofd, National University of Singapore, “The Neoliberal Consolidation of Play and Speed: Ethical Issues in Serious Gaming” in “CRITICAL LITERACY: Theories and Practices Volume 1: 2, December 2007,” p. 6-14, 2007|KZaidi // recut ahs emi

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.

**Standards:**

**a. Fairness – it’s like, really important. I promise.**

**b. Implosive violence –** Their investment in the need for medicine creates a consumptive culture that constantly begs for miracles to become happy, leading to complicity with the hyperreal and all its gifts

Frank 2k, Arthur W. Frank PhD., University of Calgary, “All the Things Which Do Not Fit: Baudrillard and Medical Consumerism” Families, Systems, & Health, 18(2), 205–216 [https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2000-05119-005] Accessed 8/12/21 AHS//NPR

Baudrillard compares consumer society to a cargo cult to make the point that consumers experience commodities as a miracle. Instead of walking along beaches on which objects have suddenly been dropped, we wander through warehouse stores and shopping malls in which the supply of objects seems endless. Whether we buy or not (a point returned to below) the cumulative experience of a lifetime of shopping leads us to believe we have a right to this miracle, “a legitimate, inalienable right to plenty” and “the natural right to abundance” (Baudrillard, 1998, p. 32: original emphases omitted). The miracles are “dispensed by a beneficent mythological agency to which we are the legitimate heirs: Technology, Progress, Growth, etc.” (p. 32). Medicine inserts itself into this mythological agency when it offers breast implants as high school graduation gifts (“Breast implants—a new form of graduation gift.” 1999), lean thighs (“Women pay $5M for lean thighs,” 1999), and relief from social anxiety (“Shyness pill eases social distress,” 1999), among the many miracles advertised and consumed. One advertisement deserves full quotation: Penile Enlargement...there is a difference. Experience counts! Rodney S. Barron, M.D. is an internationally recognized pioneer in male enhancement surgery, featured in Men’s Health and on national T.V. He has helped thousands of men achieve greater self-esteem through increased length and girth. (The New York ‘Times, December 8, 1999) How individuals report their own experiences of these miracles is discussed in the next section. The present issue is how our contemporary cargo cult of objects affects medicine, its patients, and its consumers. The Melanesians waited for the gods to redirect their bounty. “The beneficiary of the consumer miracle,” Baudrillard (1998) writes, “also sets in place a whole array of sham objects, of characteristic signs of happiness, and then waits (waits desperately, a moralist would say), for happiness to alight” (p. 31). The medical consumer waits, often desperately, for his or her own signs of happiness: “increased length and girth” of penis, enhanced breasts, leaner thighs, decreased anxieties, and conflated among these miracles, new treatments and even cures for life- threatening and debilitating diseases. The crucial word in Baudrillard’s statement may be signs of happiness. Consumer society is where signs are taken more seriously than the objects they signify. As the motto of this society T nominate the “as seen on TV" stickers that appear on everything from groceries to books. ‘The actual object is not only validated by having been experienced first as a sign (the TV image). For the consumer, the actual object will always be an imitation of the advertisement that initially created that object as a sign. Acquisition of these signs of happiness (for which survival is now the minimum condition) is not strictly optional, if Baudrillard (1998) is right that “consumerist man [and woman] regards enjoyment as an obligation; he sees himself [and herself] as an enjoyment and satisfaction business. He sees it as his duty to be happy...” (p. 80, emphases omitted). The complementary side of this attitude is being “haunted by the fear of ‘missing’ something” (p. 80). The consumer is constantly forced by medical promotions (comprising the combined effect of advertising and journalism) to ask; What would my life be like with this or that enhancement? How much happier might I be? In the answer to this question, “if I had” becomes interchangeable with “if I were.” Of course people constantly refuse signs of happiness offered hy consumer society. Moat of us do not speak in the terms used by Kate Starbird, forward of the Sacramento Monarchs: “I know a lot of people who could use more knee cartilage— artificial cartilage you wouldn't have to graft. I'm always trying to order new parts. A new back wouldn't hurt” (quoted in “The Wired diaries 2000,” 2000). Maybe more of us will speak and think this way in the near future, but that possibility -while quite real—is not necessary to the present. argument, Baudrillard leads us to recognize that whether consumers use or refuse whatever is advertised, the advertisement becomes part of their experience and expectations of the world. Advertising, Baudrillard (2000) writes, whether or not it sells specific products, “itself becomes an object to be consumed” (p. 382). What counts is not the individual rate of refusal of what medical promotions offer but the aggregate density of those promotions, since these create the “ambient social values” (Baudrillard, 2000, p. 384) into which the consumer is drawn, gradually and imperceptibly. “Advertising serves as a permanent display of the buying power [read as, therapeutic power], be it real or virtual, of society overall. Whether we partake of it personally or not, we all live and breathe this buying power” (Baudrillard, 2000, p. 384). As medical promotions play with different signs, survival value is expressed alongside social value; being alive and functioning sit, less uneasily, on the same continuum with enhancements. Signs form a system, and as in any system, each part takes its meaning and value from its reference to the other parts. Baudrillard (1998) argues: Few objects are offered alone, without a context of objects which ‘speaks’ them. And this changes the consumer's relation to the object: he no longer relates to a particular object in its specific utility, but to a set of objects in its total signification. (p. 27) Prior to hoping for artificial knee cartilage and a new back, Starbird (2000) asks, “Where's the new toothpaste that was supposed to come in all different flavors, like hamburgers?” (p. 69). Baudrillard would regard this odd juxtaposition of objects as making perfect sense. The system of consumption depends on each object— flavored toothpaste, simulated hamburger taste, knee cartilage, a new back—taking it a value from its reference to its surrounding objects. As Baudrillard (1998) expresses it: “all of these objects signify one another reciprocally as part of a more complex super-object, drawing the consumer into « series of more complex motivations” (p. 27). Baudrillard’s argument should lead us to reconsider the apparently sensible advice offered by Parens (1998), summarizing a major research project on the ethical implications of enhancement technologies: “I would advise that those who follow our project into the enhancement fields take on smaller and more manageable parcels of it” (p. 26). To take on more manageable parcels is to miss the system of reciprocal significations that consumer society depends on and to miss the motivational force behind specific enhancements within that society. Clinicians who deal with patients individually and have specialized skills to offer particular treatments can easily miss how those patients orient to treatments as signs within a system of signs. Parts of the body as sites of consumption elicit the motivations they do because people feel a duty to be happy. and happiness is acquired in the form of signs that refer to each other. No clinician offers any service by itself.

