# Deleuze AC

#### Subjectivity is the basis for ethics – it is a call for us to live life in a certain way, so it requires a concept of a subject who can answer this call. The only ethical claims that can be normative are ones that flow from the subject’s constitutive instability – the ‘I think’ is not the ‘I am’. The ‘I think’ does not determine the subject – it is merely its capacity. Thinking only affects a subject as a being in time and so is not a transcendent feature.

#### Transcendent subject hood fails because of differentiation through time causes instability.

Deleuze 68 [Deleuze, Gilles. Difference and Repitition. Translated by Paul Patton. 1968.] AA

Temporally speaking - in other words, from the point of view of the theory of time - nothing is more instructive than the difference between the Kantian and the Cartesian Cogito. It is as though **Descartes's Cogito** **operated** **with** two logical values: determination and undetermined existence. **The** **determination (I think) implies an undetermined** **existence** (**I am,** because 'in order to think one must exist') - **and** **determines it precisely as the existence of a thinking subject**: I think therefore I am, I am a thing which thinks. **The** entire **Kantian** **critique [is]** amounts to objecting against Descartes that it is impossible for determination to bear directly upon the undetermined. **The determination ('I think')** obviously **implies** something undetermined **('I am'), but** **nothing so far tells us how it is that** **this undetermined is determinable** **by the 'I think'**: 'in the consciousness of myself in mere thought I am the being itself although nothing in myself is thereby given for thought.'8 **Kant** therefore **adds** a third logical value: **the determinable**, or rather the form in which the undetermined is determinable (by the deter­ mination). This third value suffices to make logic a transcendental instance. It amounts to the discovery of Difference - no longer in the form of an empirical difference between two determinations, but **in the form of a transcendental** **Difference** between the Determination as such and what it determines; **no[t] longer in the form of an external difference which separates**, **but in the form of an** **internal Difference which establishes an a priori relation** between thought and being. Kant's answer is well known: the form under which undetermined existence is determinable by the 'I think' is that of time ...9 The consequences of this are extreme: **my undetermined existence can be determined only within time as the existence of a** **phenomenon**, of a passive, receptive phenomenal subject appearing within time. As a result, **the spontaneity of which I am** **conscious in the 'I think' cannot** **be understood as the** **attribute of a substantial** and spontaneous **being**, **but only as the affection** **of a passive self** **which experiences its own thought** - its own intelligence, that by virtue of which it can say I - being exercised in it and upon it but not by it. Here begins a long and inexhaustible story: I is an other, or the paradox of inner sense. **The activity of thought applies** to a receptive being, **to a passive subject which represents that activity to itself rather than enacts it**, which experiences its effect rather than initiates it, and which lives it like an Other within itself. **To 'I think' and 'I am' must be added the** **self** - **that is, the passive position** (what Kant calls the receptivity of intuition); to the determination and the undetermined must be added the form of the determinable, **namely** **time**. Nor is 'add' entirely the right word here, since it is rather a matter of establishing the difference and interiorising it within being and thought. It is as though the **I were fractured** from one end to the other: fractured **by** the pure and empty form of **time**. In this form it is the correlate of the passive self which appears in time. **Time signifies a** fault or a **fracture in the I and a passivity in the self**, and the correlation between the passive self and the fractured I constitutes the discovery of the transcendental, the element of the Copernican Revolution. **Descartes could draw his conclusion only by expelling time, by reducing the Cogito to an instant** and entrusting time to the operation of continuous creation carried out by God. More generally, the supposed identity of the I has no other guarantee than the unity of God himself. For this reason, the substitution of the point of view of the 'I' for the point of view of 'God' = than is commonly supposed, so long as the former retains an identity that it owes precisely tt. If the greatest tmttattve of transcendental philosophy was to introduce the form of time into thought as such, then this pure and empty form in turn signifies indissolubly the death of God, the fractured I and the passive self. It is true that Kant did not pursue this initiative: both God and the I underwent a practical resurrection. Even in the speculative domain, the fracture is quickly filled by a new form of identity - namely, active synthetic identity; whereas the passive self is defined only by receptivity and, as such, endowed with no power of synthesis. On the contrary, we have seen that receptivity, understood as a capacity for experiencing affections, was only a consequence, and that the passive self was more profoundly constituted by a synthesis which is itself passive (contemplation ontraction). · The possibility of receiving sensations or impressions follows from this. It is impossible to maintain the Kantian distribution, which amounts to a supreme effort to save the world of representation: here, synthesis is understood as active and as giving rise to a new form of identity in the I, while passivity is understood as simple receptivity without synthesis. The Kantian initiative can be taken up, and the form of time can support both the death of God and the fractured I, but in the course of a quite different understanding of the passive self. In this sense, it is correct to claim that neither Fichte nor Hegel is the descendant of Kant - rather, it is Holderlin, who discovers the emptiness of pure time and, in this emptiness, simultaneously the continued diversion of the divine, the prolonged fracture of the I and the constitutive passion of the self.10 Holderlin saw in this form of time both the essence of tragedy and the adventure of Oedipus, as though these were complementary figures of the same death instinct. Is it possible that Kantian philosophy should thus be the heir of Oedipus?

#### Impact: Stable subjectivity makes critique impossible since it takes empirical features and treats it as a model, which provides no place for contestation

#### And, instability necessitates the politics of active desire – an affirmative desire that embraces the constitution of difference – and a rejection of reactive desire – a desire that reduces anything to a transcendent identity or a singular relation.

#### NEXT, the state currently commits acts that overcode subjects, but that does not mean the state inherently bad. It is a process rather than a thing that changes over time and it is our job to mold it to foster active desire and the process of becoming .

