# 1AC

#### Space policy is a pretext for installing a universal security system of planetary control whose aim is the annihilation of all global stakes – the 1AC is the satellization of the planet, a subordination of nation-states, the market, and space itself to the consensual conspiracy of ubiquitous surveillance – their conflict scenarios cling to the illusion of war-as-fighting and thus conceal that the total liquidation of Otherness is the objective for all parties in the space race

Dickens and Ormrod 16 (Peter Dickens, Senior Research Associate in the Department of Sociology at the University of Cambridge, member of the Red-Green Study Group in London, James S Ormrod, Principal Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Brighton, 2016, “Introduction: The Production of Outer Space” in *The Palgrave Handbook of Society, Culture and Outer Space*, pp 5-6, footnote 4 included in curly braces) gz

An argument can be made that ‘the space race’ – as a material technological project, as a discourse about the conquest of space, and as an imagined competition – clung on to the older conceptions of space that were being abandoned in so many other areas of social life (while, it should be noted, embracing some of the developments Kern identifies). The space race was historicized and spatialized by its protagonists, by academics, and by the public, in largely consensual terms on both sides of the iron curtain (‘consensual’ in the sense that all agreed on how the race was to be understood). Indeed, for Baudrillard (1994), this was one of the keys to understanding the space race. Its aim was not to put a man on the Moon. The Moon landings functioned as models of rational, calculated control, in relation to which all earthly activity was to become oriented. As in nuclear proliferation,4 ‘[t]heir truth is to be models of simulation, the model vectors of a system of planetary control (where even the superpowers of this scenario are not free – the whole world is satellized)’ (1994, p. 35). Viewed in this way, the space race was a conspiracy, albeit one that nobody had charge of.

{4. Baudrillard believed the space race played the same role as the Cold War arms race that preceded it. In his understanding, nuclear deterrence was not aimed at containing a real threat from the other side, just as the aim of the space race was not to put a man on the Moon. Rather, the former represented a pretext ‘for installing a universal security system whose deterrent effect is not at all aimed at an atomic clash … but, rather, at the much greater probability of any real event, of anything that would be an event in the general system and upset its balance’ (p.33). Baudrillard sees the Cold War and space race as taking place in the cause of rationalization of the world and the exclusion of pre-modern forms: ‘[B]ehind this simulacrum of fighting to the death and of ruthless global stakes, the two adversaries are fundamentally in solidarity against something else, unnamed, never spoken, but whose objective outcome in war, with the equal complicity of the two adversaries, is total liquidation. Tribal, communitarian, precapitalist structures, every form of exchange, of language, of symbolic organization, that is what must be abolished, that is the object of murder in war – and war itself, in its immense, spectacular death apparatus, is nothing but the medium of this process of the terrorist rationalization of the social – The murder on which sociality will be founded, whatever its allegiance, Communist or capitalist’ (p.37)}

Because of this conspiracy, there now exists a standard account of the space race, and of the history of the American space programme. Histories of the Soviet programme are still being produced (see, for example, Siddiqi, 2010), but these do not necessarily challenge this standard account. A very condensed account runs as follow. Wernher von Braun, the Nazi rocket scientist, had been taken back to the United States in 1945 as part of Operation Paperclip, to later use what he had learnt working on the V-2 in the services of the American space programme. The launch of Sputnik in 1957 by the Soviet Union had shocked the United States. Eisenhower had then created NASA in 1958, and Kennedy had announced the decision to send a human to the Moon in 1962 in the wake of the embarrassment of the Bay of Pigs invasion. The United States had beaten the Soviet Union to the Moon by 1969.5

Kennedy (1962) had attempted to assert that the reasons for conquering space were noble and involved ‘new knowledge to be gained and new rights to be won … for the progress of all people’. However, he also made it clear that it was crucial for America to secure these victories. It was meant to be understood that the space race was intimately connected with the Cold War, although academics disagreed about exactly how (see Dickens & Ormrod, 2007b). The space race was nonetheless about the extension of the space of the nation state, whether this was physical space or the space of national prestige. It was also well understood that the space race, civilian and military, had to do with the proper or improper ‘meshing’ of the spaces of government, business and politics (see Chapter 3 by Wills, this volume). The existence of a military-industrial complex of some kind is widely accepted, even if historians and social scientists have been left arguing about which interests were the most significant (see, for example, Baran & Sweezy, 1966).