#### c. Clash – Tailoring arguments to the format of switch-side deliberation promotes self-reflexive openness – that’s the best way to cause wide-scale opinion shifts over time which have absolutely no impact on the real world. Absent normative meta-consensus on procedural terms for debate that guarantee switch-side deliberative testing within mutually-understood constraints, we encourage dogmatism and group polarization. And none of that matters at all.

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After describing a novel sociological position that regards semiology, rather than capital, as the key component of domination (Baudrillard [1968] 1998),  Baudrillard’s radical social theory emerges in light of considerations of consumerism, media, information and technology—all of which conspire to create what Baudrillard calls t‘hyperreal’ society. This is a contemporary world where all boundaries, categories and values implode into the ‘end of the social’. Baudrillard (1972) begins elaborating this theory in an article titled ‘Design and Environment or How Political Economy Escalates into Cyberblitz’ (Baudrillard, 1972, Chapter 10). In this essay, he points to the importance of ‘the passage out of a metallurgic into a semiurgic society’ (Ibid.: 185). Here, consumer objects take on a life of their own ‘as an embodiment and functional part of a system of signs, independent of its status as a commodity’ (Kellner, 1989: 76). He uses the German Bauhaus movement as an example to anticipate the ‘universal semantisation of the environment in which **everything becomes the object of a calculus of function and signification’** (Baudrillard, 1972: 185-86). This is achieved by the synthesis ‘of form and function, beauty and utility, of art and technology’ in the design of objects that **produces a functionalised universe whereby the meaning and function of every object is determined by its place in the system**. As a result, ‘the whole environment becomes a signifier, objectified as an element of signification’ (Ibid.: 186-87). This is analogous to Derrida’s concept of ‘difference’ whereby meaning is never present ‘in a sufficient presence that would refer only to itself’ (Derrida, 1965: 27). Essentially, objects, words and images have no direct relationship to the things in which they refer, they inherent meaning only by interacting with one another in an **ongoing system of contrast**. Baudrillard refers to this system as a ‘**cybernetic code’**, and argues that reality itself is shut out from this system of because **the system is wholly self-referencing. This code creates ‘a functionalised, integrated and self-reproducing universe’ of meaning, controlled by simulacra and simulation**. And, like Derrida’s text, there is nothing outside of the code.In ‘The Orders of Simulacra’, Baudrillard (1995) outlines the stages of the transition from traditional society to the contemporary society defined by simulations (Baudrillard, 1995). First, according to Baudrillard, the feudal era had a fixed social order established by a hierarchy of obligatory signs indicating social class and rank. Here, a ‘natural law of value’ dominates the stage. Simulacra, a representation of another image, first emerge as ‘**counterfeits’ of the real**. For example, representations of class, law or value are said to be grounded in nature: art imitates life and democracy is legitimised by ‘natural rights’. Baudrillard indicates, however, that **the inherent goal of simulacra is to produce a controllable and universal system of power**. At this stage, counterfeit simulacra is working ‘only on substance and form, not yet on relations or structures’, but **its evolution will create ‘a pacified society, ground up into a deathless substance … that will guarantee an eternity of … cultural hegemony’** (Baudrillard, 1983b: 91).  Next, the second-order of simulacra appears during the industrial revolution. Importantly, infinite reproducibility is introduced into society. For example, exact replicas of objects are produced by assembly lines and automation. No longer is there nostalgia for a natural order; **nature is to be dominated by production; counterfeit simulacra are now obsolete**. Most importantly, however, the infinite reproducibility of objects, augmented by the rise of capitalism, **enables the emergence of the cybernetic code** and contemporary society. Baudrillard claims that ‘we are in the third-order simulacra’, where simulation models come to constitute the world and all referential finalities are abolished (Ibid.: 100-01): God, Man, Nature, History, Society and others. This is because **images are only understood by reference to other images**. Thus, society has moved from ‘a capitalist-productivitist society to a neo-capitalist cybernetic order’ (Ibid.: 111). As a result of this code, images no longer refer to an object; rather, they refer to another commutable image on the code. But, through models contained in common societal narrative and institutional discourse, simulations are able to produce a ‘reality effect’, which conceals the fact they are merely referring to other simulations (Bogard, 1996: 10). For example, **the code continually sets up simulations of events, which test individuals and ‘[inscribe] them into the simulated order’ through a ‘process of signalisation’** (Kellner, 1989: 80). For example, every advertisement, choice of commodity, choice of entertainment, and political candidate presents a chance for a binary response of affirmation or negation. It is in this way that individuals are inserted into a dominating ‘coded system of similarities and dissimilarities, of identities and programed differences’ **(Ibid.).** Thus, Baudrillard’s contemporary social theory is distinguishable from previous determinist social theories that postulate powerful individuals, classes, or corporations manipulating the public for certain ends. Instead, Baudrillard suggests that **social organisation is determined by individual’s responses to the pre-coded messages** that are derived from simulations of economics, politics, culture or the banal decisions of everyday life (Baudrillard, 1983b: 111). Importantly for the third-order of simulacra**, the binary system of the code creates a ‘deterrence model’ in which all ‘radical change is ruled out, since the very fact of an option between different political parties, [for example], acts as a deterrent against demands for radical social change’** (Kellner, 1989: 81). This is the end of society as traditionally theorised.In Symbolic Exchange and Death Baudrillard (1983c: 20) announces the end of traditional conceptions of society—the end of ‘labour, production, political economy’, and the ‘dialectic signifier/signified that permeated the accumulation of knowledge and of meaning’ (Baudrillard, 2002: 127). Baudrillard argues that **we are in a new era where media and the consumption of semiotic codes that inform images, have replaced production and political economy as the organising foundation of society**. For example, labour is now a ‘sign among signs’ (Baudrillard, 1995b: 23), a symbol of one’s status and integration: ‘the choice of occupation, the utopia of an occupation custom-made for everyone … labour power is no longer violently bought and sold; **it is designed, it is marketed, it is merchandised**. Production thus joins the consumerist system of signs’ (Baudrillard, 2002: 134). Because social reality is constituted by the ‘chess pieces’ of the signs and symbols that are mobilised through the media, **nothing is objectively determined and everything can be simulated** (Kellner, 1989: 62). **Thus, political economy is no longer the determinant that can explain social phenomena.**