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Instead of seeking to trim their conceptual innovations and neologisms (new words) for simplicity and necessity (an efficiency model of theory – “just in time”, like modern production), they multiply concepts as tools for use, which, although possibly redundant in some analyses, may be useful for others (a resilience model of theory – “just in case”, like indigenous and autonomous cultures). They encourage readers to pick and choose from their concepts, selecting those which are useful and simply passing by those which are not. This has contributed to the spread of diverse Deleuzian approaches which draw on different aspects of their work, but also makes it easy for people to make incomplete readings of their theories, appropriating certain concepts for incompatible theoretical projects while rejecting the revolutionary dynamic of the theory itself. As a result, a large proportion of what passes for Deleuzian theory has limited resonance with the general gist of Deleuze and Guattari’s work, which is not at all about reconciling oneself to the dominant system, but rather, is about constructing other kinds of social relations impossible within the dominant frame. The proliferation of concepts is intended to support such constructions of other ways of being. Another effect of the proliferation of concepts is to make Deleuzian theory difficult to explain or express in its entirety.\¶ In this article, I have chosen to concentrate on **the conceptual pairing of states and war-machines as a way of understanding the differences between autonomous social networks and hierarchical**, repressive **formations**. **Deleuze and Guattari view the ‘state’ as a particular** kind of institutional **regime derived from a set of social relations** **which can be traced to** **a way of seeing** focused on **the construction of fixities** and representation. There is thus a basic form of the state (a “state-form”) in spite of the differences among specific states. Since Deleuze and Guattari’s theory is primarily relational and processual, **the state exists** primarily **as a process rather than a thing**. The state-form is defined by the processes or practices **of ‘overcoding’**, ‘despotic signification’ and ‘machinic enslavement’. These attributes can be explained one at a time. The concept of despotic signification, derived from Lacan’s idea of the master-signifier, suggests that, in statist thought, a particular signifier is elevated to the status of standing for the whole, and the other of this signifier (remembering that signification is necessarily differential) is defined as radically excluded. ‘**Overcoding’ consists in the imposition of the regime of meanings arising from this fixing of representations on the** **various processes** **through which** **social life** **and desire operate**. In contrast to the deep penetration which occurs in capitalism, states often do this fairly lightly, but with brutality around the edges. Hence for instance, in historical despotic states, the inclusion of peripheral areas only required their symbolic subordination, and not any real impact on everyday life in these areas. **Overcoding** **also**, however, e**ntails the destruction of anything which cannot be represented or encoded.¶ ‘Machinic enslavement’ occurs when assembled groups of social relations and desires, known in Deleuzian theory as ‘machines’, are rendered subordinate to the regulatory function of the despotic signifier and hence incorporated in an overarching totality.** This process identifies Deleuze and Guattari’s view of the state-form with Mumford’s idea of the megamachine, with the state operating as a kind of absorbing and enclosing totality, a bit like the Borg in Star Trek, eating up and assimilating the social networks with which it comes into contact. Crucially, while these relations it absorbs often start out as horizontal, or as hierarchical only at a local level, their absorption rearranges them as vertical and hierarchical aggregates. **It tends to destroy** or reduce **the intensity of horizontal connections, instead increasing the intensity of vertical subordination**. Take, **for instance, the formation of the colonial state** **in Africa: loose social identities were rigidly reclassified as exclusive ethnicities**, **and these ethnicities were arranged in hierarchies** (for instance, **Tutsi as superior to Hutu**) in ways **which created rigid** **boundaries** **and oppressive relations** culminating in today’s conflicts.¶ According to this theory of the state-form, states are at once ‘isomorphic’, sharing a basic structure and function, and heterogeneous, differing in how they express this structure. In particular, states vary in terms of the relative balance between ‘adding’ and ‘subtracting axioms’ (capitalism is also seen as performing these two operations). An axiom here refers to the inclusion of a particular group or social logic or set of desires as something recognised by a state: examples of addition of axioms would be the recognition of minority rights (e.g. gay rights), the recognition and systematic inclusion of minority groups in formal multiculturalism (e.g. Indian ‘scheduled castes’), the creation of niche markets for particular groups (e.g. ‘ethnic food’ sections in supermarkets), and the provision of inclusive services (e.g. support for independent living for people with disabilities). It is most marked in social-democratic kinds of states. The subtraction of axioms consists in the encoding of differences as problems to be suppressed, for example in the classification of differences as crimes, the institutionalisation of unwanted minorities (e.g. ‘sectioning’ people who are psychologically different), or the restriction of services to members of an in-group (excluding ‘disruptive’ children, denying council housing to migrants). This process reaches its culmination in totalitarian states. It is important to realise that in both cases, the state is expressing the logic of the state-form, finding ways to encode and represent differences; but that the effects of the two strategies on the freedom and social power of marginalised groups are very different.¶ **The state** **is** also **viewed** as a force of ‘antiproduction’. This term is defined **against** the ‘productive’ or creative power Deleuze and Guattari believe resides in processes of **desiring-production** (the process through which desires are formed and connected to objects or others) and social production (the process of constructing social ‘assemblages’ or networks). **Desiring-production** tends to **proliferate** **differences**, **because desire operates through fluxes and breaks**, **overflowing particular boundaries**. **The** **state** as machine of antiproduction **operates to restrict**, prevent or channel **these flows of creative** **energy so as to preserve fixed social** **forms and restrict the extent** of **difference which is able to exist**, or the connections it is able to form. Hence, **states try to restrict** and break down **the coming-together of** **social networks by prohibiting** or making difficult **the formation of** hierarchical **assemblages**; it operates to block ‘subject-formation’ in terms of social groups, or the emergence of subjectivities which are not already encoded in dominant terms. Take for instance the laws on ‘dispersal’, in which the British state allows police to break up groups (often of young people) congregating in public spaces. Absurdly, the state defines the social act of coming-together as anti-social, because it creates a space in which different kinds of social relations can be formed. **The state wishes to have a monopoly on how people interrelate, and so acts to prevent people from associating horizontally**. Another example of antiproduction is the way that participation in imposed activities such as the requirement to work and the unpaid reproductive labour involved in families, leaves little time for other kinds of relationships – people don’t have time to form other assemblages either with other people or with other objects of desire. Hakim Bey has argued that this pressure to restrict connections is so strong that simply finding time and space for other forms of belonging – regardless of the goal of these other connections – is already a victory against the system.

#### The politics of active desire is the only way we can promote the social relations the state seeks to suppress – this allows us to envision a truly revolutionary praxis, where difference is promoted and desire is no longer misdirected towards fascism.

[K and R 13] Karatzogianni and Robinson 13 [Athina Karatzogianni and Andrew Robinson. “Schizorevolutions vs. Microfascisms: A Deleuzo-Neitzschean Perspective on State, Security, and Active/Reactive Networks.” *From the Selected Works of Athina Karatzogianni.* July 2013. Works.bepress.com/athina\_karatzogianni/19] JW

**The impulse to condemn deviance, resistance and insurrection is disturbingly strong in academia**, and doubtless strengthened by revulsion against network terror. Yet **this networked rebellion of the excluded is the key to hopes for a better world**. In the spiral of terror between states and movements, it is important to recognise that **the source is the state and the weak point is in the movements**. In today’s social war, the Other is not even accorded the honour of being an enemy in a fair fight**. As long as social conflicts are** **seen** **through a statist frame, social war is doomed to continue**, because discursive exclusion produces social war as its underside, and renders resistance both necessary and justified. **The cycle of terror starts with the state: its terror at an existential level of losing control and fixity.** This terrified state produces state terror and thereby creates the conditions for movement terror. It is naive to look for a way out from this side of the equation. **State terror can end only when the state, both accepts the proliferation of networks beyond its control, and adopts a more humble role for itself, or when it collapses or is destroyed**. On the other side, **we should find hope in the proliferation of resistance among the excluded. We need to see in movements of the excluded the radical potential and not only the reactive distortions**. To take Tupac Shakur’s metaphor, we need to see the rose that grows from concrete, not merely the thorns. The problem is, rather, that **many of the movements on the network side of the equation are still thinking, seeing and feeling like states. Such movements are potential bearers of the Other of the state-form, of networks as alternatives to states, a**ffinity against hegemony, abundance against scarcity. The question thus becomes how they can learn to valorise what they are -- autonomous affinity-networks -- rather than internalising majoritarian norms. For instance, in terms of the impact of technosocial transformations on agency, the negotiation of ideology, order of dissent in relation to capitalism as a social code, remains hostage to labor processes and to thick identities of local/regional or national interests, which fail to move contemporary movements to an active affinity to a common humanity and a pragmatic solution for an ethical, non exploitative form of production (Karatzogianni and Schandorf, 2012). Here the exception may like in the global justice movements and Occupy, although still here the discourse remains often in reactive mode, due to state crackdowns experienced by the movements. **There is a great need to find ways to energise hope against fear. Hope as an active force can be counterposed to the reactive power of fear.** **People are not in fact powerless, but are made to feel powerless by the pervasiveness of the dominant social fantasy and of separation. This yields a temptation to fall back on the power of ‘the powerful’, those who gain a kind of distorted agency through alienation**. **But powerlessness and constituted power are both effects of alienation, which can be broken down by creating affinity-network forms of life. An emotional shift can thus be enough to revolutionise subjectivities.** Hence, as Vaneigem argues, ‘[t]o work for delight and authentic festivity is barely distinguishable from preparing for a general insurrection’ (Vaneigem 1967: 50-1). It has been argued in utopian studies that fear and hope form part of a continuum, expressing ‘aspects of affective ambivalence’ connected to the indeterminacy of the future (McManus 2005). **The type of hope needed is active and immanent, brought into the present as a propulsive force rather than deferred to the future**. Deleuze and Guattari use the term ‘absolute deterritorialisation’ for this possibility. In his work on conflict transformation, John Paul Lederach emphasises the need to turn negative energies into creative energies and mobilising hope against fear (Lederach and Maiese, n.d.: 2-3; Lederach, 2005). How is this change in vital energies to be accomplished? Deleuze and Guattari invoke a figure of the shaman as a way to overcome reactive energies (1983: 167-8). **They call for a type of revolutionary social movement ‘that follows the lines of escape of desire; breaches the wall and causes flows to move; assembles its machines and its groups-in-fusion in the enclaves or at the periphery’**, countering reactive energies (ibid. 277). In looking at how **this might operate in practice**, let us examine briefly **[like] the Colombian feminist anti-militarist group La Ruta Pacifica de las Mujere**s. In particular, **the aspects of social weaving and collective mourning prominent in their methodology are crucial forms of creative shamanism, which turns fear into hope.** **Their approach involves ‘the deconstruction of the pervasive symbolism of violence and war and the substitution of a new visual and textual language and creative rituals’** (Cockburn, 2005: 14; Brouwer, 2008: 62).

#### Active desire prevents our desire from being co-opted towards closure of identity, which is the root cause of material violence.