**Modern peace is reactive nihilism, a will to total utility that characterizes the life-denying fascism of the dilemma of space policy: to influence or retreat: the will to sublimate violence, contain it within the state, is a repressive move that guarantees ever increasing cycles of violence, vote aff to let the order bleed, let there be excess**

**Hamblet 2005**

Wendy, Pvh.D. Department of Philosophy, Adelphi University “The Manic Ecstasy of War.” Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice, 17:39–45

Eli Sagan’s At the Dawn of Tyranny posits the advent of civilization as coincidental with the dawn of tyranny and oppression. War, one of the oldest human institutions, has proven invaluable to states in establishing their power over subgroups within the system, as well as in acquiring territories from neighboring peoples to permit their expansion in space and power. Because of war’s great functionality to the state, there remains little mystery to the long-term success of war as a state institution over the formative millennia of civilization. The continuing popularity of war among modern states ostensibly dedicated to democracy, freedom, and the dignity of human beings, remains baffling to violence scholars. Karl von Clausewitz’s On War, considered by many scholars to be the canonical treatment of the war philosophy, attributes to war a logic all its own: war composes a compulsion, a dynamic that aims at excessive overflow, absolute expenditure of the energies of the state. War seeks absolutization as it feeds and fires the population’s martial enthusiasm; if unchecked by political goals, war will fulfill itself in the maximum exertion of self-expenditure—self-annihilation. War composes a potlatch of state resources, a useless splurge of the nation’s human and economic wealth for no better reason than wanton celebration of state power. The language of absolute expenditure resonates with the philosophy of Georges Bataille. His philosophy explains two principles of expenditure— the principle of classical utility defined by utilitarian goals serving current power relations, and that of nonproductive expenditure—that is, orgiastic outflow or ek-stasis that escapes mundane servitude to reason and utility. Political implications of the two economies are exposed in Bataille’s “Propositions on Fascism.” There, the two dialectical opposites represent extreme possibilities for the state structures. The first model aspires to perfect order, like the timeless realm of the gods, a frozen homogeneous perfection that is monocephalic (single-headed). Like the god, the monocephalic state becomes self-identified as a sacred entity—changeless, eternal, and perfect, its laws and customs fixed and imperative. At the other end of the structural spectrum resides the second form of state—the acephalic state—disordered, anarchic, and volatile. This state is seen by ordered states as a terrifying, heterogeneous primitive lifeform where uncivilized tribes practice mystical thinking, incommensurable truths, and mad affective experience. Unreasonable. Useless. Mad. People within the acephalic social structure enjoy abundant ritual lives that offer escape from the mundane in orgiastic festivals involving drunkenness, dancing, blood rites, wanton tortures, self-mutilation, and even murder in the name of dark monster gods. The monocephalic state, on the other hand, has overcome all death. The civilized state boasts an enlightened stable form that promotes reason, life, and progress, whereas the primitive society is referred to chaos, madness, and death. Bataille’s dichotomy provides a valuable framework for analyzing global realities, even in the modern world. Because Bataille insists the models represent dual extreme possibilities in the cyclical evolution of all states, then all states seek timeless stability, secured against time with absolute truth claims, infallible social codes, and enduring legislation. States are duly secured by the legalized violence of police and military that appropriate the illegal violence of the people and ultimately suppress all transformation. Intricate unyielding systems of rules and regulations—passports, licenses, identity cards, forms completed in triplicate, travel restrictions, immigration regulations, police interrogations, surveillance of social and financial transactions among subgroups, security checkpoints, departments of homeland security—weed out the deviant lifeforms until ultimately all countervoices have been silenced, all rebellion quite obliterated, all evolutionary movement logically contradictory. But, at this evolutionary apex, a problem arises in paradise. As the monocephalic state increasingly closes itself off, it stifles social existence, smothers creative energies, chokes the passion from its citizen-devotees, suffocates their spiritual urges, and reduces all sacrifices to mundane utility. When the perfect eternality of the structure is complete and the nation duly deified, all labors have become co-opted in utter servitude. Bataille names this culminating stage of development, the peaceful, stable end sought by all states, in its most excessive extrapolation—fascism. Ultimately, however, life and time must break free and move forward into futures. This most solid state holds firm for a short while only; then there begins a condensation of forces. Life rises up and explodes the suffocating stasis, disintegrating the solid, erect whole. Existence and liberty flow forth in rage, blood, tears, and passion. The death of God is complete. For Bataille, these endless cycles describe the movement of history: the erection of unitary gods of knowledge and power that ultimately ossify into totalities, and then explode in hysterical, raging catastrophes, releasing the explosive liberty of life from mundane servitude. The acephalic chaos will eventually recompose, slowly heaving up an ugly divine head once again. Life turns back on its chaotic freedom and develops what Bataille calls an aversion to the initial decomposition. The chaotic structure moves from the ek-stasis bliss of wanton pleasures and pains toward the stasis of the deity once again. Time, states, and human individuals, for Bataille, move between the two contradictory forms: stasis and ek-stasis. Time demands both forms in the world—the eternal return of an imperative object, and the explosive, creative, destructive rage of the liberty of life. Bataille’s analysis of state evolution offers resolution to the mystery of the frequency of wars in the