# The Tradition – 1N v American Heritage SS

## 1N

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#### Forms of fragmented politics completely cedes the political to capitalism. Engagement in undercommon communication is too individualized and resists collective and concrete change. This constitutes enjoyment of melancholic pleasures of being distanced and accommodated to the real world, and as a result remains stuck in parasitic oppression without change – Dean 13:

“Communist Desire”, Jodi Dean, , 2013, LHP AM

An emphasis on the drive dimension of melancholia, on Freud's attention to the way sadism in melancholia is 'turned round upon the subject's own self', leads to an interpretation of the general contours shaping the left that differs from Brown's**. Instead of a left attached to an unaclmowledged orthodoxy,** **we have one that has given way on the desire for communism, betrayed its historical commitment to the proletariat, and sublimated revolutionary energies into restorationist practices that strengthen the hold of capitalism**. **This left has replaced commitments to the emancipatory, egalitarian struggles of working people against capitalism - commitments that were never fully orthodox, but always ruptured, conflicted and contested - with incessant activity** (not unlike the manic Freud also associates with melancholia), and so **now satisfies itself with criticism and interpretation, small projects and local actions, particular issues and legislative victories, art, technology, procedures, and process**. It sublimates revolutionary desire to democratic drive, to the repetitious practices offered up as democracy (whether representative, deliberative or radical). **Having already conceded to the inevitably of capitalism, it noticeably abandons 'any striking power against the big bourgeoisie',** to return to Benjamin's language. For such a left, **enjoyment comes from its withdrawal from responsibility, its sublimation of goals and responsibilities into the branching, fragmented practices of micro-politics, self-care, and issue awareness**. Perpetually slighted, harmed and undone**, this left remains stuck in repetition, unable to break out of the circuits of drive in which it is caught** - unable because it enjoys. **Might this not explain why such a left confuses discipline with domination, why it forfeits collectivity in the name of an illusory, individualist freedom that continuously seeks to fragment and disrupt any assertion of a collective or a common?** The watchwords of critique within this structure of left desire are moralism, dogmatism, authoritarianism and utopianism - watchwords enacting a perpetual self-surveillance: has an argument, position or view inadvertently rukeo one of these errors? Even some of its militants reject party and state, division and decision, securing in advance an inefficacy sure to guarantee it the nuggets of satisfaction drive provides. **If this left is rightly described as melancholic, and I agree with Brown that it is, then its melancholia derives from the real existing compromises and betrayals inextricable from its history - its accommodations with reality, whether of nationalist war, capitalist encirclement, or so-called market demands.** Lacan teaches that, like Kant's categorical imperative, the super-ego refuses to accept reality as an explanation for failure. Impossible is no excuse - desire is always impossible to satisfy. A wide spectrum of the contemporary left has either accommodated itself, in one or another, to an inevitable capitalism or taken the practical failures of Marxism-Leninism to require the abandonment of antagonism, class, and revolutionary commitment to overturning capitalist arrangements of property and production. **Melancholic fantasy (the communist Master, authoritarian and obscene) as well as sublimated, melancholic practices (there was no alternative) shield this left, shield Ltd, from confrontation with guilt over such betrayal as they capture us in activities that feel productive, important, radical.**

#### The alternative is the politics of the comrade – one that is oriented toward a shared communist horizon – only our methodology can fight capitalism, anything else allows it to take over co-opting any movement – Dean 19:

Dean, Jodi. Comrade: An essay on political belonging. Verso, 2019. // LHP BT + LHP PS