Deleuze & Guattari 77 [Deleuze and Guattari. Deleuze and Guattari. “Anti-Oedipus.” Pg. 26-29. 1977.] MK

In point of fact**, if desire is the lack of the real object, its very nature as a real entity depends upon an "essence of lack" that produces the fantasized object. Desire thus conceived of as** production, though merely the **production of fantasies, has been explained perfectly by psychoanalysis.** On the very lowest level of interpretation, **this means that the real object that desire lacks is related to an extrinsic natural or social production**, whereas desire intrinsically produces an imaginary object that functions as a double of reality, as though there were a "dreamed-of object behind every real object," or a mental production behind all real productions. This conception does not necessarily compel psychoanalysis to engage in a study of gadgets and markets, in the form of an utterly dreary and dull psychoanalysis of the object: psychoanalytic studies of packages of noodles, cars, or "thingumajigs**." But even when the fantasy is interpreted in depth, not simply as an object, but as a specific machine that brings desire itself front and center, this machine is merely theatrical, and the complementarity of what it sets apart still remains: it is now need that is defined in terms of a relative lack and determined by its own object, whereas desire is regarded as what produces the fantasy and produces itself by detaching itself from the object, though at the same time it intensifies the lack by making it absolute: an "incurable insufficiency of being," an "inability-to-be that is life itself."** Hence the presentation of desire as something supported by needs, while these needs, and their relationship to the object as something that is lacking or missing, continue to be the basis of the productivity of desire (theory of an underlying support). In a word, when the theoretician reduces desiring-production to a production of fantasy, he is content to exploit to the fullest the idealist principle that defines desire as a lack, rather than a process of production, of "industrial" production. Clement Rosset puts it very well: **every time the emphasis is put on a lack that desire supposedly suffers from as a way of defining its object, "the world acquires as its double some other sort of world, in accordance with the following line of argument: there is an object that desire feels the lack of; hence the world does not contain each and every object that exists; there is at least one object missing, the one that desire feels the lack of; hence there exists some other place that contains the key to desire** (missing in this world)."29 If desire produces, its product is real. If desire is productive, it can be productive only in the real world and can produce only reality. Desire is the set of passive syntheses that engineer partial objects, flows, and bodies, and that function as units of production. The real is the end product, the result of the passive syntheses of desire as autoproduction of the unconscious. Desire does not lack anything; it does not lack its object. **It is, rather, the subject that is missing in desire,** or desire that lacks a fixed subject; there is no fixed subject unless there is repression. Desire and its object are one and the same thing: the machine, as a machine of a machine. Desire is a machine, and the object of desire is another machine connected to it. Hence the product is something removed or deducted from the process of producing: between the act of producing and the product, something becomes detached, thus giving the vagabond, nomad subject a residuum. The objective being of desire is the Real in and of itself.\* There is no particular form of existence that can be labeled "psychic reality." As Marx notes, what exists in fact is not lack, but passion, as a "natural and sensuous object." Desire is not bolstered by needs, but rather the contrary; needs are derived from desire: they are counter-products within the real that desire produces. Lack is a counter-effect of desire; it is deposited, distributed, vacuolized within a real that is natural and social. Desire always remains in close touch with the conditions of objective existence; it embraces them and follows them, shifts when they shift, and does not outlive them. For that reason it so often becomes the desire to die, whereas need is a measure of the withdrawal of a subject that has lost its desire at the same time that it loses the passive syntheses of these conditions. This is precisely the significance of need as a search in a void: hunting about, trying to capture or become a parasite of passive syntheses in whatever vague world they may happen to exist in. It is no use saying: We are not green plants; we have long since been unable to synthesize chlorophyll, so it's necessary to eat. . .. Desire then becomes this abject fear of lacking something. But it should be noted that this is not a phrase uttered by the poor or the dispossessed. On the contrary, such people know that they are close to grass, almost akin to it, and that desire "needs" very few things-not those leftovers that chance to come their way, but the very things that are continually taken from them-and that what is missing is not things a subject feels the lack of somewhere deep down inside himself, but rather the objectivity of man, the objective being of man, for whom to desire is to produce, to produce within the realm of the real. The real is not impossible; on the contrary, within the real everything is possible, everything becomes possible. Desire does not express a molar lack within the subject; rather, the molar organization deprives desire of its objective being. Revolutionaries, artists, and seers are content to be objective, merely objective: they know that desire clasps life in its powerfully productive embrace, and reproduces it in a way that is all the more intense because it has few needs. And never mind those who believe that this is very easy to say, or that it is the sort of idea to be found in books. "From the little reading I had done I had observed that the men who were most in life, who were moulding life, who were life itself, ate little, slept little, owned little or nothing. They had no illusions about duty, or the perpetuation of their kith and kin, or the preservation of the State.... The phantasmal world is the world which has never been fully conquered over. It is the world of the past, never of the future. To move forward clinging to the past is like dragging a ball and chain."30 The true visionary is a Spinoza in the garb of a Neapolitan revolutionary. We know very well where lack-and its subjective correlative-come from. Lack (manque)\* is created, planned, and organized in and through social production. It is counterproduced as a result of the pressure of antiproduction; the latter falls back on (se rabat sur) the forces of production and appropriates them. It is never primary; production is never organized on the basis of a pre-existing need or lack (manque). **It is lack that infiltrates itself, creates empty spaces or vacuoles, and propagates itself in accordance with the organization of an already existing organization of production. The deliberate creation of lack as a function of market economy is the art of a dominant class. This involves deliberately organizing wants and needs (**manque**) amid an abundance of production; making all of desire teeter and fall victim to the great** fear of not having one's needs satisfied; and making the object dependent upon a real production that is supposedly exterior to desire (the demands of rationality), while at the same time the production of desire is categorized as fantasy and nothing but fantasy. There is no such thing as the social production of reality on the one hand, and a desiring-production that is mere fantasy on the other. The only connections that could be established between these two productions would be secondary ones of introjection and projection, as though all social practices had their precise counterpart in introjected or internal mental practices, or as though mental practices were projected upon social systems, without either of the two sets of practices ever having any real or concrete effect upon the other. As long as we are content to establish a perfect parallel between money, gold, capital, and the capitalist triangle on the one hand, and the libido, the anus, the phallus, and the family triangle on the other, we are engaging in an enjoyable pastime, but the mechanisms of money remain totally unaffected by the anal projections of those who manipulate money. The Marx-Freud parallelism between the two remains utterly sterile and insignificant as long as it is expressed in terms that make them introjections or projections of each other without ceasing to be utterly alien to each other, as in the famous equation money = shit. The truth of the matter is that social production is purely and simply desiring-production itself under determinate conditions. We maintain that the social field is immediately invested by desire, that it is the historically determined product **of desire, and that libido has no need of any mediation or sublimation, any psychic operation, any transformation, in order to invade and invest the productive forces and the relations of production.** There is only desire and the social, and nothing else. **Even the most repressive and the most deadly forms of social reproduction are produced by desire within the organization that is the consequence of such production under various conditions that we must analyze. That is why the fundamental problem of political philosophy is still precisely the one that Spinoza saw so clearly, and that Wilhelm Reich rediscovered: "Why do men [people] fight for their servitude as stubbornly as though it were their salvation?" How can people possibly reach the point of shouting: "More taxes! Less bread!"? As Reich remarks, the astonishing thing is not that some people steal or that others occasionally go out on strike, but rather that all those who are starving do not steal as a regular practice, and all those who are exploited are not continually out on strike: after centuries of exploitation, why do people still tolerate being humiliated and enslaved, to such a point, indeed, that they actually want humiliation and slavery not only for others but for themselves? Reich is at his profoundest as a thinker when he refuses to accept ignorance or illusion on the part of the masses as an explanation of fascism, and demands an explanation that will take their desires into account, an explanation formulated in terms of desire: no, the masses** were not innocent dupes; at a certain point, under a certain set of conditions, they **wanted fascism, and it is this perversion of the desire of the masses that needs to be accounted for.**

#### Thus, the standard and ROB is embracing the politics of active desire. That’s key to education – majoritarian stabilized schooling wrecks thought and is unethical.