modern civilized era: It suggests that war composes a “potlatch”—a manic ecstasy of useless self-expenditure that permits a breakout from mundane servitude. We may not readily recognize, in our states, the extreme forms that Bataille describes—fascist stasis or chaotic ecstasy. We believe that, although chaos is unquestionably undesirable, fascism is promoted only by madmen—Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin**. We may be convinced that fascist urges fade with global democracy where all people will, eventually, know the order and security of the first world**. Modern Western states, we may object, compose a golden mean between Bataille’s two economies, aspiring neither to fascism nor to a manic primitivism, but to the reasonable metron of golden rules. **But the roots of the West**ern **world are well planted in the fascist drive for hyper-order and changeless eternality**. Hesiod and the PreSocratics, as much as Jewish and Christian myth, cite a common arche of the universe in the good works of a god that renders order (cosmos) out of chaos (kaos). For the ancients, one head (cephalus) is far superior to many; simplicity is beauty, whereas the many compose hoi poloi, an embarrassment of riches. **The foundational logic that posits monocephalic order as ontologically and morally superior to acephalic multivocity remains an unquestioned assumption embedded in the Western lifeworld**. A single well-ordered edifice, stretching high into the sky—erect, rigid, unyielding—is preferable, in the Western mind, to the broadest playing field studded with incongruous heroics. **Bataille’s meditations on the dark underside of reason’s projects and triumphs, on such prohibited subjects as monstrous tortures, illicit sexual excesses, and the colorful anuses of apes, provide a theater of cruelty and death that is designed to challenge the polite threshold of civilized culture, to shock and interrupt the philosophical tradition it invades, and to subvert the pretenses of refined sophistication thought definitive of civilized society. Bataille shows that people are torn by conflicting drives, by lofty ideals, and by the dark concealed forces they suppress and deny.** Lorenz states that Bataille’s treatment of the dark, concealed urges in human nature offer resolution to the paradox of the simultaneous lofty goals of modern states and the frequency of **brutal aggressions** by those very states naming themselves the most civilized. Perhaps **the popularity and frequency of war even in the civilized modern era represents the release of suppressed subterranean drives within industrialized, rationalist, rigidly hierarchically ordered populations enslaved to reason and utility. The violence that floods the globe in modernity, that claims to be serving reasonable projects of global freedom and democracy, may represent new forms expressing old desires, the projects of monocephalic statehood aspiring to deification.** Bataille recognizes chthonic forces as instrumental in the modern world: “The economic history of modern times is dominated by the epic but disappointing effort of fierce men to plunder the riches of the Earth [and turn its fire and metal into weapons] ... . [M]an [lives] an existence at the mercy of the merchandise he produces, the largest part of which is devoted to death.” The fierce men of modernity—gods, kings, and their modern sequels (presidents, popes, corporate rulers)—extend their control to the ends of the planet. **Fierce men disembowel the Earth and turn on their own kind the products of molten metal torn from her bowels to ensure the permanence of their nations.** **War**, states Bataille, “**represents the desperate obstinacy of man opposing the exuberant power of time and finding security in an immobile and almost somnolent erection**.” Bataille believes that primitive urges are still at work in the projects of modernity. Human beings, as much as superstructures of power, must satisfy their dark urges for the good of their communities. **They must release their death drives if they are to gather together in heartfelt communities**. Human beings crave **mystical, passionate,** frenzied escape from **the rigorous projects of their ordered systems.** If Bataille is correct, people must ultimately break free from the mundane enterprises of their everyday lives. Their inner demons will beckon them from their ordered worlds to revel in orgiastic festival. Surely Bataille’s claim—that life’s erotic drives will out and fulfill themselves in deathly destructiveness and wanton joy—should trouble us greatly, given the leveling effects of modern industrial society, its will to mediocrity, utility, and conformity. But is Bataille correct in his attribution of a measureless and rending character to modern war? Is modern warfare the aimless catastrophe that Bataille claims it to be? If so, then **modern wars can be explained**, according to Bataille, **as ecstatic release from th**e fascist orientation of modern ordered states and from people’s imprisonment within the merchandise they produce. Modern war, with its Shock and Awe techno-theatrics, should provide a wondrous release from mundane servitude. 42 WENDY C. HAMBLET War could be said to satisfy collective fantasies of manic omnipotence and the drive for self-sacrifice for sacred values. Perhaps the wars of modernity occur with such rabid frequency because people must satisfy their suppressed lust for a sexualized release from the cold reality of state projects, the utilitarian reasons of state. This resonates with Clausewitz’s claim that people’s martial enthusiasm must find release in politically restrained wars or fulfill itself in the maximum exertion of self-expenditure, that is, self-annihilation. For Clausewitz, modernity represents that unfettered stage when war has escaped all political bounds and reasonable restraint. Although ostensibly a world driven by the lofty goals, modernity—for Clausewitz—composes an era of absolute war. The democratic revolution may have embraced other goals—citizen welfare and the grandeur of their rulers—but democracy, for Clausewitz, composes merely one of a number of crucial forces (the scientific revolution that provides the technology, the industrial revolution that provides mass production of weaponry, and the imperialism that draws the entire globe into the war system) that have been successfully harnessed to the powerprojects of the mightiest nations. The goods of the modern West, including the good of democracy, exist to extend