**The topical version of the aff solves all their offense – the only option is a radical mimicry of the forms of the system, one that accelerates them to the point of their obvious vacuity. Fatal theory seeks to restore the symbolic space of mystery by operating in the margins, issuing the ironic force of the object in lieu of mastery of it. We must infuse education with symbolic exchange, breaking open the determinism of language and penchant for falsifiability that grounds political violence. Our paradoxical politics dwells in the poetic aporia of hyper-commodification, issuing signs against signs in a bitter but happy duel with reality as such**

**Pawlett 13 - William Pawlett, Senior Lecturer in the School of Law, Social Sciences and Communication at the University of Wolverhampton, in Ashgate Publishing, in 2013** ["Violence society and radical theory: Bataille, Baudrillard and contemporary society", https://www.researchgate.net/publication/288148526\_Violence\_society\_and\_radical\_theory\_Bataille\_Baudrillard\_and\_contemporary\_society, pg. 33-35, 1-5-2019] recut ahs emi

Symbolic Exchange and Death begins with a remarkably strident and politically radical preface: it declares that symbolic exchange is the only effective means of challenging or defying the capitalist system at a fundamental level. The capitalist system, for Baudrillard, is a vast and insidious system of control, adept at neutralising critique and political contestation. Critique may be neutralised by suppression or mis-representation, but increasingly **critique is assimilated as commodity** and as information/data through electronic solicitude. Taking its place within the general information overload, critical thought becomes just another link on the home page of the sort of person who ‘likes’ critical thought, one of your endless options on a Kindle or something you are made to read on an unpopular module during a university degree. That is, critical thought does not succeed in challenging the capitalist system; the cheap and abundant availability of works of critical thought, on Amazon for example, not only provides profits to a tax-dodging mega-corporation, it also demonstrates (or rather, simulates) the openness, tolerance and freedoms of the consumer capitalist system. How does symbolic exchange embody a greater or more successful defiance? Taking up Mauss’s notion of gift exchange as a concept “more radical than Marx’s or Freud’s”, Baudrillard insists that symbolic exchange does not merely describe the traditional practices of certain archaic cultures but is also “taking place here and now” (Baudrillard 1993a: 1). According to Baudrillard, symbolic exchange “haunts” capitalist social relations, it is present in them (in the sign – the medium of exchange) and it “mocks” these structural significations “in the form of their own death”. To understand what Baudrillard might mean by this it is important to stress that symbolic exchange is not a concept to be deployed as critique, symbolic exchange is, in itself, the practice of defiance; it is the living reversal of the system’s order. Symbolic exchanges, in Baudrillard’s sense, are the practice or act of reversal of the system’s priorities and values and so, in this sense, spell death for the system: not ‘real’ but symbolic death and symbolic death is more fundamental and humiliating than ‘real’ death. It is the enormity and reach of the system that makes it so vulnerable, like a much larger opponent being thrown by the momentum of their own weight in martial arts. The system is eminently vulnerable because it is built upon the sense of its own invulnerability, and specifically on its sense of irreversibility: the irreversibility of rationality, of progress, of (Western) dominance, the irreversibility of technological advancement. Given these conditions, according to Baudrillard, even a small or “infinitesimal” injection of reversibility can threaten the entire edifice; the system has no defences against symbolic reversion while it is more than capable of neutralising a frontal attack. Such reversions, the reversion of all the system’s ‘gifts’ include: the reversion of power in the sudden, unanticipated defiant acts of the apparently weak; the reversion of technological supremacy in the breakdown or computer virus; the reversion of rationality in the experience of the irreducible irrationality of rationality; the reversion of official meanings and sense into nonsense and mockery; the reversion of control in catastrophic failures. The effect of symbolic reversibility then consists in sudden, catastrophic reversals suffered by power and by the powerful which reveal, perhaps momentarily, the system’s deep vulnerability. Baudrillard’s position on symbolic exchange is not to be confused with the strategies of the Situationists, though he remained sympathetic towards this movement with which he was involved in the 1960s (Baudrillard 2004a: 15-20). An egg or custard flan thrown in the face of someone powerful and captured by the same media channels which the powerful usually dominate, can be far more effective in countering power than an unwieldy political statement. However, if the Situationists sought meaningful spaces for self-assertion in the gaps, lapses and dead zones of the capitalist system, Baudrillard’s approach is quite distinct. It seeks the setting in motion of a chain reaction or a chain failure through the rippling effects of symbolic humiliation by counter-gift or potlatch. The counter-gift may well be more effective when it is immediate, unplanned, or more specifically when it is not the result of subjective desires and considered beliefs – which can generally be accommodated by the system through simulation. One example might be the sudden, unexpected haranguing of then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher by an elderly lady in 1983. Yet, this example does not really capture the sudden escalation that is involved in