Carlin and Wallin [Carlin, Matthew. Wallin, Jason. “Deleuze & Guattari, Politics and Education.” Bloomsbury. 2014. Pg. 119-121] MK

As a social machine through which ‘labour power and the socius as a whole is manufactured’, schooling figures in the production of social territories that already anticipate a certain kind of people (Guattari, 2009, p. 47). And what kind of people does orthodox schooling seek to produce but a ‘molar public’, or, rather, a public regulated in the abstract image of segmentary social categories (age, gender, ethnicity, class, rank, achievement) (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987)? Such an aspiration is intimately wed to the territorializing powers of the State, for as Deleuze and Guattari argue (1983), State power first requires a ‘representational subject’ as both an abstract and unconscious model in relation to which one is taught to desire. As Massumi (2002) writes, ‘**the subject is made to be in conformity with the systems that produces it, such that the subject reproduces the system’** (p. 6). Where **education has historically functioned to regulate institutional life according to such segmentary molar codes, its** modes of production have taken as their teleological **goal** the **production of a ‘majoritarian people’**, or, more accurately, a people circuited to their representational self-similarity according to State thought. This is, in part, the threat that Aoki (2005) identifies in the planned curriculum and its projection of an abstract essentialism upon a diversity of concrete educational assemblages (a school, a class, a curriculum, etc.). Apropos Deleuze, Aoki argues that the standardization of education has effectively reduced difference to a matter of difference in degree. That is, in reference to the stratifying power of the planned curriculum, Aoki avers that difference is always-already linked to an abstract image to which pedagogy ought to aspire and in conformity to which its operations become recognizable as ‘education’ per se. Against political action then, orthodox educational thought conceptualizes social life alongside the ‘categories of the Negative’, eschewing difference for conformity, flows for unities, mobile arrangements for totalizing systems (Foucault, 1983, p. xiii). Twisting Deleuze, might we claim that the people are missing in education? That is, where **education aspires to invest desire in the** production of a ‘**majoritarian’** or ‘molar’ **public, the prospect of thinking singularities are stayed**, not only through the paucity of enunciatory **forms and images available for thinking education** in the first place, but further, **through the organization of the school’s enunciatory machines into vehicles of representation that repeat in molarizing forms of self-reflection**, ‘majoritarian’ perspective, and dominant circuits of desiring-investment. Herein, **the impulse of standardization obliterates alternative subject formations and the modes of counter-signifying enunciation that might palpate them. Repelling the** singular, the ‘**majoritarian’** **and standardizing** **impulse of education takes as its ‘fundamental’ mode of production** **the reification of common sense**, or, rather, the territorialization of thought according to that which is given (that which everyone already knows). **Figuring in a mode ‘of identification that brings diversity in general to bear upon the form of the Same’,** common sense functions to stabilize patterns of social production by tethering them to molar orders of meaning and dominant regimes of social signification (Deleuze, 1990, p. 78). As Daignault argues, in so far as it repels the anomalous by reterritorializing it within prior systems of representation, common sense constitutes a significant and lingering problem in contemporary education (Hwu, 2004). Its function, Daignault alludes apropos Serres, is oriented to the annihilation of difference. Hence, **where the conceptualization of ‘public’ education is founded in common sense, potentials for political action through tactics of proliferation, disjunction, and singularization are radically delimited** and captured within prior territorialities of use (Foucault, 1983, p. xiii). The problem of this scenario is clear: common sense has yet to force us to think in a manner capable of subtracting desire from majoritarian thought in lieu of alternative forms of organization and experimental expression. In so far as it functions as a vehicle of ‘molarization’, reifying a common universe of reference for enunciation, the school fails to produce conditions for thinking in a manner that is not already anticipated by such referential ‘possibilities’. Hence, while antithetical to the espoused purpose of schooling, the majoritarian impulse of the school has yet to produce conditions for thinking – at least in the Deleuzian (2000) sense whereupon thought proceeds from a necessary violence to those habits of repetition with which thought becomes contracted.

#### Prefer the standard additionally – general understandings of the relation between norms, subjects, and the world are insufficient for ethics because there is a gap between discursive regimes and real subjectivity. Only structures of affect distinguish the subject from static concepts of it – it is cruelly optimistic to think we can fit into stable structures. SCHAEFER 13:

[Schaefer ’13. Schaefer, D. "The Promise of Affect: The Politics of the Event in Ahmed's The Promise of Happiness and Berlant's Cruel Optimism." Theory & Event 16.2 (2013). Project MUSE. Web. LHP MK]