Western hegemony globally in the marketplace of military power. But Bataille claims that war is useless expenditure—a release of the primal urges of a community toward excessive overflow. He states: “Military existence is based on a brutal negation of any profound meaning of death and, if it uses cadavers, it is only to make the living march in a straighter line.” But, if war is to be posited as an ecstatic release, it must compose orgiastic overflow, an entirely useless and pointless expenditure of the nation’s finest goods. Excessive expenditure is defeated the moment the violent explosion of forces serves mundane projects of servitude and utility. When war serves the purposes of the state, it loses its manic and ecstatic character and ceases to fulfill the people’s deepest needs for release from servitude and instrumentality. But Bataille is mistaken; the apparent uselessness of modern warfare is a deception, an illusion. War is one of the oldest traditions of our species. It has become a timeworn vehicle precisely because it serves a great many functions in states. Clausewitz names the institution of war a form of communication between nations. Franco Fornari states: “War is a multifunctional institution. ... It is extremely difficult to find a substitute that would perform all of its functions.” One of the most crucial functions that war provides in service of the state is the crystallization of its monopoly on violence. War is a crucial aspect of the centralizing, evolutionary process that culminates, ultimately, in fascist stability. The establishment of a massive and robust military is THE MANIC ECSTASY OF WAR 43 utterly necessary to the deification of the structure and the raising of a sturdy cephalus, because, along with the creation of strong policing and military forces, war serves to alienate the private violence of the citizens and place their collective aggressive energies into the hands of the cephalus. War serves the collective illusion of eternality. War serves other crucial functions in the state: it confirms the values, virtues, and meanings of one’s own cultural group. Sacred symbols—flags, national anthems, tales of past heroes, fallen ancestors—are put to work in luring the best of the nation—its strong and courageous youths—to the extreme patriotism required to maintain order in fascist regimes. The seduction of the nation’s best to its wars includes their provision of an international stage to display the collective prowess of the nation, a point of pride for all citizens, even the most oppressed of the society, and it allows for the individual display of the soldiers’ manly character—the valor, the selflessness, the loyalty. The wars of modern super-states continue in the tradition of imperialist projects of old. Posited as serving the most selfless values—the advancement of freedom, democracy, and the spread of civilization—**today’s wars clearly bring too massive a booty to be named selfless expenditures**. In fact, **for the past fifty years, wars have increasingly become shameless lootings of helpless peoples—the projects of economists and accountants and big businessmen purified by political propaganda and backed by an arsenal of modern techno-weaponry.** War serves the needs of the cephalus; it serves the personal narcissism of the leaders, and the collective narcissism of the combatants and civilians.Above all, **modern wars serve economic goals; their booty is prodigious.** They may cost the sacred love-object (the nation) massive capital, human and monetary, but the generals, the political leaders, and their corporate cronies profit handsomely from the hostilities. **War also serves the fantasy that the sacred love-object (the nation) is the savior and benefactor of the globe; war serves the paranoid collective delusion that the cephalus is infallible and indestructible, unlimited as the god in its strength and in its moral** substance. Killing the enemies, propagandized as evil, the collective illusion is fed that evil is overthrown: thus the sanctity of the loveobject is preserved. **Sacred values are recomposed; the cephalus stand**s **taller, more erect, more firm than ever in the wake of a good war**. But for all the benefits served by the institution of war, **modern wars are deeply tragic; they do waste millions of innocent lives; they tear apart societies and disburse homeless families across the globe. One in nine of the earth’s seven billion now lives a miserable, wandering, hopeless existence on parched lands where even the earth mother is barren**. 44 WENDY C. HAMBLET **Ultimately the greatest tragedy of modern war lies in its stark utility to the few at the extreme expenditure of its many. The utility of war defeats the purposes of war by frustrating the deepest needs of the society—the people’s need to build heartfelt communities, a need that can only be served by expressing the collective aggressive energies of the society beyond utility.** Bataille states that: “Since [war] is essentially constituted by armed force, it can give to those who submit to its force of attraction nothing that satisfies the great human hungers, because it subordinates **everything to a particular utility** ... it must force its half-seduced lovers to enter the inhuman and totally alienated world of barracks, military prisons, and military administrations.” In fact, **it may well be the non-release of ecstatic urges that explains a state’s return, year after year and decade after decade, to that old institution**. It may be that **the deepest paradox of modern war is that, in its usefulness to the cephalus and in its service to the fascist drives of the state, war proves utterly useless in dispensing its most fundamental function; it ceases to discharge the most vicious and cruel needs of the people, their deepest primitive motivations, whose collective release makes possible the formation of a heartfelt community**. Bataille counts this failure as the most tragic of the multiple tragedies of modern war. **The sacred values of community—life, freedom, festival, and the joy of communal fraternity—are rendered meaningful only in juxtaposition to their opposites.** Bataille states: **“The emotional element that gives an obsessive value to communal life is death.”** But, ultimately, insists Bataille, the sacrifice will be celebrated beyond the reasonable purposes of the cephalus. If Bataille is correct, then **we can be certain that, for those states whose wars are utterly utilitarian, self-annihilation is imminent.**