The term ***comrade* indexes a political relation, a set of expectations for action toward a common goal**. **It highlights the sameness of those on the same side—no matter their differences, comrades stand together**. As Obama’s joke implies, when you share a politics, you don’t generally distance yourself from your comrades. **Comradeship binds action**, **and in** this binding, **this solidarity, it** collectivizes and **directs action in light of a shared vision for the future**. **For communists, this is the egalitarian future of a society emancipated from the determinations of private property and capitalism and reorganized according to the free association, common benefit, and collective decisions of the producers.** But the term comrade predates its use by communists and socialists. In romance languages, comrade first appears in the sixteenth century to designate one who shares a room with another. Juan A. Herrero Brasas cites a Spanish historical-linguistic dictionary’s definition of the term: “*Camarada* is someone who is so close to another man that he eats and sleeps in the same house with him.”[2](about:blank) In French, the term was originally feminine, *camarade*, and referred to a barracks or room shared by soldiers.[3](about:blank) Etymologically, comrade derives from *camera*, the Latin word for room, chamber, and vault. The technical connotation of *vault* indexes a generic function, the structure that produces a particular space and holds it open.[4](about:blank) A chamber or room is a repeatable structure that takes its form by producing an inside separate from an outside and providing a supported cover for those underneath it. Sharing a room, sharing a space, generates a closeness, an intensity of feeling and expectation of solidarity that differentiates those on one side from those on the other. Comradeship is a political relation of supported cover. Interested in comrade as a mode of address, carrier of expectations, and figure of belonging in the communist and socialist traditions, I emphasize **the comrade as a generic figure for the political relation between those on the same side of a political struggle. Comrades are those who  tie themselves together instrumentally, for a common purpose: *If we want to win—and we have to win—we must act together*.** As Angela Davis describes her decision to join the Communist Party:I wanted an anchor, a base, a mooring. I needed comrades with whom I could share a common ideology. I was tired of ephemeral ad-hoc groups that fell apart when faced with the slightest difficulty; tired of men who measured their sexual height by women’s intellectual genuflection. It wasn’t that I was fearless, but I knew that to win, we had to fight and the fight that would win was the one collectively waged by the masses of our people and working people in general. I knew that this fight had to be led by a group, a party with more permanence in its membership and structure and substance in its ideology.[5](about:blank) **Comrades are those you can count on. You share enough of a common ideology,** enough of a commitment to common principles and goals, **to do more than one-off actions. Together you can fight the long fight. As comrades, our actions are voluntary, but they are not always of our own choosing**. **Comrades have to be able to count on each other even when we don’t like each other and even when we disagree. We do what needs to be done because we owe it to our comrades.** In *The Romance of American Communism*, Vivian Gornick reports the words of a former member of the Communist Party USA, or CPUSA, who hated the daily grind of selling papers and canvassing expected of party cadre, but nevertheless, according to her, “I did it. I did it because if I didn’t do it, I couldn’t face my comrades the next day. And we all did it for the same reason: we were accountable to each other.”[6](about:blank) Put in psychoanalytic terms, the comrade functions as an ego ideal: the point from which party members assess themselves as doing important, meaningful work.[7](about:blank)Being accountable to another entails seeing your actions through their eyes. Are you letting them down or are you doing work that they respect and admire?In *Crowds and Party*, I present the good comrade as an ideal ego, that is to say, as how party members imagine themselves.[8](about:blank) They may imagine themselves as thrilling orators, brilliant polemicists, skilled organizers, or courageous militants. In contrast with my discussion there, in the current book, I draw out how **the comrade** **also functions as an ego ideal, the perspective that party members—and often fellow travelers—take toward themselves**. This perspective is the effect of belonging on the same side as it works back on those who have committed themselves to common struggle. The comrade is a symbolic as well as an imaginary figure and it is the symbolic dimension of ego ideal I focus on here. My thinking about the comrade as a generic figure for those on the same side flows out of my work on communism as the horizon of left politics and my work on the party as the political form necessary for this politics.[9](about:blank) **To see our political horizon as communist is to highlight the emancipatory egalitarian struggle of the proletarianized against capitalist exploitation—that is, against the determination of life by market forces; by value; by the division of labor (on the basis of sex and race); by imperialism (theorized by Lenin in terms of the dominance of monopoly and finance capital); and by neocolonialism (theorized by Nkrumah as the last stage of imperialism).** **Today we see this horizon in struggles such as those led by women of color against police violence, white supremacy, and the murder and incarceration of black, brown, and working-class people. We see it in the infrastructure battles around pipelines, climate justice, and barely habitable cities with undrinkable water and contaminated soil. We see it in the array of social reproduction struggles against debt, foreclosure, and privatization, and for free, quality public housing, childcare, education, transportation, healthcare, and other basic services. We see it in the ongoing fight of LGBTQ people against harassment, discrimination, and oppression.