At a recent talk at the University of Pennsylvania, Lauren Berlant was asked a question about the relationship between her work—she had just finished a lecture on the theme of flat affect in Gregg Araki's 2004 film Mysterious Skin—and the political. "Because I work on affect," she responded, "I think everything is realism" ([Berlant: 2012](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b3)). Like the dense introductory segments of each of her chapters—thick but fast-moving genealogical waterslides—I think that unpacking statements like this from Berlant is best repaid by taking them in a low gear. When Berlant maps her method as affect theory, she is suggesting that the works she examines in her capacity as a scholar of literature cannot be divorced from the political-material contexts out of which they emerge, but at the same time must be recognized as incarnations of aparticular embodied iteration within this field. Texts are produced by bodies that are both enmeshed in their political worlds and trying to negotiate those worlds in their own distinct way. Everything we do is realism: Berlant's textual objects of study are mediations, attempts to work something out, exhibitions of tensed, embodied, affective realities.[1](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#f1) This is the promise of affect theory, the possibility sliding together analytical tools used to pick apart both highly individuated and highly social contact zones—bodies and histories—as incarnated realities. Affect theory wants to maintain the insights of high theory, the doctrinaire approach that says "historicize everything," while at the same time thinking of how bodies inject their own materiality into spaces. This means using language that enters the orbit of the biological. In the introduction to their 1995 edited volume Shame and Its Sisters: A Silvan Tomkins Reader (later reprinted in Sedgwick's Touching Feeling)—one of the earliest manifestoes of contemporary affect theory— Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Adam Frank acerbically catalog what theory "knows today," first and foremost that 1: The distance of [an] account from a biological basis is assumed to correlate near precisely with its potential for doing justice to difference (individual, historical, and cross-cultural), to contingency, to performative force, and to the possibility of change ([Sedgwick: 2003, 93](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b11)). And 2: Human language is assumed to offer the most productive, if not the only possible, model for understanding representation ([Sedgwick: 2003, 93](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b11)). Affect theory in this vision is designed to explore[s] the "crucial knowledges" of bodies outside a purely theoretical determination, outside the traditional domains of humanist scholarship—reason, cognition, and language ([Sedgwick: 2003, 114](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b11)). Affect, for Lauren Berlant, is thus understandable as "sensual matter that is elsewhere to sovereign consciousness but that has historical significance in domains of subjectivity" ([Berlant: 2011, 53](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). Affect theory is about how systems of forces circulating within bodies—forces not necessarily subsumable or describable by language—interface with histories. It is about how discourses form ligatures with pulsing flesh-and-blood creatures. Two recent texts, Sara Ahmed's The Promise of Happiness ([2010](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)) and Berlant's Cruel Optimism ([2011](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)), can be seen as developing this strand, and in particular, of indicating new ways of feeling out politics through the membrane of affect theory. Both of these authors suggest that the repertoire of the analytics of power ([Foucault: 1990](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b6)) must be supplemented with resources from the affective turn. Recent critiques of affect theory[2](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#f2) have focused on a branch of affect theory heavily informed by Gilles Deleuze's reading of Spinoza. In this strand, affect is rendered as a set of ontological properties, as an ensemble of mutable attributes.[3](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#f3) Contemporary Deleuzians such as Brian Massumi[4](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#f4) and William Connolly[5](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#f5) have been targeted by these critics for their attempts at absorbing scientific research into the Spinozistic discourse of affect. But Spinoza and Deleuze are second-tier characters in Ahmed and Berlant's work—which is perhaps why Ahmed situates herself in a lineage—stretching back to Sedgwick—that she calls "feminist cultural studies of affect"[6](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#f6) ([Ahmed: 2010, 13](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)). Where the Deleuzian strands focuses on affect as the raw material of becoming, as the play of substances, Ahmed and Berlant locate affect theory [is] as a phenomenological, rather than ontological enterprise. It is in the phenomenology of the political that Ahmed and Berlant ground their projects. For Ahmed, this comes in the form of a new attention to happiness as an object of analysis. This does not mean a circumscribed exploration of happiness as a thing, but rather programmatically asking the question "what does happiness do?" ([Ahmed: 2010, 2](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)). Happiness is not autonomous, Ahmed argues, but a relationship of evaluation that creates the horizon of the self. For Ahmed, the "near sphere" of the self is constituted by a perimeter studded with "happy objects." This cluster of objects is what gives the field of mobile operations of the self its shape. In this "drama of contingency," we "come to have our likes, which might even establish what we are like" ([Ahmed: 2010, 24](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)). But for Ahmed, happiness as an affective field settling in proximity to bodies is not necessarily transparent in its shape or its function to the self. Happiness often takes the form, she suggests, of a promise, of a deferred possibility. Taking the phenomenological tradition of Edmund Husserl as a springboard for a discussion of time-consciousness, she suggests that happiness as a promise—from the Latin verb promittere, "to let go or send forth"—is an anticipation rather than a felt presence ([Ahmed: 2010, 38](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)). Rather than simply an affect that circulates between bodies and objects, happiness is also a promise that is passed around. This analysis of the promise of happiness underpins the genealogy Ahmed organizes in the opening chapter of the book: an exploration of the contemporary "happiness turn" in scholarship and the "happiness industry" emerging in parallel in popular media marketplaces. This discourse, she suggests, moves happiness further away from its etymological origin point—in the Middle English hap or fortune, cognate with "perhaps" and "happenstance"— suggesting chance to a sense of happiness as a scheme, a program that, if followed, leads to ultimate good ([Ahmed: 2010, 6](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)). This sense of the promise of happiness is the elimination of contingency by guaranteeing the futurity of happiness: "The promise of happiness takes this form: if you have this or have that, or if you do this or do that, then happiness is what follows" ([Ahmed: 2010, 29](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)). Happiness as a guarantee—a promise that circulates through power-knowledge regimes—but one that defers happiness rather than making happiness present, is one of the mechanisms by which happiness is translated into the skin of a political organism, an "affective community"—such as a family or a society. Through the promise of happiness, bodies are brought together by a shared expectation of future comfort. But because this is a promise rather than immediate happiness, an interstice is formed between this promise and individual experiencing bodies— an interstice that can either be full and complete or disconnected. The family, for instance, does not share a happiness, but a happiness deferred, a promise or image of happiness to-come ([Ahmed: 2010, 46](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)). It is in this interstice, either blockaded or fluid, that Ahmed articulates the need for a politics of killing joy, of breaking down the promise of happiness as a regime that demands fidelity without recourse. For Ahmed, the discourse of happiness is performative: it produces a politics of promise (or nostalgia) that suffocates alternative promises and alternative explorations. Here Ahmed produces biographies of a range of "affect aliens," bodies that are called on to be silent and accept the happiness that has been promised, while their actual desires and hopes are out of joint with the world around them: feminist killjoys, unhappy queers, melancholic migrants. The promise of happiness, Ahmed suggests, must be interrupted to make room for emancipatory politics. "I am not saying that we have an obligation to be unhappy," she writes, "I am simply suggesting that we need to think about unhappiness as more than a feeling that should be overcome" ([Ahmed: 2010, 217](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)). In the closing passage of the book she writes that since "the desire for happiness can cover signs of its negation, a revolutionary politics has to work hard to stay proximate to unhappiness" ([Ahmed: 2010, 223](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)). Political change, Ahmed contends, is paralyzed by the imperative to be happy, to stay within the narrow guidelines of happiness's promise. Where Ahmed's background is in a western philosophical lineage that leads up to contemporary questions of affect, the immediate theoretical precursor of Lauren Berlant's Cruel Optimism is Kathleen Stewart's Ordinary Affects ([2007](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b12)), which develops the notion of the "ordinary" as a felt reality. "Ordinary affects," Stewart writes, "are the varied, surging capacities to affect and to be affected that give everyday life the quality of a continual motion of relations, scenes, contingencies, and emergences" ([Stewart: 2007, 1f](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b12)). Berlant is interested in particular in how the ordinary comes to take the form of a sort of affective impasse, a set of felt relationships that cannot be moved through. Cruel Optimism is a focused study of a particular category of impasse, what she calls "cruel optimism." Cruel optimism, she explains at the book's outset, refers to a relation that emerges "when something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing. It might involve food, or a kind of love; it might be a fantasy of the good life, or a political project" ([Berlant: 2011, 1](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). Berlant explores a range of situations where these attachments emerge, as a response to trauma or out of the ongoing pressures of the ordinary, in particular through the parameters of what she calls "genres of precarity," a range of aesthetic practices and styles—"mass media, literature, television, film, and video"—that ... emerge during the 1990s to register a shift in how the older state-liberal-capitalist fantasies shape adjustments to the structural pressures of crisis and loss that are wearing out the power of the good life's traditional fantasy bribe without wearing out the need for a good life ([Berlant: 2011, 7](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). Realism: texts always reflect an affective situation, a force field of desires, a labile contact zone between bodies and intersecting historical frames. Framing literary criticism (broadly construed) as a practice of tracing the connective tissue between bodies and situations is what lets Berlant speak to the political uses of affect. She suggests that affect theory is a "another phase in the history of ideology theory," that it "brings us back to the encounter of what is sensed with what is known and what has impact in a new but also recognizable way" ([Berlant: 2011, 53](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). Affect—especially ordinary affect—is the missing link between discursive regimes and bodies, the arterial linkages through which power is disseminated. "The present" is not an assemblage of texts and knowledges, bloodless discursive inscriptions on the body, but a felt sense out of which political circumstances emerge. "We understand nothing about impasses of the political," she writes, "without having an account of the production of the present" ([Berlant: 2011, 4](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). Cruel optimism as a byproduct of political situations colliding with bodies plays out in ongoing, semistable routines, in ordinariness. This focus on the ordinary