#### In response, the affirmative refuses to cohere the impossible existence to begin with –– a dwelling within negative affect and a refusal of interpellation and consumption within the sphere of capital, one that offers a symbolic counter-gift of negative affect to the system – its the only radical act left.

Liu 17 [Wen Liu, "Cruising Borders, Unsettling Identities: Toward a Queer Diasporic Asian America", 2017, http://academicworks.cuny.edu/gc\_etds/2017]

However, these losses documented in the psychological framework are only quantifiable when the queer space and racial space are considered mutually exclusive and inherently incompatible in the first place. By reading this racialized queer grief through the concept of melancholia, can we consider these losses and permanent attachments to both spaces as a form of CRUISING BORDERS UNSETTLING IDENTITIES 123 protest against the splitting of identity? That is, what if to grieve is a psychic and social process of rejecting being reduced to a singular space of belonging? Instead of regarding the negative affects of melancholia and grief as quantifiable damages or inconsolable wounds, it may be more productive to read melancholia as a refusal to “feel better” under the current condition of neoliberal hegemony where happiness is only narrowly defined (Ahmed, 2010; Love, 2007). The “unhappy queers” and “melancholic migrants” (Ahmed, 2010) hold onto the negative affects that interrupt the presumed route of assimilation, “allowing the body with another kind of desire…[that] may even queer our aspirations“ (p. 120). For queer Asian Americans, such alternative desire may be the one that allows the individual to not feel conflicted or ironic about the question—“where are you really from?”—as national belonging would no longer be restricted by eliminating the unhappy histories of exploitation and imperialist conquest. Methods: Grieving in Diaspora In the psychological documentation of queer Asian American experiences, ‘Asia’ can be a complicated site of belonging and burden, pride and shame, resilience and distress. The anti-essentialism of the diasporic paradigm opens up a symbolic space for the immigrant subject to navigate identity and positionality beyond the confined and bounded categories of citizenship and nationality, whereas queerness rejects the reproductive futurism pervasive in the immigrant acculturation narratives and demands a temporality elsewhere, away from the hegemonic neoliberal future, an alternative way of belonging beyond the constraints of biological and ethnic ties. Taking these articulations of the political possibility of queer Asian American subjectivity that are generated by the affective capacity of melancholia—to “get lost” and “dwell on” a timespace elsewhere and in another time—I am particularly interested in how queer Asian American activists negotiate losses and grief. More important, as Cheng asks, “How does an CRUISING BORDERS UNSETTLING IDENTITIES 124 individual go from being a subject of grief to being a subject of grievance?” (2001, p. 3) That is, rather than conceptualizing melancholic affect as antagonistic to political agency, how might it be generative to speak from a place of loss and grief? Can there be a productive attachment to the object of loss? On the context and participants. The question of queer melancholia arose from my larger ethnographic research on Asian American political participation in Black Lives Matter. While queerness was not the central political demand of the Asian American activists involved in the movement, it was the social and material bond that brought us together in the coalition, Asian and Pacific Islander Peoples’ Solidarity (APIPS), of approximately 15 anti-imperialist activists working to connect issues of militarism and neoliberal trades abroad to racialized violence in the US. These Asian American activists in the coalition all have personal and political ties to their countries of origin, including South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, China, and the Philippines. Since I started to be involved in the coalition in 2013, I have become curious about their capacity of forging political alliances and psychological bonds across the US borders flexibly. The conceptualization of Asian Americanness among these activists is distinct from the mainstream narrative of US-centrism and liberal multiculturalism, but a sense of obligation to defy the US nation-state and imperialist apparatus as individuals who have the privileges to reside within the border due to their various histories of migration. This attachment to Asia is not merely ideological, but deeply affective. As the Black Lives Matter movements intensified after the Ferguson incident, one conversation around the priority of organizational objective emerged in the coalition that clearly illustrated the political and psychological dilemma of activists in the diaspora: one member suggested that we shifted our focus to link militarism to the urgent issue of domestic police violence in the US, yet another member immediately responded defensively CRUISING BORDERS UNSETTLING IDENTITIES 125 by saying, “I feel deeply impacted by US imperialism everyday, more so than everything.” How does one afford to be continually attached to an object that is supposed to be gotten rid of in the interest of becoming Asian American? How do they negotiate these multiple spaces of loss and grief as queer Asian subject?