** It is readily apparent today that **the communist horizon is the horizon of political struggle** not for the nation but **for the world**; it is an international horizon. This is evident in the antagonism between the rights of immigrants and refugees and intensified nationalisms; in the necessity of a global response to planetary warming; and in anti-imperialist, decolonization, and peace movements. In these examples, **communism is a force of negativity, the negation of the global capitalist present.** **Communism is also the name for the positive alternative to capitalism’s permanent and expanding exploitation, crisis, and immiseration, the name of a system of production based on meeting social needs**—*from each according to ability to each according to need*, to paraphrase Marx’s famous slogan—in a way that is collectively determined and carried out by the producers. This positive dimension of communism attends to social relations, to how people treat each other, animals, things, and the world around them**. Building communism entails more than resistance and riot. It requires the emancipated egalitarian organization of collective life.** With respect to the party, intellectuals on the contemporary left tend to extract the party from the aspirations and accomplishments it enabled. Communist philosophers who disagree on a slew of theoretical questions, such as Antonio Negri and Alain Badiou, converge on the organizational question—no party! **The party has been rejected as authoritarian**, as outmoded, as ill-fitting a society of networks. **Every other mode of political association may be revised, renewed, rethought, or reimagined except for the party of communists**. **This rejection of the party** as a form for left politics is a mistake. It **ignores the effects of association on those engaged in common struggle.** **It fails to learn from the everyday experiences of generations of activists**, organizers, and revolutionaries. **It relies on a narrow, fantasied notion of the party as a totalitarian machine.** It neglects the courage, enthusiasm, and achievements of millions of party members for over a century. **Rejection of the party form has been left dogmatism** for the last thirty years **and has gotten us nowhere**. Fortunately, the movements of the squares in Greece and Spain, as well as lessons from the successes and limits of the Occupy movement, have pushed against this left dogmatism. They have reenergized interest in the party as a political form that can scale; a form that is flexible, adaptive, and expansive enough to endure beyond the joyous and disruptive moments of crowds in the streets. A theory of the comrade contributes to this renewal by drawing out the ways that shared commitment to a common struggle generates new strengths and new capacities. Over and against the reduction of party relations to the relations between the leaders and the led, comrade attends to the effects of political belonging on those on the same side of a political struggle. **As we fight together for a world free of exploitation, oppression, and bigotry, we have to be able to trust and count on each other. Comrade names this relation. The comrade relation remakes the place from which one sees, what it is possible to see, and what possibilities can appear**. It enables the revaluation of work and time, what one does, and for whom one does it. Is one’s work done for the people or for the bosses? Is it voluntary or done because one has to work? Does one work for personal provisions or for a collective good? We should recall Marx’s lyrical description of communism in which work becomes “life’s prime want.” We get a glimpse of that in comradeship: **one *wants* to do political work**. **You don’t want to let down your comrades**; you see the value of your work through their eyes, your new collective eyes. **Work, determined not by markets but by shared commitments, becomes fulfilling**. French communist philosopher and militant Bernard Aspe discusses the problem of contemporary capitalism as a loss of “common time”; that is, the loss of an experience of time generated and enjoyed through our collective being-together.[10](about:blank) From holidays, to meals, to breaks, whatever common time we have is synchronized and enclosed in forms for capitalist appropriation. Communicative capitalism’s apps and trackers amplify this process such that the time of consumption can be measured in much the same way that Taylorism measured the time of production: How long did a viewer spend on a particular web page? Did a person watch a whole ad or click off of it after five seconds? In contrast, the common action that is the actuality of communist movement induces a collective change in capacities. Breaking from capitalism’s 24-7 injunctions to produce and consume for the bosses and owners, the discipline of common struggle expands possibilities for action and intensifies the sense of its necessity. The comrade is a figure for the relation through which this transformation of work and time occurs. **How do we imagine political work? Under conditions where political change seems completely out of reach, we might imagine political work as self-transformation**. At the very least, we can work on ourselves. In the intensely mediated networks of communicative capitalism, we might see our social media engagements as a kind of activism where Twitter and Facebook function as important sites of struggle. Perhaps we understand writing as important political work and hammer out opinion pieces, letters to the editors, and manifestoes. When we imagine political work, we often take electoral politics as our frame of reference, focusing on voting, lawn signs, bumper stickers, and campaign buttons. Or we think of activists as those who arrange