placing one’s life and death as a stake against the system. The tragic suicide in December 2012 of a nurse, Jacintha Saldanha, who worked at the private hospital in London favoured by the British royal family and was tricked into revealing information about a royal by two ‘journalists’ working for a Australian radio show, captures something of this fatal escalation. She had been humiliated by the journalists, yet her suicide vastly escalated the stakes and re-directed the humiliation back at the journalists, the media and wider society, generating a truly devastating, ‘potlatching’ humiliation of the journalists responsible (who seemed to crumble inwards), it further weakened the reputation of the so-called ‘free’ press and also brought to a close the British royal family’s ‘bounce’ in popularity after the royal wedding, jubilee and the London Olympics. Each of these powerful interests suffered an immediate reversion of their standing, a symbolic death ; and although the British media partially succeeded in limiting these symbolic effects to the designated sacrificial scapegoats consisting of the two journalists, the fundamental nature of the sacrificial or symbolic sphere became, temporarily, brutally obvious. In a sense we could say that the system cannot suffer a ‘real’ death in any case, not only because it is not a discrete, finite organism but because, in Baudrillard’s terminology, it is already dead, it has no genuine life or vitality and is kept alive only by its life support systems of simulation. The vampiric nature of capitalism was, of course, already a prominent feature of the Marxist critique (Marx Capital Vol. 1). For Baudrillard, the capitalist system does not only draw the life-blood of its exploited workers, it condemns its citizen-consumers to a life-less survival, a living-on in a state of humiliation and dependence, a ‘life’ that is shaped by the system, a life that is made to seem a gift of the system. Though suicide is expressly forbidden by both religious and secular law, that is the system exerts ownership over our death as well as our life, the point of biological termination does represent the absolute limit of the system’s control. Given these conditions the only fundamental strategy of defiance, for Baudrillard, is to reverse this humiliation, to refuse the ‘gifts’ and imprecations, to reverse this derisory life through a symbolic death hurled back at the system. This may take the form of the reversal of the poisonous gifts of consumer goods and information through a greater counter-gift of “**hyper-conformity”: the absorbing of** anything and **everything the system gives while refusing the proper use of these ‘gifts’**. One example given by Baudrillard is obesity, the indiscriminate absorption of food to a degree that becomes a social problem; this involves a (literally) internal revolt against the cult of physical fitness and the body beautiful, a rejection of the injunction to compulsory sexuality and sexual enjoyment (Baudrillard 1990b: 27-34). A further example is the reversal and cancellation of the overload of information through its spontaneous “poetic dispersal” into paradox and ever greater uncertainty: only in the correct dosage does information aid understanding, in excess it creates an absolute uncertainty. These forms of internal reversal reveal the ambivalence hidden within the system. It is not ‘real’ (or biological) death, nor ‘real’ violence, which has the power to challenge the system, it is death as symbolic form which is excluded from the system, and it is the symbolic death through the reversion of its systems which may be re-introduced into the system to subversive and fatal effect. According to Baudrillard, symbolic exchange is experienced “as a demand forever blocked by the law of value” and embodies “an intoxicating revolt”. This intoxication is always present so it does suggest a radically different pattern of social relations, which for Baudrillard would be “based on the extermination of values” (Baudrillard 1993a: 1). But could this extermination of all controlling values ever exist beyond clearly circumscribed ritual occasions, such as those described by Mauss (1990)? It seems that for both Bataille and Baudrillard the answer must be negative, there can only ever be a dynamic alternation or a fundamental duality and, Baudrillard suggests, all social formations except Western modernity have implicitly understood this. This issue is re-visited in more detail in Chapter 2. For Baudrillard “the principle of reversibility (the counter-gift) must be imposed against all the economistic, psychologistic and structuralist interpretations” (1993a: 1-2) and he adopts a very Bataillean formulation when he declares that symbolic exchange is “a functional principle sovereignly outside and antagonistic to our economic reality principle” (1993a: 2). Baudrillard comes close to a definition of symbolic exchange with the following:The symbolic is neither a concept, an agency, a category, nor a ‘structure’, but an act of exchange and a social relation which puts an end to the real, which resolves the real, and, at the same, puts an end to the opposition between the real and the imaginary. This initiatory act is the reverse of our reality principle … the symbolic is what puts an end to the disjunctive code and to separated terms … in the symbolic operation the two terms lose their reality (Baudrillard 1993a: 133).

#### Now for the paradigm issues:

**[1] Fairness and Education are voters! Appeals to fairness and education buy into a global ponzi scheme**

**Senese and Page 95 - Guy B Senese, Professor of Educational Foundations at North Illinois University and Ralph Page, Associate professor of Philosophy at the University of Illinois, Published April 30, 1995** “Simulation, Spectacle, and the Ironies of Education Reform” [https://www.amazon.com/Simulation-Spectacle-Education-Critical-Paperback-ebook/dp/B000WEX9BQ] Accessed 8/29/19 SAO