**Debate is an able-normative network of cybernetic visualization, nourished by its pursuit of white capitalist pathologies. As the very stasis and ground for our positions are preconfigured by logistical control, the unrepresentability of environmental destruction and intra-communal racism are lost to the increasing bankruptcy of sign function, over-coded by technical decisions and procedural fairness**

**Beller 18** [Jonathan Beller, 2018, The Message is Murder: Substrates of Computational Capital, Part 2, Published by Pluto Press, p. 116-121] Ronak

The automation of what I will refer to here as the pathologistics of attention can also be pursued from the standpoint of the experience of today’s large-scale psychological afflictions including burn-out, **depression**, autism, OCD, **ADD**, sociopathology and the like—all of which, like schizophrenia, must be understood as at once forms of genuine suffering and historically specific incarnations. However, I will not dwell on the psychoanalytic aspe cts of the generalization of “mental illness” in the twenty-first century as a fundamental condition of possibility for the perpetuation of “our times,” (though that is, as Eva Ilouz brilliantly demonstrates, indeed the case) and more **on the infrastructure of the logistics of attention that organize and functionalize psychopathologies**. As a mediological analysis would take into account, **these logistics are not only internal to subjects but are also distributed throughout the mediatic and material forms of the socius itself**. Thus, we shall turn to the “support, apparatus [and] procedure” of modes of transmission of meaning and the organization of attention—in short, to screens and, more particularly, cinema.2 An exploration of the pathologistics of attention through a consideration of cinematic programming seems justified in as much as cinema’s identificatory structures were, and in legacy forms remain, fundamental processes for the encoding, dissemination, and activation of visual and mental processes. In short **we take the subject as always already cyborg while recognizing histories of its emergence and implosion by means of a series of distributed software upgrades discernible in the form of paradigmatic cinematic tropes and conventions. The investigation proposes the following hypotheses**: 1. Films are programs of visualization and hence for discourse. 2. Iconic films abstract and mobilize paradigmatic programs. These programs provide infrastructure for the organization of attention. 3. Psychological aspects of these programs are functional and legible in the interface of the screen, but the logistics are distributed in the organization of bodies, apparatuses and social relations—in materiality and more precisely in historical materiality. 4. **Apparatuses automate aspects of formerly human decision and intelligence.** They are programs that have been formalized and sedimented into machinery. 5. Sovereignty is increasingly moving into the material, the machinemediated, which is to say, the computational environment: platform sovereignty.3 6. Convergence, ordinarily thought to mean the convergence of various media platforms into the digital medium known as the computer, is 118 . the message is murder to be understood as the convergence of linguistic function, scopic and auditory function and financialization with and as computation. These platforms consolidate a matrix of operations. This convergence is a powerful tendency, perhaps not a fait accompli. These proposals extend from the argument made in The Cinematic Mode of Production that cinema “brings the Industrial Revolution to the eye.” Aspects of Industrialization, “the factory code,” the assembly line, routinization, were built into the cinema, and then later developed in feedback loops with the cinema and computation. McLuhan’s “homogenous segmentation” attributed to Gutenberg, what Steigler generalizes and calls grammatization, works for frames and bits—and on bodies. **Life processes are broken down and reassembled in discrete units with ever more granularity**. By studying a non-random selection of films made at various moments along the evolutionary path taken by cinema, films that not incidentally all have a thematic relation to money at their narrative and libidinal cores, we may sketch with some precision the implication of Karl Marx’s idea that “industry is the open book of man’s essential powers, the exposure to the senses of human psychology” for contemporary psychology.4 Film, abstracted and submitted to analysis, shows us the machinic and indeed automated organization of spectatorship and it’s psychological interpellations. However, in this case, different in important respects from that of Marx and his fragment on machines, our “open book” is not the assembly line (chaine de montage) but cinema and cinematic montage conceived as a key transitional phase between industrialization and the social factory of digital culture (post-Fordism). We will be sketching, dialectically as it were, the (re-)organization of the psyche itself as well as the modes of attention that correspond to said organization in the advance of computational capital. It is increasingly non-controversial that **machine-mediated modes of attention are regimes of capture; the attention-machine as fixed capital absorbs sensual labor**. Thus we may observe that montage, deep focus, and the cut, as theorized during the history of cinema and the heyday of film theory, all correspond to neurological and psychological processes as well as to specific forms of attention prototyped then instituted. We may also observe paradigmatic cinematic forms were “destined,” more or less, to be utilized in capital’s emerging regimes of production and monetization collectively termed attention economy or cognitive capitalism. This is particularly obvious from the standpoint of the pathologistics of attention . 