phone banks, canvass door-to-door, and set up rallies. In yet another political imaginary, we might envision political work as study, whether done alone or with others. We might imagine political work as cultural production, the building of new communities, spaces, and ways of seeing. Our imaginary might have a militant, or even militarist, inflection: political work is carried out through marches, occupations, strikes, and blockades; through civil disobedience, direct action, and covert operations. Even with the recognition of the wide array of political activities, the ways people use them to respond to specific situations and capacities, and how they combine to enhance each other, we might still imagine radical political work as punching a Nazi in the face.Throughout these various actions and activities, how are the relations among those fighting on the same side imagined? How do the activists and organizers, militants and revolutionaries relate to one another? During the weeks and months when the Occupy movement was at its peak, relations with others were often infused with a joyous sense of being together, with an enthusiasm for the collective co-creation of new patterns of action and ways of living.[11](about:blank) But the feeling didn’t last. **The pressures of organizing diverse people and politics under conditions of police repression and real material need wore down even the most committed activists.** Since then, on social media and across the broader left, **relations among the politically engaged have again become tense and conflicted, often along lines of race and gender. Dispersed and disorganized, we’re uncertain of whom to trust and what to expect. We encounter contradictory injunctions to self-care and call out. Suspicion undermines support. Exhaustion displaces enthusiasm**. **Attention to comradeship, to the ways that shared expectations make political work not just possible but also gratifying, may help redirect our energies back to our common struggle.** As former CPUSA member David Ross explained to Gornick:I knew that I could never feel passionately about the new movements as I had about the old, I realized that the CP has provided me with a sense of comradeship I would never have again, and that without that comradeship I could *never* be political.[12](about:blank)For Ross, the Communist Party is what made Marxism. The party gave Marxism life, political purpose. This life-giving capacity came from comradeship. Ross continues: “The idea of politics as simply a diffused consciousness linked only to personal integrity was—*is*—anathema to me.” His description of politics as “a diffused consciousness linked only to personal integrity” fits today’s left milieus. Perhaps, then, his remedy—comradeship—will as well. Various people have told me their stories of feeling a rush of warmth when they were first welcomed into their party as a comrade. I’ve had this feeling myself. In his memoir *Incognegro: A Memoir of Exile and Apartheid*, the theorist Frank Wilderson, a former member of uMkhonto weSizwe, or MK, the armed wing of the African National Congress (ANC), describes his first meeting with Chris Hani, the leader of the South African Communist Party and the chief of staff of MK. Wilderson writes, “I beamed like a schoolboy when he called me ‘comrade.’”[13](about:blank) Wilderson chides himself for what he calls a “childish need for recognition.”[14](about:blank) Perhaps because he still puts Hani on a pedestal, he feels exposed in his enjoyment of the egalitarian disruption of comradeship. Wilderson hasn’t yet internalized the idea that he and Hani are political equals. “Comrade” **holds out an equalizing promise, and when that promise is fulfilled, we confront our own continuing** yet **unwanted attachments to hierarchy, prestige, inadequacy. Accepting equality takes courage.** Wilderson’s joy in hearing Hani call him “comrade” contrasts sharply with another instance Wilderson recounts where comrade was the term of address**. In 1994, shortly before Wilderson was forced to leave South Africa, he encountered Nelson Mandela** at an event hosted by *Tribute*magazine. **After Mandela’s public remarks, Wilderson asked a question in which he addressed Mandela as “comrade.”** “Not Mr. Mandela. Not sir, like the fawning advertising mogul who asked the first question. **Comrade Mandela. It stitched him back into the militant garb he’d shed since the day he left prison.”**[15](about:blank) **Wilderson’s recollection shows how comrade’s equalizing insistence can be aggressive, an imposition of discipline. This is part of its power. Addressing another as “comrade” reminds them that something is expected of them. Discipline and joy are two sides of the same coin**, two aspects of comradeship as a mode of political belonging. As a form of address, figure of political relation, and carrier of expectations, comrade **disrupts capitalist society’s hierarchical identifications of sex, race, and class.** It **insists on** the **equalizing sameness of those on the same side of a political struggle** and **renders that** equalizing sameness **productive of new modes of work and belonging. In this respect, comrade is a carrier of utopian longings** in the sense theorized by Kathi Weeks. Weeks presents **the utopian form** as **carrying out two functions**: “One function is to alter our connection to the present, while the other is to shift our relationship to the future; one is productive of estrangement, the other of hope.”[16](about:blank) **The first function mobilizes the negativity of disidentification and disinvestment**. **Present relations** **become** strange, **less binding on our sense of possibility**. The second function **redirects “our attention and energies toward an open future** … providing a vision or glimmer of a better world.”[17](about:blank) **The power of comrade is in how it negates old relations and promises new ones—the promise itself ushers them in,** welcoming the new comrade into relations irreducible to their broader setting.