For Baudrillard, reform projects can be understood as quasi-public advertisements and promotions. These promotions enter the world of consumer circulation independent of the logic of capital accumulation. The power of this circulation is a function of ideology only tangentially related to the facticity of the object of the promotion. For boxing, the damaging, sometimes death-dealing struggle is obscured when reformers shape the debate. This shaping works to alter the true dangers of the activity and serves as advertisements for the importance of reformers. For education, the ideology of equal opportunity and excellence is an advertisement for the deeper struggle where public-school compulsion becomes the standardized substitute for the lost power of working-class persons to amass private goods and time for their own and their communities' betterment. The orchestration of schooling appears in this light somewhat like a dance marathon, a decorous and energetic activity initially, but one which grinds to an obscure and deadly march of endurance and success of a few only at the expense of those contestants who fall. We may follow Baudrillard into his world, where what things stand for are more important than what they are for. Reform, as a sort of spectacular, decorous democratic mobilization of care, stands for rectitude, but is coded to promote little if any substantial change. Indeed Baudrillard claimed that "control of the code" and the proliferation of sign values are of more significance than control of labor and the sphere of production. He argued for theoretical perspective in which the most fruitful area of approach is to oppose and expose the process of signification that makes possible the process of obscurity, which operates as a function of the symbolic universe of competition and struggle in capitalist societies. For Baudrillard, capital itself is a "demented enterprise, without limits, to abolish the symbolic universe in an indifference that is always greater, and in circulation of values always accelerated ... capital is described as the reign without limits of exchange value." Thus the de-mentation of participants in a competitive struggle must be met by the de-mentation of our efforts to describe and define the symbolic universe encapsulating these struggles. Boxing and schooling play a part in this symbolic universe, and all efforts to reform must also reform their metaphorical message. For Baudrillard the struggles of Right and Left, which have their counterpart in reform efforts in education, particularly have imploded in a media-saturated society, in which differences become signs simulating democratic debate. Capital is itself a fundamental challenge to the natural order of value and moral hierarchy. Justice and reason are only accidental to its efficiencies. With Baudrillard we might argue that reform and democratic process "involve the injection of homeopathic doses of the social and the political into a body in which the previous vestiges are dying.” Svi Shapiro contributed an analysis of the 1980s excellence movement that illuminates some of these homeopathic and spectacular elements of education reform. He argued, for example, that the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) report, "while stopping short of calling for new outlays, also makes clear its support for a strong federal role." This highlights the paradoxical allegiance to a "new federalism," evident in the growing privatization impulse, while the education of children is quietly redefined as the sole protectorate of a "national interest." This interest is that of business primarily, and the NCEE report's apparent concern with education in the humanities, civics, or the development of a "literate citizenry" are in fact subsidiary to the human capital development interests of business. "Knowledge, learning information and skilled intelligence are the new raw materials of international commerce," the report concludes," and are today spreading throughout the world as vigorously as miracle drugs ... if only to keep and improve on the slim competitive edge we will retain in world markets, we must rededicate ourselves to the reform of our educational system." Yet, disguised by the metaphors of expansion and productivity is the reality for working-class children of the struggle for what they hope are actual, not symbolic, life chances.

**[2] We can cross apply the aff to theory. Solves ideological dogmatism and content exploration**

**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.”

**[3] Theory is disciplinary tool that upholds hierarchies**

**Pawlett 8 - Dr William Pawlett, International Journal of Baudrillard Studies, January 2008** “Against Banality – The Object System, the Sign System and the Consumption System” [https://baudrillardstudies.ubishops.ca/against-banality-the-object-system-the-sign-system-and-the-consumption-system/] Accessed 8/25/20 SAO

Inequality drives the system, providing the underlying dynamic for the games of invidious distinction. Baudrillard does not contend that the capitalist system is “deliberately bloodthirsty”40 simply that it seeks to maintain privilege, domination and, through these, control. It is simply that a new car for a private consumer is a more effective means of social control than a new public hospital, while a visible “underclass” of the marginal and rejected serves as a potent reminder of what happens if you refuse to play by the rules. It is important to emphasise that at this stage of Baudrillard’s thought there is a strong sense of “determination by social structure”; a social level of causality which is quite real though it is largely hidden or unconscious. Baudrillard’s analysis attempts to penetrate beneath or beyond the “metaphysical” notions of growth and affluence, of needs and uses, to expose the workings of the system through “a genuine analysis of the social logic of consumption”.41 This analysis reveals fundamental inequality and divisiveness – a social status war. The level of ideology with its notions of equality, fairness, and of technological progress, is secondary and offers signs of freedom which mask “real” lived inequalities (though the distinction between real and apparent is abandoned in Baudrillard’s next study For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign).

**[4]** **The ROB is to vote for the debater with the best strategy to interrogate and rupture the hyperreal.**

**Prefer –**

**[a] Bindingness – Every subject exists within the code – any action a subject takes is infected by its operations which means an understanding of it is a priori question to any action.**

**[b] Motivation – All thought and action including the flow has been influenced by the semiotic attachments enforced by the hyperreal which means any genuine motivation stemming from an agent must come from a rupture, since capitalism has otherwise influenced all our desires so the aff is a side constraint. Means the aff is a side constraint on the flow.**

**[c] Sociological Subjectivity – hijacks their fwk- if a subject is socially excluded, only rectifying the mechanisms of the code which produced those conditions allows for any solvency.**

**[d] All our other cards are reasons as to why the ROB is important.**

#### [5] Differentiation of ideas motivates technological mastery

**Germain 14 - Gil Germain, Voegelin View, December 13th, 2014** “Scientism Unbound: Baudrillard and the Critique of Technology (Part I)” [https://voegelinview.com/scientism-unbound-baudrillard-critique-technology-part-1/] Accessed 8/27/20 SAO