frames Berlant's conception of the political as a slow-motion reaction rather than a series of staccato punctuations. This comes out, for instance, in her exhortation to move away from trauma theory as a way of "describing what happens to persons and populations as an effect of catastrophic impacts" ([Berlant: 2011, 9](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). Rather, Berlant suggests that trauma is only one facet of the ordinary, a precursory event that yields new historical trajectories lived out in slow-motion. "Trauma," she writes, ... forces its subjects not into mere stuckness but into crisis mode, where they develop some broad, enduring intuitions about the way we live in a now that's emerging without unfolding, and imagining a historicism from within a discontinuous present and ways of being that were never sovereign ([Berlant: 2011, 93](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). Rather than the instantiating event, Berlant is interested in the fallout of politics, the long-running reverberations. It is in these interwoven aftermaths following in the wake of bodies that Berlant locates the tropic of cruel optimism. Optimism, she is careful to point out, can "feel" any number of different ways, can come clothed in any number of affective orientations. "Because optimism is ambitious," she writes, "at any moment it might not feel like anything, including nothing: dread, anxiety, hunger, curiosity, the whole gamut from the sly neutrality of browsing the aisles to excitement at the prospect of 'the change that's gonna come'" ([Berlant: 2011, 2](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). Rather than a singularly identifiable feeling, optimism takes the phenomenological form of a "knotty tethering to objects, scenes, and modes of life that generate so much overwhelming yet sustaining negation" ([Berlant: 2011, 52](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). Optimism binds bodies to "fantasies of the good life," to horizons of possibility that may or may not be defeated by the conditions of their own emergence. Cruel optimism is the outcome of this circumstance of tethering confused by itself, of Möbius-strip cycles of ambition and frustration. The ordinary, precisely because of its complexity, can contain the intransigent contradictions of cruel optimism ([Berlant: 2011, 53](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). It is the space of the rubble, the hovering dust, the shockwaves that follow the event rather than the piercing clarity of the punctum itself. Berlant is interested in the ways that habits form out of situations of impossibility—for instance, in her reading of Gregg Bordowitz's documentary filmHabit (2001), about the body rituals that structure the daily lives of a gay man living with AIDS and his partner in New York City in the 1990s. Bordowitz's work maps a crisis that reflects Berlant's delineation of the field of the political: with the new availability of anti-retroviral drugs in the 1990s, AIDS ceased to be "a death sentence," and thus "turned fated life back into an ellipsis, a time marked by pill- and test-taking, and other things, the usual" ([Berlant: 2011, 58](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). For Berlant, the event is a rarity, and is only secondarily the zone of the political, which is itself constituted by ongoing patterns of response and desire—slow-motion echoes producing new forms as they cross-cut and interfere with one another ([Berlant: 2011, 6](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). In this sense, Berlant explains, her work meshes with Sedgwick's queer reading of affect as the histories that make us desire in unexpected, perverse ways. "The queer tendency of this method," Berlant writes, "is to put one's attachments back into play and into pleasure, into knowledge, into worlds. It is to admit that they matter" ([Berlant: 2011, 123](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). Berlant sees the terrain of the political emerging out of this tissue of affectively-embroidered histories. Although both Ahmed and Berlant write about the uses of affect as a phenomenological bridge to the political, and the slipperiness of happiness or the good life—the way that pleasure can be wrapped up with a strain of unease— there is a distinction between their respective scopes of inquiry. Where Ahmed's book is about frustration/promise/deferral, Berlant's is about addiction. When I asked my students to come up with examples of cruel optimism, they brainstormed the following list: heroin, abusive relationships, candy, horcruxes. Each of these instances suggests a vital but destructive need, an ambivalent compulsion—an addiction, where the tectonic plates of the body's affects shift in friction with one another. Cruel optimism indexes these moments where a body desires and needs an arrangement of the world that is also frustrating or corrosive. Politics is one of these zones of fractious attraction. Berlant writes, for instance, that Intensely political seasons spawn reveries of a different immediacy. People imagine alternative environments where authenticity trumps ideology, truths cannot be concealed, and communication feels intimate, face-to-face" ([Berlant: 2011, 223](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). Politics produces fantasies, tethers that draw us forward to particular attachments in the form of images, narratives, bodily practices. But these fantasies also contain the elements of their own frustration or refusal. President George W. Bush, for example, is able to use the affective elements of statecraft (a practice which, Berlant assures us, is decidedly non-partisan) to create a façade that diverts attention from his flailing foreign and economic policies ([Berlant: 2011, 226](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). Berlant's focus in Cruel Optimism is on politics as a field of attachments, a skein of affectively pulsing tissues linking bodies together. "Pace Žižek," she writes, ... the energy that generates this sustaining commitment to the work of undoing a world while making one requires fantasy to motor programs of action, to distort the present on behalf of what the present can become. It requires a surrealistic affectsphere to counter the one that already exists, enabling a confrontation with the fact that any action of making a claim on the present involves bruising processes of detachment from anchors in the world, along with optimistic projections of a world that is worth our attachment to it ([Berlant: 2011, 263](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b2)). Berlant looks at how politics pulls on bodies using the ligaments of affect, how politics becomes irresistible, even when it is self-frustrating. Ahmed's focus is very different: she is interested in thinking through politics as the space of unhappiness and deferment. In a section of Chapter 5 entitled "The Freedom to Be Unhappy," Ahmed writes that revolutionary practices may need to follow from the willingness to suspend happiness, to dissolve the imbricated promises of happiness that produce hermetically sealed political systems. Affect aliens are forged in the pressure of unfulfilled or unfulfillable promises of happiness, sealed in a relationship of anticipation pinned to the guarantee of ultimate good. Thus Ahmed writes that "any politics of justice will involve causing unhappiness even if that is not the point of our action. So much happiness is premised on, and promised by, the concealment of suffering, the freedom to look away from what compromises one's happiness" ([Ahmed: 2010, 196](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)). The revolutionary politics Ahmed wants to advance is willing to put happiness at risk, to dissolve promises of happiness. Ahmed is clear, though, that this is not to make politics about unhappiness: It is not that unhappiness becomes our telos: rather, if we no longer presume happiness is our telos, unhappiness would register as more than what gets in the way. When we are no longer sure of what gets in the way, then 'the way' itself becomes a question ([Ahmed: 2010, 195](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)). Neither happiness nor unhappiness is the telos of revolutionary politics. Rather, Ahmed wants to connect the political back to the "hap" of happiness. Rather than a critique of happiness, I would suggest that the broader channel of her project is best understood as a critique ofpromise. Thus she ends Chapter 5 with the later work of Jacques Derrida, indicating the need to keep politics open to the event, to the unexpected possibilities to-come. She proposes a vision of happiness that "would be alive to chance, to chance arrivals, to the perhaps of a happening" ([Ahmed: 2010, 198](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)). Where for Berlant the event is in the past, the ancestor of our tensed bodily habits today, for Ahmed, the event is ahead, the always-anticipated but radically unknown future. There is also a complementarity to these books, a sense in which both come at the relationship between affect and the political from different sides of the problem, but are nonetheless hurtling towards a common point of impact. Is Ahmed describing scenes where cruel optimism unravels under the internal pressure of a frustrated promise? Is cruel optimism the deferral of happiness implicit in the temporal structure of the promise? These are not fully resolved or resolvable questions, in part because Ahmed and Berlant roll their theoretical lens over such a wide range of circumstances. I would suggest that deepening the conversation between these approaches will hinge in part on exploring the relationship between affect and time—a question that is surfaced by both of these texts but not resolved. Ahmed wants to play inside the deconstructive thematics of the promise that allows us to view affect as a state of deferral. But Ahmed comes closest to Berlant when she writes that "[i]f we hope for happiness, then we might be happy as long as we can retain this hope (a happiness that paradoxically allows us to be happy with unhappiness)" ([Ahmed: 2010, 181](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)). Is deferred happiness really divided from happiness? What if fantasies—what Silvan Tomkins calls "images"[7](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#f7)—are so crucial to the production of affect that to save and savor fantasies in one's near sphere is "worth" their eventual frustration? What if a promise deferred is itself a form of happiness—even if the deferral turns out, in retrospect, to have been endless? What happens while we wait? This is in no way to acquiesce to those situations, sketched by Ahmed in the inner chapters of the book, where promises are made that produce affect aliens— investment in a community of promise that will never materialize as happiness. But it is to suggest that the economic flows of affect are more complex than a simple binary of presence/deferment. There may be a clearer divergence in Berlant and Ahmed's respective emphases on the felt temporality of politics. Ahmed suggests that political transformation happens by orienting us to the perhaps, towards an evental horizon constituted by uncertainty, rather than promise. Berlant seems more skeptical about the possibility of untethering ourselves from an orientation to future happiness. As in her response to Žižek, she emphasizes the intransigence of fantasy, especially as a conduit that can produce political energy. I wonder if Berlant's answer here points to a different way of resolving the problem of temporality hovering over Ahmed's work: what if the dissolution of promise did not leave us at the mercy of a pure politics of hap, of chance, but opened us up to new horizons of hope—neither guaranteed nor radically accidental? This dynamic interfaces with an equally provocative question lodged early on and left unresolved in Berlant's book: "I have indeed wondered," she writes in her Introduction, "whether all optimism is cruel, because the experience of loss of the conditions of its reproduction can be so breathtakingly bad, just as the threat of the loss of x in the scope of one's attachment drives can feel like a threat to living on itself" ([Berlant: 2011, 24](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509908#b1)). In mapping affectively mediated politics, how do we assess the cruelty of hope? What are the singular psychic costs of disappointment that must be risked or countenanced in the production of a politics without promise? These books are profoundly important contributions advancing the still-new and in some ways still-tentative field of affect theory. They open up two distinct but interrelated methodological templates for thinking through issues of globalization, race, gender and sexuality, media, philosophy, and religion: the thematics of frustration and of addiction in the moving affectsphere of the political. What both Ahmed and Berlant demonstrate is that affect theory offers a crucial set of resources for thinking through the relationship between bodies and discourses. The enterprise of thinking politics, of mapping the enfolding of bodies by power, cannot move forward without affect.