#### The role of the ballot is fidelity to the truth – dedication to a shared horizon is liberatory, Dean 19:

Dean, Jodi. Comrade: An essay on political belonging. Verso, 2019. // LHP BT + LHP PS

The idea that comrades are those who belong to the same side of a political struggle leads to the fourth thesis: **The** relation between comrades is mediated by **fidelity to a** truth**;** practices **of comradeship** materialize **this** fidelity**. The “same side” points to the truth comrades are faithful to—the political truth that unites them**—**and the fidelity with which they work to realize this truth in the world.** “Belonging” invites attention to the expectations, practices, and affects that being on the same side generates. The notions of truth and fidelity at work here come from Alain Badiou. In brief, **Badiou rejects the idea of truth as a proposition or judgment, arguing instead that** truth is a process**. The process begins with the eruption of something new, an event.** **Because an event changes the situation, breaks the confines of the given, it is undecidable in terms of the given; it is something entirely new**. Badiou argues that this undecidability “induces the appearance of a *subject* of the event.”[60](about:blank) **This subject isn’t the cause of the event. It’s an effect of or response to the event,** “the decision to *say* that the event has taken place.” Grammar might seduce us into rendering this subject as “I.” **We should** avoid this temptation and **recognize the subject** **as** designating an inflection point, **a response that extends the event.** **The decision that a truth has appeared, that an event has occurred, incites a process of verification**, the “infinite procedure of verification of the true,” **in** **what Badiou calls an “exercise of fidelity**.”[61](about:blank) **Fidelity is a working out and working through of the truth, an engagement with truth that extends out into and changes the world. We should recognize here the unavoidably collective dimension of fidelity: in the political field, verification is a struggle of the many.** Peter Hallward draws out some implications of Badiou’s conception of truth. First, it is subjective. Those faithful to an evental truth involve themselves in working it out, exploring its consequences.[62](about:blank) Second, fidelity is not blind faith; it is rigorous engagement unconcerned with individual personality and incorporated into the body of truth that it generates. Hallward writes:Fidelity is, by definition, ex-centric, directed outward, beyond the limits of a merely personal integrity. To be faithful to an evental implication always means to abandon oneself, rigorously, to the unfolding of its consequences. **Fidelity implies that, if there is truth, it can be only cruelly indifferent to the private as such.** **Every truth involves a kind of anti-privatization, a subjective collectivization. In truth, “I” matter only insofar as I am subsumed by the impersonal vector of truth—say, the political organization, or the scientific research program.**[**63**](about:blank) **The truth process builds a new body**. This body of truth is a collective formed to “work for the consequences of the new” and this work, this collective, disciplines and subsumes the faithful.[64](about:blank)Third, collectivity does not imply uniformity. The infinite procedure of verification incorporates multiple experiments, enactments, and effects.Badiou writes, “An organization lies at the intersection between an Idea and an event. However, this intersection only exists as process, whose immediate subject is the political militant.”[65](about:blank) We should amend this statement by replacing *militant* with *comrade*. Comrade highlights the “discipline of the event,” the way that political fidelity cannot be exercised by a solitary individual—hence, the Marxist-Leninist emphasis on the unity of theory and practice, the barren incapacity of each alone. Comrade also affirms the self-abandonment accompanying fidelity to a truth: its vector, its unfolding, is indifferent to my personal experiences and inclinations. For communists, the process of truth has a body and that body is the party, in both its historical and formal sense. Already in *Theory of the Subject*, Badiou recognizes the necessity of a political body, the party as the “subject-support of all politics.”[66](about:blank) He writes:The party is the body of politics, in the strict sense. The fact that there is a body by no means guarantees that there is a subject … But for there to be a subject, for a subject to be found, there must be the support of a body.[67](about:blank) **As a figure of political belonging, the comrade is a faithful response to the evental rupture of crowds and movements, to the egalitarian discharge that erupts from the force of the many where they don’t belong, to the movement of the people as the subject of politics.**[**68**](about:blank) **Comrades demonstrate fidelity through political work; through concerted, disciplined engagement. Their practical political work extends the truth of the emancipatory egalitarian struggle of the oppressed into the world.** Amending Badiou (by drawing from his earlier work), we can say that the comrade is not a faithful subject but a political relation faithful to the divided people as the subject of emancipatory egalitarian politics.[69](about:blank) **For us to see the revolutionary people as the subject in the struggles of the oppressed, for their subject to be found, we must be comrades.** In *Ninotchka*, Nina Ivanova Yakushova can’t tell who her comrades are by looking at them. The party has told her who to look for, but she has to ask. After Iranoff identifies himself, Yakushova tells him her name and the name and position of the party comrade who authorized her visit. Iranoff introduces Buljanoff and Kopalski. Yakushova addresses each as comrade. But it’s not the address that makes them all comrades. They are comrades because they are members of the same party. **The party is the organized body of truth that mediates their relationship. This mediation makes clear what is expected of comrades—disciplined, faithful work.** Iranoff, Buljanoff, and Kopalski have not been doing the work expected of comrades, which is why Moscow sent Yakushova to oversee them in Paris. That Kopalski says they would have greeted her with flowers demonstrates their *embourgeoisment*, the degeneration of their sense of comradeship. But they are all there for work. Gendered identity and hierarchy don’t mediate relations between comrades. The practices of fidelity to a political truth, the work done toward building that truth in the world, do. The solidarity of comrades in political struggle arises out of the intertwining of truth, practice, and party. It’s not reducible to any of these alone. **Comrades are not simply those who believe in the same truth—as in, for example, the idea of communism. Their fidelity to a certain truth is manifested in practical work.** Work for the realization of a political truth brings people into comradely relation. **But carrying out similar tasks in fidelity to the same truth isn’t sufficient for comradeship. The work must be in common; no one is a comrade on their own. Practices of comradeship are coordinated, organized. The party is the organization out of which comradeship emerges and that comrade relations produce. It concentrates comradeship even as comradeship exceeds it.**