Baudrillard is at pains to dispel the modern penchant for reducing otherness to “difference.” A technological society is premised on the unleashing of the forces of differentiation. Modern economies, for example, thrive on product and service differentiation, and on creating a consumer base that ties matters of personal identity to specific patterns of consumption. The Internet, to take another example, opens up an almost unimaginable array of information, sufficiently fragmented so as to meet the varied interests of its users. In a culture given over to the itemization and **circulation of innumerable** goods, services, and **ideas**, it is understandable that **the meaning of** otherness – which Baudrillard equates with **incommensurability – might be lost**. This is because most of the variation we observe today amounts to distinctions within a single totalizing system, which renders these differences commensurable or commutable. Coke, for example, may be distinguishable from Pepsi as a consumer product, but because this difference occurs within a system of exchange that codes products relative to each other, they remain related to each other as products arrayed in an extended series of consumer options. Like integers within a common numbering system, consumer items gain their significance in relation to other items, to their position within an overall structure of meaning. Otherness, unlike difference, is not a relational concept. To the contrary, for two things to be “other” than one another they must bear no relationship to one another; they must be in classes of their own. This is why Baudrillard associates otherness with notions such as incomparability and disparateness. Life and death are non-equivalences, for instance. They cannot be placed on a single scale or system of exchange: They are not commutative realities. The same, for Baudrillard, can be said of masculinity and femininity.15 These “traits” can be harmonized as per modern gender equality only if they are conceived as a mere set of behavioral “differences.” Their oppositional quality is obscured when they are regarded as anything less than distinct realities or modes of being. We have to ask ourselves at this point why Baudrillard is so keen to draw a distinction between otherness and difference. The answer lies in the consequences of not doing so. If, as Baudrillard believes, the otherness that haunts reality (and foils our effort to perfect reality by reconstructing it) is denied or otherwise overlooked, we will continue to act on the assumption that there are no insurmountable challenges to the attainment of perfection. Introducing the notion of otherness serves the purpose of complicating the world picture technology has constructed for itself. Difference is as close to otherness as one gets in a world reorganized by technology. But the two are nothing alike. This is because reality for Baudrillard is not a system and otherness not a “part” within the monolithic whole. Rather, reality is self-divided in a way that not everything holds together or coheres. Otherness is the name given to the irreducible “gaps” in the fabric of being that effectively withhold the promise of perfection and the hope of realizing a totalized system. Conceived this way, otherness symbolizes what remains beyond our powers of control and suggests the existence of **limits to the project of technological mastery**. Otherness has manifested itself historically in a belief in the will of an omnipotent God or the workings of an inscrutable nature. To believe in fate is to accept and respect the fact that there are forces other than the merely human that shape you, your life, and the lives of others, and over which you have no power to effect or change. But otherness, as a general condition of existence, also persists in our largely secular technological era. As will be discussed below, Baudrillard’s efforts to describe reality as alien are an attempt to show up the mystery of everyday experience and to regain a sense of wonder at the sheer “thereness” of the world around us, a sensibility all but lost on us today.

#### [6] The Affirmative critique is assimilated to justify the moral superstructure they criticize.

**Robinson 12 - Andrew Robinson, Ceasefire, August 24th, 2012** “An A to Z of Theory | Jean Baudrillard: From Revolution to Implosion” [https://ceasefiremagazine.co.uk/in-theory-baudrillard-10/] Accessed 3/9/20 SAO