#### Outweighs – Even you win your framework, this outweighs because we cant cohere to that norm

# Contention

#### Thus the advocacy: I affirm resolved: A just government ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike. I am willing to clarify or specify anything in CX to avoid frivolous T debates. PICs don’t negate because general principles tolerate exceptions

#### 1) The recognition of the right to strike is a line of flight against capitalism and the employer. Strikes recognize the fluid nature of being and avoid the static nature of the worker.

Lim 19 [Woojin Lim Writer for the Harvard Crimson and Philosophy concentrator at Harvard, 12-11-2019“The Right to Strike” <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2019/12/11/lim-right-to-strike/>] AX

The right to strike is a [right](https://jacobinmag.com/2018/07/right-to-strike-freedom-civil-liberties-oppression) to resist oppression. The strike (and the credible threat of a strike) is an indispensable part of the collective bargaining procedure. Collective bargaining (or “agreement-making”) provides workers and employees with the opportunity to influence the establishment of workplace rules that govern a large portion of their lives. The concerted withdrawal of labor allows workers to promote and defend their unprotected economic and social interests from employers’ unilateral decisions, and provide employers with pressure and incentives to make reasonable concessions. Functionally, strikes provide workers with the bargaining power to drive fair and meaningful negotiations, offsetting the inherent inequalities of bargaining power in the employer-employee relationship. The right to strike is essential in preserving and winning rights. Any curtailment of this right involves the risk of weakening the very basis of collective bargaining. Strikes are not only a means of demanding and achieving an adequate provision of basic liberties but also are themselves intrinsic, self-determined expressions of freedom and human rights. The exercise of the power to strike affirms a quintessential corpus of values akin to liberal democracies, notably those of dignity, liberty, and autonomy. In acts of collective defiance, strikers assert their freedoms of speech, association, and assembly. Acts of striking, marching, and picketing command the attention of the media and prompt public forums of discussion and dialogue.

#### 2) The right to strike is key to embracing new relations. The right to strike causes community building that forms new relations that break past the binary of worker and employer

Green 19 [Ken Green, 10-29-2019“How Unions Build Strength Through Community Engagement” <https://www.uniontrack.com/blog/community-engagement>] AX

Now, maybe more than ever before, labor unions need all the support they can get to defend themselves and build up memberships. The current political climate has been devastating for workers’ rights. Anti-union legislation like [right-to-work laws](https://www.uniontrack.com/blog/right-to-work-states), blows to [collective bargaining](https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/crime-and-courts/2019/05/17/collective-bargaining-iowa-legislature-afscme-61-kim-reynolds-supreme-court-unions/3705134002/) and the [spread of misinformation](https://www.uniontrack.com/blog/fight-back-against-fake-news) about unions is making it extremely difficult for unions to do what they are built to do — advocate for and bargain on behalf of workers. To combat the onslaught of anti-unionism and take the labor movement into the future, labor leaders are searching for ways to build up support from advocates and allies. One grassroots strategy they are focusing on is engaging their local communities. “We must engage our communities and all their diversity,” says [Kenneth Rigmaiden](https://www.iupat.org/news/community-building-for-a-bold-future/), general president of the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT). Why is a high level of engagement with local communities so important to labor unions? Because when unions and communities work together, good things happen.Unions need communities to enhance their memberships and support their endeavors. As the [International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers’](http://www.ibew.org/Civic-and-Community-Engagement) (IBEW) Civic and Community Engagement Department emphasizes, community engagement is the cornerstone of improving the union’s standing in local neighborhoods. The public, in turn, needs unions to boost working and economic conditions in their communities. To help foster this relationship, unions must reach out and build a presence in local communities. American Federation of Teachers (AFT) President [Randi Weingarten](https://www.aft.org/american-labor-movement-crossroads) stresses that unions can no longer focus solely on themselves or the four walls of the workplace to improve wages and working conditions. She emphasizes the need for unions to build power through community partnerships, saying “Community must become the new ‘density’ of American unionism.” That’s because “communities are the lifeblood of movements,” writes [Douglas Williams](https://thesouthlawn.org/2013/05/18/one-big-union-why-community-engagement-is-needed-for-labor-victories-in-the-south/), a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Alabama who researches the labor movement and labor policy. Communities can elect the pro-labor candidates to community leadership positions. Communities can rally around striking workers when they stand in solidarity on a picket line. As such, engaging community advocates should be a primary focus of labor leaders in their efforts to build union strength, Williams says. On the other side of the equation, community members have an interest in a union’s accomplishments. Communities need unions to improve economic conditions by boosting workers’ wages and benefits through collective bargaining. Stronger unions means stronger communities. When unions secure wins for their members, they also make gains for nonunion workers in the community. “Union members are stewards of the public good, empowering the individual through collective action and solidarity,” explains [Andy Stern](https://www.amacad.org/sites/default/files/daedalus/downloads/13_spring_daedalus_Articles.pdf), president emeritus of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). “Being a member of a union has greater implications than working for oneself, or one’s workplace, to gain benefits for yourselves,” says the [Independent Education Union of Australia (IEU) WA Branch](https://ieuwa.org.au/community-engagement/). “Being ‘union’ also means extending the idea of fairness and solidarity to the community.” By engaging the community, unions can demonstrate how their efforts benefit everyone, not just union members. That concept is the underlying reason why the recent teacher strikes were so successful. The Teacher Strikes Were a Case Study in Community Engagement Before teachers in West Virginia started their statewide strike in 2018, they reached out to community stakeholders to explain their actions, garner support, solicit advice, and plan for potential hardships to teachers and students. “The teachers felt that it was time to meet with parents and community residents to ask how public schools could better serve West Virginia’s children,” writes [Eleanor J. Bader](https://truthout.org/articles/unions-forge-partnerships-with-communities-for-the-common-good/), an English teacher at Kingsborough Community College in Brooklyn, New York. Those efforts resulted in individuals and businesses in the community preparing packed lunches for the kids during the strike and organizing groups to provide child care for working families, who needed somewhere for their kids to go during the day. The teachers also took advantage of the power of social media to engage the public by communicating their messages and the progress of their strikes. “Educators communicating online played a key role in forming grassroots groups that are storming statehouses and holding demonstrations,” writes AP reporter [Melissa Daniels](https://www.wvpublic.org/post/teachers-use-social-media-us-uprisings-fight-funding#stream/0). That constant flow of information kept the public connected to the mission of the teacher strikes. This community-based approach to the strikes helped earn the teachers the support they needed to withstand nine days of organized action. Community engagement bought the teachers the time they needed to secure key victories. It was a strategy that carried across to strikes in other states over the last couple of years.

#### 3) Only by reframing the question to the potentiality of the strike as a space of knowledge production can we hope to destabilize systems of power and imperialism.

Azoulay 19 (Ariella Aisha Azoulay, Imagine Going on Strike: Museum Workers and Historians, November 2019, Issue #104, <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/104/299944/imagine-going-on-strike-museum-workers-and-historians/>) Recut AX

In contrast to liberal and social democratic arguments, Alex Gourevitch proposes a radical view of the right to strike. The right to strike, he claims, is derived from the right to resist oppression. In the case of strikes, he argues, oppression “is partly a product of the legal protection of basic economic liberties, which explains why the right to strike has priority over these liberties.” However, conceiving of a strike as the last but not the least right of the oppressed against their oppressors doesn’t exhaust the potential of the right to strike. Alongside this radical conception of strike, and by no means as its replacement, I propose to consider the strike not in terms of the right to protest against oppression, but rather as an opportunity to care for the shared world, including through questioning one’s privileges, withdrawing from them, and using them. For that purpose, one’s professional work in each and every domain—even in domains as varied as art, architecture, or medicine—cannot be conceived for itself and unfolded as a progressive history, nor as a distinct productive activity to be assessed by its outcomes, but rather as a worldly activity, a mode of engaging with the world that seeks to impact it while being ready to be impacted in return. In other words, if one’s work is conceived as a form of being-in-the-world, work stoppage cannot be conceived only in terms of the goals of the protest. One should consider the strike a modality of being in the world that takes place precisely by way of renunciation and avoidance, when one’s work is perceived as harming the shared world and the condition of sharing it. In a world conditioned by imperial power, a collective strike is an opportunity to unlearn imperialism with and among others even though it has been naturalized into one’s professional life. Going on strike is to claim one’s right not to engage with destructive practices, not to be an oppressor and perpetrator, not to act according to norms and protocols whose goals were defined to reproduce imperial and racial capitalist structures. To strike in this context is to consider one’s expertise-related privileges, which are at the same time part of one’s skills, and use them to generate a collective disruption of existing systems of knowledge and action that are predicated on the triple imperial principle. Imagine artists, photographers, curators, art scholars, newspaper editors, museumgoers, or art connoisseurs going on strike and refusing to pursue their work because the field of art sustains the imperial condition and participates in its reproduction.

#### 4) The right to strike represents a key line of flight within capitalism – a means of ‘becoming minoritarian’ which can break free from institutionalized modes of being.