119 present conjuncture in the U.S., where as **in Nazi Germany, “adolescene [is] streamlined … and advanced to the position of superego”** and a white supremacist government is (still) in power.5 Thus, **we begin a kind of archaeology of forms of attention**—neuro-, psycho-, photo-, cinematico-, informatico-, and capital-logical—that have both paved the way **to** and achieved a culmination of sorts in **the capture of the cognitive-linguistic commons by life-destroying modalities for the organization of attention in racial capitalism**. There are connections to be investigated between the organization of perception by machinery, the strip-mining of attention by images and James Baldwin’s observation that American heroes of the John Wayne type never had to grow up. Because of the widespread influence of say the first person shooter, a perspective and relation that has effects resounding through the entire fabric of the socius, the modalities of cinematic implantation and cybernetic visualization include not just the ordinarily acknowledged media platforms but in our own times, student debt, blood computing, drone warfare, **and the every second of every day function of representation floating on the surface of an ocean of unrepresented—**and in the current conjuncture unrepresentable—suffering of more than two billion people living on less than two dollars per day and the history of the world that got “us” here. **Platforms though programmatic are not autonomous but embedded**; formal shifts index changes in the sites and modes of the production process and of sovereignty. **If this correspondence does not occur in exactly the same way for all viewers, then it occurs within statistically predictable parameters** in which **real deviation requires** the reclaimed and purposefully **redirected sensibilities of a critical movement** such as feminism, anti-racism or **decolonization in feminist** film **theory**, third cinema, postcolonial film theory **and** the like—**bell hooks’ oppositional gaze**. One thinks of figures like James Baldwin, bell hooks, Solanas and Gettino, and in cinema a long and powerful tradition of **modification and refusal of programmatic norms** (Maya Deren, Trin T. Minh-ha, Sadie Benning, Djibril Mambety, etc.). It is **our urgent challenge to connect the function of apparatuses** w**hose logistics both organized dominant** (dominated and dominating) **psychic formation** and have also been abstracted and encoded in the operation of digital machines, **with** the expansion of mass immiseration, and **the relative unrepresentability of planetary crisis in such a way that would demand revolution (and new foms of revolution) instead of various types of conformity and machinic enslavement.** 120 . the message is murder **This study** of the pathologistics of **attention is therefore necessarily also about the scrambling of the symbolic orde**r**; the increasing bankruptcy of sign-function**; the de-structuring and restructuring of the grammar of semiotics and the grammatization of social relations such that they can be broken apart and reassembled according to new protocols of value extraction; **it is about the proletarianization of the senses that occurs from the dissociation of the senses** from prior social instantiations of mind and body; **the expropriation of the cognitive-linguistic;** the installation of the regime of cognitive capitalism over and on top of, or adjacent to, the persistence of spectacular, industrial, and feudal regimes; the mining of attention as an amalgamating means of command-control-production; the current and ostensibly indomitable reign of short-term thinking; the life-sucking character of financialization; the acid corrosiveness of the Wall Street nanosecond; the ever-advancing seizure of the commons; **the rise and rise of white nationalism** and the effect of all these projects in relation to mentality, warfare, global dispossession, and planetary collapse. The very organization of appearance as data-visualization under the contemporary forms of inequality presses perception and knowledge into functioning **as technologies of for-profit murder through the active cancellation and “dismediation”6 of the other**. **This intensive production of the other by the pathologistics of datavisualization is a fundamental productive strategy of a computational capitalism that remains racial capitalism**. The other is slated to labor as surface of inscription. So, in addition to the breakdown and reformatting of language function and the redistribution and/or liquidation of meaning, this essay unavoidably focuses on the psychopathology and the logistics of perception of contemporary, that is, postmodern, fascism, otherwise to be thought of as the totalitarianism of computational finance capitalism—a formation that is, **like the psyche itself, at once without us and within us**. In what follows we will have occasion to remark upon the solicitation of identification and the fractalization of fascist structures of personality such that they may compensate in “the imaginary” for collective disempowerment while preserving property relations in “the real.” We have the dialectic between the historical expropriation first of labor and then of attention, on the one side, and the short-circuiting of the body and then of thought on the other side. The historico-technical, and indeed affective, ramification of this gap between the liberative potentials of globalized life and the sovereign planetary interdiction against justice is the definitive means and necessary condition for the production of this our present time—th**e** time of computational capital—in as much as it is verifiably present at all.

#### The will to knowledge is the will to order life into expected roles and identity categories, permitting endless xenophobia as statistical loss disrupts the smooth flow of imperialist knowledge production. Communication necessitates a vulnerability to difference which can only be found in excess.