Baudrillard and resistance Last week, this column explored Baudrillard’s account of the collapse or implosion of capitalism. What does all of this mean for political resistance? For one thing, it means that the dominant system must continue to be opposed. For Baudrillard, there is always something missing from the code. It is always incomplete, leaving a radical remainder. The system is based on a split. The code is differentiated from reality. It has to be, to avoid symbolic exchange. It cannot achieve the complete inclusion which comes about with generalised reversibility. Yet the code tends to take over all of social space. Its “other” disappears or becomes invisible. It tries to be a complete system, a total reality. It largely succeeds in sucking intensity from social life. Yet it also remains vulnerable, because of the exclusion on which it is based. Baudrillard theorises resistance in terms of the irruption of the symbolic in the realms controlled by the code. It is something like what Hakim Bey terms the ‘return of the primitive’. We really need the dimension of the ‘secret’. Its forced revelation is destructive and impossible. The return of the symbolic is discussed in various ways in different texts. Resistance arises when subjects come to see their own programmed death in the accumulation, production and conservation of their subjectivity. They become fiercely opposed to their reduction to the regime of work-buy-consume-die. Resistance becomes increasingly nihilistic, in response to the programming of the universe. It becomes resistance to the code as meaning, and at the same time as lack of intensity. In seeking to restore intensity, it resorts to the modalities of symbolic exchange. The impossibility of “revolution” It is important to differentiate Baudrillard’s view from standard accounts of revolution. To be sure, this is the position from which Baudrillard emerges. In the early work, The Political Economy of the Sign, Baudrillard argued that the regime of the code could only be destroyed by a total revolution. ‘Even signs must burn’. Baudrillard’s early work can be read as a call for a Situationist-style overthrow of capitalism through a revolution in the everyday, which breaks the power of the code and of signs. In more recent works, Baudrillard rethinks this view. He claims that revolution is now impossible. Baudrillard makes this claim because of the end of production. Revolution was historically seen as the liberation of the productive energy of humanity from the confines of capitalism. But if production no longer exists, this kind of vision has no hold. Labour has become another sign. There is no tendency for it to liberate itself by moving beyond capitalism. Baudrillard is deeply critical of standard leftist responses to neoliberalism. He criticises revolutionaries of his day for seeking a return to the “real”. He sees this as nostalgia for the previous, Fordist period of capitalism. People seek to get rid of the code, and go back to the earlier kind of simulation. Or they seek to identify something which is not yet signified in the system and which ought to be – for instance, excluded groups who should be included. This actually ties people to the prior forms of the dominant system. For Baudrillard, the weapons of the previous period are already neutralised in the order of the code. Revolution is a casualty of the end of the period of system-expansion. Explosions and revolutions are effects of an expanding order. This expanding order is an effect of the regime of production. But simulation is instead an inward-looking order. It is ‘saturated’ – it cannot expand any further. As a result, explosion will never again happen. It has been replaced by the ‘cold’ energy of the simulacrum. Instead, there is constant implosion. The world is saturated. The system has reached its limits. It is socially constructed as dense and irreversible, as beyond the ‘liberating explosion’. Baudrillard believes that we are past a point of no return: the system can’t be slowed down or redirected to a new end. We are in a ‘pure event’, beyond causality and without consequence, and every effort to exorcise hyperreality simply reinforces it. These are little fractal events and gradual processes of collapse which no longer create massive collapses, but exist horizontally. Events no longer resonate across spheres. It is as if the forces carrying the meaning of an event beyond itself have slowed to a standstill. The London ‘riots’ or the student fees **protests**, for example, **do not turn into generalised rebellions** in Britain as perhaps they still might in Egypt or Greece. **We are in an era of ‘anomalies without consequences’**. But the system will nevertheless come to an end, by other means. Even if people can’t revolt, a reaction is certain. Explosive violence is replaced by implosive violence, arising from a saturated, retracting, involuting system. The system has lost its triumphal imaginary because of its saturation. It is now in a phase of mourning, passing towards catastrophe. Things don’t get transcended anymore, but they expand to excess. Baudrillard sees this as the culmination of a kind of negative evolution. Systems pass through stages: a loose state produces liberty or personal responsibility; a denser state produces security; an even denser state produces terror, generalised responsibility, and saturation. Beyond saturation there is only implosion. Anti-consumerism is another target of critique. Criticising consumer society for doing what it claims to do – for supplanting ‘higher’ virtues with everyday pleasures – is a false critique which reinforces the core myth of consumerism. Consumer society functions as it does, precisely because it does not provide everyday pleasures. Rather, it simulates them through the code. Baudrillard also criticises moral critique and scandal, such as Watergate. He argues that the system requires a moral superstructure to operate, and the revival of such a superstructure sustains the system. What is really scandalous is that capital is fundamentally immoral or amoral. Moral panics serve to avoid awareness of this repressed fact. Similarly, critiques of ideology risk reaffirming the system’s maintenance of the illusion of truth. This helps cover up the fact that truth no longer exists in the world of the code. Since there is no reality beneath the simulacrum, such analyses are flawed. It is now the left (or the Third Way) that tries to re-inject moral order and justice into a failing system, thereby protecting it from its own collapse. Baudrillard implicitly criticises theories such as Laclau’s, which seek to re-inject meaning and intensity into politics. For Baudrillard, this task is both impossible and reactionary. Baudrillard sees the system as creating the illusion of its continued power by drawing on or simulating antagonisms and critique. There is thus a danger that **critique** actually **sustains the system, by giving it a power it doesn’t have**. **Trying to confront and destroy the system** thus inadvertently **revives it, giving it back** a little bit of **symbolic power.** He also sees conspiracy theories and current forms of Marxism as attempts to stave off awareness of the reality of a systematic code. In any case, the energy of the social is simply a distorted, impoverished version of the energy of “diabolical” forces (i.e. of symbolic exchange). Baudrillard thinks that societies actually come into being, not for the management of interests, but coalesce around rituals of expenditure, luxury and sacrifice. Politics itself was a pure game until the modern period, when it was called upon to represent the social. Now politics is dead, because it no longer has a referent in reality. This is because it lacks symbolic exchange. The absence of symbolic exchange leads also to an absence of possibility of redistribution, either North to South or elite to masses. Fascism also resists the death of the real, in a similar way. It tries to restore in an excessive way the phenomena of death, intensity and definite references, in order to ward off the collapse of the real. Fascist and authoritarian tendencies revive what Baudrillard terms ‘the violence necessary to life’ – they keep up some kind of symbolic power. (Baudrillard’s Lacanian heritage is clearly shown in this idea of a necessary violence). Baudrillard has a certain sympathy for the desire to escape hyperreality in this way, but also sees it as futile. People doing this – both left and right – are trying to resuscitate causes and consequences, realities and referents, and recreate an imaginary. But the system deters such efforts from succeeding. Le Pen for instance is ultimately absorbed, as the mainstream integrates and repeats his racist ideas. This analysis could also be applied to various “fundamentalisms” and ethno-nationalist movements today. This kind of resistance is ultimately reactionary, seeking to restore the declining regime of signs. But it can only be understood if its basis in energies of resistance to simulation is recognised. It is because it channels such resistance that it is able to mobilise affective forces. Baudrillard’s analysis is here similar to Agamben’s view that the sovereign gesture is now exercised everywhere because of the rise of indistinction and indeterminacy. The paradox is that the performance of fundamentalism often leads back towards the world of simulation and deterrence. Such movements map symbolic exchange onto the state, restoring some of its reality, but ultimately contributing to the persistence of simulation. Resistance from inside the regime of power is impossible because of deterrence. Baudrillard suggests that it’s now impossible to imagine a power exercised inside the enclosure created by deterrence – except for an implosive power which abolishes the energies preventing other possibilities emerging. He also suggests that the loss of the real is irreversible. Only the total collapse of the terrain of simulation will end it, not a test of reality. A truly effective revolution would have to abolish all the separations – including the separation from death. It cannot involve equality in what is separated – in survival, in social status and so on. The strategy for change is now exacberation, towards a catastrophic end of the system. Baudrillard believes that the resultant death of the social will paradoxically bring about socialism.