**T.C. ’17:** “The Human Strike and the Politics of Escape”. The Tragic Community. March 28th, 2017. https://thetragiccommunity.wordpress.com/2017/03/28/the-human-strike-and-the-politics-of-escape/.

The Human Strike, we can say, is a kind of strike that begins by posing the problem of the abolition of capital in the following terms: How can strikes been utilized outside of the employer-employee relation (e.g. in the context of migrant-life, the lives of racialized and gendered subjects, and so on)? While strikes have historically taken the form of the general or mass strike, which wages its struggle at the point of production (workplace/factory), the Human Strike takes place at any and all points of social reproduction (home, school, relations amongst friends, cultural platforms, media, neighbourhood in terms of rent strikes, etc.). As Tiqqun write The general strike meant that exploitation was limited in time and space, that alienation was partial, due to a recognizable enemy, and thus beatable. Human strike replies to an age in which the limits between work and life are fading away […] Empire is when the means of production have become means of control at the very same time that the opposite revealed itself to be the case. Empire means that in all things the political moment dominates the economic one. A general strike is helpless against this. What must be opposed to Empire is a human strike. Which never attacks relations of production without attacking at the same time the affective knots which sustain them…the human strike is that strike which PREFERS NOT TO. That slips away from the assemblage. That saturates it or explodes it. Pulls itself together, preferring something else. Something else that does not belong to the authorized possibilities of the assemblage. (“Comment Faire”, Tiqqun 2, Zone d’opacité offensive) Now, despite the differences between the general strike and the human strike, what allows Fontaine to categorize the human strike as a strike nonetheless is the fact that the actions of the general and Human strike share something essential in common: both seek to withhold a service, to subtract one’s participation in a process that perpetuates exploitation and alienation, as a means of instituting a rupture so polarizing that one would find themselves in a situation where only two possible positions exist: to either be for or against the human strike. Or in the language of Dark Deleuze, to either be for or against bringing about an end to this world. So if it’s with the Human Strike that we approach an adequate vision of Dark Deleuze’s politics of escape, how does this escape relate back to Andrew’s image of Deleuze as an anti-state communist? That is, what concept or term from the Deleuzian corpus could we point to as belonging to Andrew’s, Fontaine’s, and Tiqqun’s wager on a total and collective withdrawal from the demands of the social? It is my claim that it is with the concept of becoming-minoritarian as formulated in A Thousand Plateaus that best captures what is at stake in Dark Deleuze‘s politics of escape. Importantly, to engage in a becoming-minoritarian is not the same type of collective action found in a ‘molecular revolution. For Andrew, the truth of Tiqqun’s claim that ‘the revolution was molecular, and so was the counter-revolution’ still holds for our present moment. However, ‘becoming-minoritarian’ is the concept adequate to this politics of escape not simply because D&G claim that ‘Becoming-minoritarian as the universal figure of consciousness is called autonomy’ (ATP, 106). More importantly, a becoming-minoritarian is a form of collective subjectivity that has the potential to effectuate a rupture that institutes a polarized situation between itself and the world. This rupture that only offers one the option of being for or against this world; is this not what D&G mean when they write the following: It is always astounding to see the same story repeated: the modesty of minorities’ initial demands, coupled with the impotence of the axiomatic to resolve the slightest corresponding problem. In short, the struggle around axioms is most important when it manifests, itself opens, the gap between two types of propositions, propositions of flows and propositions of axioms. The power of minorities is not measured by their capacity to enter and make themselves felt within the majority system…but to bring to bear the force of the non-denumerable sets…against the denumerable sets (ATP, 471). Thus, becoming-minoritarian, plotting an escape from the world that effects a situation where one is always a partisan to something – whether that something is minoritarian struggles or being complicit in the capitalist-state; it is in this way that our withdrawal from the demands of the social has the potential to effect a qualitative break with the world. It is also in this way that Dark Deleuze, following Fontaine, poses the question of how best to strike given the present conjuncture in terms of struggles that concerns the whole of life and not simply the portion of life defined by our labour-time. And this is one of the ways we can understand that Dark Deleuze’s politics of escape is geared toward world destruction, since Andrew’s interpretation begins from the admission that, today, we find ourselves in situations where we are no longer able to distinguish between life and work; between labour-time and leisure-time; between alienation and the freedom from having to be a subject.

#### 5) The state is not inherently bad – we can use it as a set of tools to accomplish different desires – to try and ignore or destroy the state is merely defensive and does not accomplish anything

Guattari 86

[Felix Guattari and Suely Rolnik, schitzoanalysts and revolutionaries, 1986, “Molecular Revolution in Brazil, p.120-121 Accessed 9/17/21 <https://monoskop.org/images/1/10/Guattari_Felix_Rolnik_Suely_Molecular_Revolution_in_Brazil_2008.pdf>] AX

Comment: It's good that you mentioned those homosexuals who worked within the system as lawyers and succeeded in shaking it up. Here, everyone looks down on the institutional part.¶ Guattari: That's silly.¶ **Comment:** They think that dealing with the institutional side is reformism**, that it** doesn't change anything**. As far as they're concerned,** the institutions should be ignored because only one kind of thing is worthwhile**, anarchism—which I question deeply.** I think it's very naive, as you yourself say, to ignore the state on the basis that "it's useless," or "it oppresses us," and therefore to leave it aside and try to do something totally from outside, as though it might be possible for us to destroy it like that.¶ Suely Rolnik: This malaise in relation to institutions is nothing new; on the contrary, the feeling is particularly strong in our generation which, since the 1960s, has taken institutions as one of its main targets. But it's true that the malaise has been especially pronounced in Brazil over the last few years, and in my view this must have to do with an absolutely objective (and obvious) fact, which is the hardness of the dictatorship to which we were subjected for so long. The rigidity of that regime is embodied in all the country's institutions, in one way or another; in fact, that constituted an important factor for the permanence of the dictatorship in power over so many years.¶ But I think that this antiinstitutional malaise, whatever its cause, doesn't end there: the feeling that the institutions are contaminated territories, and the conclusion that nothing should be invested in them, is often the expression of a defensive role. This kind of sensation is, in my view, the flip side of the fascination with the institution that characterizes the "bureaucratic libido." These two attitudes really satisfy the same need, which is to use the prevailing forms, the instituted, as the sole, exclusive parameter in the organization of oneself and of relations with the other, and thus avoid succumbing to the danger of collapse that might be brought about by any kind of change. Those are two styles of symbiosis with the institution: either "gluey" adhesion and identification (those who adopt this style base their identity on the "instituted"), or else repulsion and counteridentification (those who adopt this style base their identity on negation of the "instituted," as if there were something "outside" the institutions, a supposed "alternative" space to this world).¶ Seen in this light, both "alternativism" and "bureaucratism" restrict themselves to approaching the world from the viewpoint of its forms and representations, from a molar viewpoint; they protect themselves against accessing the molecular plane, where new sensations are being produced and composed and ultimately force the creation of new forms of reality,. They both reflect a blockage of instituting power, an impossibility of surrender to the processes of singularization, a need for conservation of the prevailing forms, a difficulty in gaining access to the molecular plane, where the new is engendered. It's more difficult, to perceive this in the case of "alternativism," because it involves the hallucination of a supposedly parallel world that ¶ emanates the illusion of unfettered autonomy and freedom of creation; and just when we think we've got away from "squareness" we risk succumbing to it again, in a more disguised form. In this respect, I agree with you: the institutions aren't going to be changed by pretending that they don't exist. Nonetheless, it's necessary to add two reserves. In the first place, it's obvious that not every social experimentation qualified by the name of "alternative" is marked by this defensive hallucination of a parallel world. And secondly, x it's self-evident that in order to bear the harshness of an authoritarian regime there is a tendency to make believe that itdoesn't exist, so as not to have to enter into contact with sensations of frustration and powerlessness that go beyond the limit of tolerability (indeed, this is a general reaction before any traumatic experience). And in order to survive, people try in so far as possible to create other territories of life, which are often clandestine.

# Underview

**Case outweighs theory. 3 reasons.**

**1. Theory replicates statist repression of difference by expecting debaters to follow certain norms. We shouldn’t duplicate statist practices in autonomous spaces, that’s Robinson 13.**

**2. The framework cards prove “fairness” and “education” have no transcendent meaning.**

**3. The debate round’s intrinsic purpose is to function as a war machine—theory provides restrictions that replicate state power structures.**