Barbour 13. Charles “The sovereign without domain: Georges Bataille and the ethics of nothing,” *The Politics of Nothing: On Sovereignty*, ed. Clare Monagle and Dimitris Vardoulakis, Culture, Theory and Critique, Vol. 51, Issue 2, Routledge 2013, p. 46-47

It remains to be explained what any of this could have to do with ethics. While it might not immediately appear as an ethical project, certainly not from the perspective of traditional ethics, or those which begin with either the rational decisions of a responsible, autonomous subject, or the conventional mores of a delimited moral community, there is nevertheless a fairly clear sense in which Bataille’s writing is driven by an imperative, and a privileging of certain experiences over others. In this sense, and as Alan Stoekl notes, Bataille s theory is profoundly ethical (Stoekl 2007: 254). But this ethics it not, as Stoekl then goes on to suggest, rooted in Bataille s effort to reassert genuine, sovereign modes of expenditure and waste in the face of modern instrumental reason, which deludes itself into thinking it can do without waste, and in doing so unconsciously mechanizes the process of waste production. As we have already seen, Bataille only advances these claims while resisting or cancelling them out at the same time. Rather, I maintain, for Bataille, it is not the striving for an ideal that is ethical, but the very act of self-negation or self-cancellation – the act, as I have tried to show, that we find repeated over and over again in his writing. ¶ That striving for an ideal cannot be ethical for Bataille seems clear enough. Nothing is more servile, and less sovereign, in his estimation, than allowing future possibility to dictate or dominate the present moment. Even worse, from Bataille s perspective, would be Habermasian discourse ethics, which not only suggests that statements and acts in the present can only be ethical insofar as they are oriented towards the possibility of a future consensus, or an agreement among all interested subjects, but also that such a consensus can never be attained, but is forever altered through the very practical engagements that it regulates, and thus retreats like an eternally unreachable horizon (Habermas 1991). Indeed, it would not be inaccurate to say that, for Bataille, ethics would involve the exact opposite – the rejection or annihilation, not only of all particular interests, but also of all universal norms. Or, we might say, it would have to begin by refusing nearly everything Habermas takes for granted. ¶ Something very close, if not quite identical, to this point is made by Chris Gemerchak, in his article Of Goods and Things: Reflections on an Ethical Community. According to his interpretation, Bataille everywhere resists the hegemony of an ethics that adheres to the principle of reason, a principle that invariably comes down to the calculations of interest for the good of the individual or a community of individuals and is oriented toward survival in the future rather than life in the present (Gemerchak 2009: 64). In the place of the calculation of interest and the projection of a future good, Bataille privileges the moments of what he sometimes calls intimacy or communication. Importantly, such things cannot be understood in sanguine liberal terms. They do not involve subjects coming together in pursuit of rational consensus, nor do they involve the absorption of individuals into a kind of oceanic whole. Rather, for Bataille, in intimacy or communication each particular subject is placed, or torn, outside of themselves, not in such a way as to constitute a larger totality, but in such a way as to fragment all totalities, and all efforts to generate an individual or collective unity. ¶ At this point, and like so many others I have discussed in this paper, Gemerchak comes up against the paradox of this approach – the paradox that, as mentioned earlier, Bataille repeatedly admits. It is the paradox of what Gemerchak calls the unrelenting work of the dialectical economy, which makes every loss work in the service of a larger community (Gemerchak 2009: 75). Thus, while the moment of intimacy or communication might involve the complete dissolution of all subjective interests or future purposes, nevertheless, in order to formulate such things as an experience, let alone a discourse, interests and purposes must return. That Bataille himself is compelled, or seems compelled, to write about such things appears, for Gemerchak as for everyone else, to confirm this fact. As a result, and despite the innumerable paths his paper breaks, Gemerchak concludes by suggesting that, inasmuch as there must be one, the maxim of Bataille’s ethics would have to read: do not give in on your dissatisfaction (Gemerchak 2009: 78). Or, to put it differently, do not foreclose the possibility of intimacy and communication, or events that challenge the very core of your identity (the very core of identity as such), simply because you know from the outset that, in their wake, some identity must return. Do not say no to risking everything simply because, no matter how much you risk, you know you will get something back. ¶ Here, I think, while Germachak comes very close to Bataille’s ethics, and what I am calling the ethics of nothing, his proposition needs to be finessed, or modified ever so slightly. For Bataille, I imagine, it would not have been a question of not giving up simply because you know you must fail. Rather, it would have been a question of incorporating your inevitable failure into your act – of affirming, in the moment of intimacy or communication, both the moment, and the failure against which you suspect it is destined to smash. In this way, perhaps, you usurp the power of the future, or deprive it of its authority over the present. You take it up in the present, as part of the present, and of the ecstasy that is the present. This, at any rate, is what Bataille seems to have done in his writing, and in the performances that are his texts. This is how, as Derrida maintains, he transformed his inability to describe sovereignty (or, more accurately, the impossibility of describing sovereignty), and thus his perpetual shifting between descriptions of sovereignty, into an enactment or a performance of sovereignty. This is how his text became a living example, rather than a mummified representation, of the sovereign act