**[7] Images of suffering fuel violence**

**Alford 20 - Aaron J. Alford, Medium, January 13th, 2020** “Disaster Pornography and the American Media”[<https://medium.com/@aaronjalford1/disaster-pornography-and-the-american-media-f01ee1cb4512>] Accessed 1/30/20 SAO

Most of us are familiar with the concept of pornography, at least sexual pornography: Images or media meant to titillate your arousal. Similarly, the images of catastrophe and destruction presented by the news media are like a drug, used by first world nations to feed off the suffering of the rest of the world. Images of death and violence from non-western countries are extracted and reprocessed for consumption by you, the consumer. The production of disaster porn is, as Baudrillard proclaimed, charity cannibalism and incentives the perpetuation of oppressive conditions in order to sustain and prolong our enjoyment. “We are the consumers of the ever delightful spectacle of poverty and catastrophe, and the moving spectacle of our own efforts to alleviate it. We see to it that extreme poverty is reproduced as a symbolic deposit, as a fuel essential to the moral and sentimental equilibrium of the West.” — Baudrillard In short, disaster pornography shows us images of suffering and our efforts to stop suffering, which gives us a little dopamine hit. **Our news media is trying to get you addicted to violence, so they can sell you more ads**. Disaster pornography is the new drug. Or should I say, old drug. Producing and reproducing suffering Somehow, what Baudrillard warned of the year I was born is still going full force, unchecked, unchallenged, and no one is calling it out. Baudrillard said “Our whole culture lives off this catastrophic cannibalism, relayed in cynical mode by the news media.” Now I can already hear you scoffing at my ridiculous claims, but consider these examples. The New York Times Sells the Iran missiles as “an Action Movie” The Iran war effort is being pushed, as I write, by American media. Take for example the New York Times coverage of a missile strike compared to Al Jazeera’s coverage of the same missile strike. One is factual, the other wants you to imagine your favorite Iron Man movie. The **New York Times wants to feed your wildest fantasies** about the glory of war, and how beautiful it is. Al Jazeera, the non-western source, simply reported the facts. The big difference is the framing. NBC Worships Trump’s Missile Attacks on Syria Consider another example, NBC’s Brian Williams coverage of a missile attacks on Syrian air bases in which he described the wanton destruction as “beautiful missiles.” He said he was “tempted to quote the great Leonard Cohen” in that he is “guided by the beauty of our weapons.” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lJz9q7pfXkY The U.S’s Cycle of support and betrayal of the Kurds To better understand this cycle, look no further than the U.S’s support and then sudden betrayal of the Kurds. During the gulf war, there was a huge push for “humanitarian protections” for the Kurds, even after Saddam Hussein had already crushed them while the west stood by drinking our tea. In 2003, we start a war against Saddam Hussein, which perpetuates the instability that feeds our love for disaster even more. Then ISIS comes out of that chaos, and we are even more fed. Then the Kurds defeat ISIS, popular opinion of the Kurds goes up in the wake of the Syrian civil war and destruction of ISIS, only to have our president abandon them to be genocided on the Syrian border by fucking Turkey. You see, we never cared about the Kurds, only the images they gave us. Only their suffering, only their death, was enough to sate the American appetite for war, violence, and suffering. The election of Donald Trump Baudrillard argued that when the disaster market from around the world slows down, the west will turn inward and **produce its own spectacles of disaster**. Brexit and the election of white nationalists in America are great examples of what Baudrillard warned of. Another example of this cycle of catastrophe is president Donald Trump’s election. Donald Trump received 2 billion dollars of free television coverage in 2016 leading up to his election. The media could not get enough of this crazy television host billionaire who thought he would be a good president. The truth is that the media always wanted him to be the president, the source of constant disasters both here and abroad. Donald Trump is a president who: Impulse killed an Iranian General without a declaration of war Cut taxes for the rich and raised taxes on the poor Put children, including babies, in cages at the border Bullied a 15 year old climate activist on Twitter Has been accused of sexual misconduct by at least 17 women Betrayed our ally the Kurds and genocidal Turkey Has actively supported a Saudi Arabian genocide in Yemen Started a trade war with China for no apparent reason Attempted to bribe Ukrainian officials into meddling with our election, and got impeached for it Nominated a rapist to the Supreme Court Supported known child molester Roy Moore for congress Paid of a porn star to stay quiet about how he cheated on his wife with her Is best friends with Steve Bannon, a outspoken fascist and white nationalist Said that there were good people on both sides of a dispute between white supremacists and people protesting white supremacy Pardoned a sheriff in Arizona who advocates for concentration camps Consistently uses anti-Semitic tropes and promotes division I mean, the list goes on from here, but you get my point. Donald Trump is **a walking disaster maker, and the media worships him for it**. Hell, Republicans worship him for it. Even when the media and right wing establishment claim to disagree with him, they put him and his hateful rhetoric on the pedestal. The truth is, no matter what they tell you, the owners of American media want his reelection. It is just too good for their bottom line. A president who creates disaster’s like these is exactly what the American media needs to keep American addicted and the profits rolling in. How then shall we live? Disaster pornography relies on a cycle of production and consumption. The West is complicit in the creation of numerous disasters all around the world. When Donald Trump fucked with Iran, it provoked a response from Iran which is now played back by our media as a justification for further western intervention. This cycle didn’t just start, it’s been going on since before I was born. The west does not respond to disasters, we fucking create them. It’s a process, by which we sell our souls to the devil. Although I fear this description is unfair — to the devil. So how do we stop it? How we prevent the cycle of disaster, images, disaster? It’s simple; **stop watching** disaster porn. I don’t mean stop watching the news, but I do mean to stop listening to the neo-liberal pundits, the discourse of fear, and the spectacles of violence displayed for your pleasure. Listen to news sources who have some god damned respect for humanity. (This means not Fox News OR CNN, if that wasn’t clear). “We have long denounced the capitalistic, economic exploitation of poverty of the ‘other half of the world’. We must today denounce the moral and sentimental exploitation of that poverty — charity cannibalism being worse than oppressive violence.” — Baudrillard So I ask you today, to denounce with me the exploitation of disaster for our own selfish needs. **Say no to the staged spectacle and eventually the market for these simulated disasters will dry up**. When the market of staged disasters is no longer where we look, we will again be able to recognize real human suffering when we encounter it, and act to resolve it. Rather than ignoring the suffering of the underpaid, overworked, and exploited around us, we will finally be able to recognize their suffering as legitimate, rather than looking to the news for our moral compass.