## Case

### Dump

#### Prefer our Role of the Ballot:

#### 1] A focus on discourse is an abandonment of real change – we must use a materialist focus to solve oppression Cloud ‘1:

#### (Dana L. Cloud, Associate Professor, Communication Studies UT Austin, “The Affirmative Masquerade,” American Communication Journal, Volume 4, Issue 3, Spring 2001, http://www.acjournal.org/holdings/vol4/iss3/special/cloud.htm)

At the very least, however, it is clear that **poststructuralist discourse theories have left behind** some of **historical materialism’s most valuable conceptual tools for** any **theoretical and critical practice that aims at informing practical, oppositional political activity on behalf of** historically exploited and **oppressed groups**. As Nancy Hartsock (1983, 1999) and many others have argued (see Ebert 1996; Stabile, 1997; Triece, 2000; Wood, 1999), **we need to retain concepts such as standpoint epistemology** (wherein truth standards are not absolute or universal but arise from the scholar’s alignment with the perspectives of particular classes and groups) **and fundamental, class-based interests** (as opposed to understanding class as just another discursively-produced identity). We need extra-discursive reality checks on ideological mystification and economic contextualization of discursive phenomena. Most importantly, **critical scholars bear the obligation to explain the origins and causes of exploitation and oppression in order** better **to inform the fight against them**.  In poststructuralist discourse theory, **the "retreat from class**" (Wood, 1999) **expresses an unwarranted pessimism about what can be accomplished in late capitalism with regard to** understanding and **transforming** system and **structure at the level of the economy and the state**. **It** substitutes meager cultural freedoms for macro-level social transformation even **as millions of people around the world feel the global reach of capitalism more deeply than ever before**. At the core of the issue is a debate across the humanities and social sciences with regard to whether we live in a "new economy," an allegedly postmodern, information-driven historical moment in which, it is argued, organized mass movements are no longer effective in making material demands of system and structure (Melucci, 1996). In suggesting that global capitalism has so innovated its strategies that there is no alternative to its discipline, arguments proclaiming "a new economy" risk inaccuracy, pessimism, and conservatism (see Cloud, in press). While a thoroughgoing summary is beyond the scope of this essay, there is a great deal of evidence against claims that capitalism has entered a new phase of extraordinary innovation, reach, and scope (see Hirst and Thompson, 1999).  Furthermore, both class polarization (see Mishel, Bernstein, and Schmitt, 2001) and the ideological and management strategies that contain class antagonism (see Cloud, 1998; Parker and Slaughter, 1994) still resemble their pre-postmodern counterparts. A recent report of the Economic Policy Institute concludes that in the 1990s, inequality between rich and poor in the U.S. (as well as around the world) continued to grow, in a context of rising worker productivity, a longer work week for most ordinary Americans, and continued high poverty rates.  Even as the real wage of the median CEO rose nearly 63 percent from 1989, to 1999, more than one in four U.S. workers lives at or below the poverty level. Among these workers, women are disproportionately represented, as are Black and Latino workers. (Notably, unionized workers earn nearly thirty percent more, on average, than non-unionized workers.) Meanwhile, Disney workers sewing t-shirts and other merchandise in Haiti earn 28 cents an hour. Disney CEO Michael Eisner made nearly six hundred million dollars in 1999--451,000 times the wage of the workers under his employ (Roesch, 1999). According to United Nations and World Bank sources, several trans-national corporations have assets larger than several countries combined. Sub-Saharan Africa and the Russian Federation have seen sharp economic decline, while assets of the world’s top three billionaires exceed the GNP of all of the least-developed countries and their combined population of 600 million people (Shawki and D’Amato, 2000, pp. 7-8).  **In this context of a real** (and clearly bipolar) **class divide in** late **capitalist society,** the postmodern party is a masquerade ball, in which theories claiming to offer ways toward emancipation and progressive critical practice in fact **encourage scholars** and/as activists **to abandon** any **commitment to crafting oppositional political blocs** with instrumental and perhaps revolutionary potential. Instead, on their arguments, we must recognize agency as an illusion of humanism and settle for playing with our identities in a mood of irony, excess, and profound skepticism. Marx and Engels’ critique of the Young Hegelians applies equally well to the postmodern discursive turn: "They are only fighting against ‘phrases.’ They forget, however, that to these phrases they themselves are only opposing other phrases, and that they are in no way combating the real existing world when they are merely combating the phrases of this world" (1976/1932, p. 41).  Of course, the study of "phrases" is important to the project of materialist critique in the field of rhetoric. The point, though, is to explain the connections between phrases on the one hand and economic interests and systems of oppression and exploitation on the other. Marxist ideology critique, understands that classes, motivated by class interest, produce rhetorics wittingly and unwittingly, successfully and unsuccessfully. Those rhetorics are strategically adapted to context and audience. Yet **Marxist theory is not naïve in** its **understanding** of intention or individual **agency**. Challenging individualist humanism, **Marxist** ideology **critics regard people as "products of circumstances**" (and changed people as products of changed circumstances; Marx, 1972b/1888, p. 144).  Within this understanding, **Marxist** ideology **critics can describe and evaluate cultural discourses** such as that of racism or sexism **as strategic and complex expressions of both their moment in history and of their class basis**. Further, this mode of critique seeks to explain both why and how social reality is fundamentally, systematically oppressive and exploitative, exploring not only the surface of discourses but also their often-complex and multi-vocal motivations and consequences. As Burke (1969/1950) notes, **Marxism is both a method of rhetorical criticism and a rhetorical formation** itself (pp. 109-110). There is no pretense of neutrality or assumption of transcendent position for the critic.  Teresa Ebert (1996) summarizes the purpose of materialist ideology critique:   Materialist critique is a mode of knowing that inquires into what is not said, into the silences and the suppressed or missing, in order to uncover the concealed operations of power and the socio-economic relations connecting the myriad details and representations of our lives. It shows that apparently disconnected zones of culture are in fact materially linked through the highly differentiated, mediated, and dispersed operation of a systematic logic of exploitation. In sum, materialist critique disrupts **‘what is’ to explain how social differences**--specifically gender, race, sexuality, and class--**have been systematically produced and continue to operate within regimes of exploitation, so that we can change them. It is the means for** producing transformative knowledges**.** (p. 7)

#### 2] A rejection of ontological and linguistic boundaries reinforces capitalism – not only will the material basis of capital recreate entrenched attitudes, this rejection will destroy binaries such as class that are the only method of truly confronting material oppression - DeFazio 12:

(Kimberly, English Professor at University of Wisconsin Lacrosse, Winter/Spring 12, Machine-Thinking and the Romance of Posthumanism, http://redcritique.org/WinterSpring2012/machinethinkingandtheromanceofposthumanism.htm)

A broader point that needs to be made here is that, while for Heidegger the problem is the subject/object binary, and for posthumanists it is the human/animal distinction, what they all reject as metaphysical thinking is the logic of the "binary" which is the structuring principle of class society. Class societies, in which a few control the labor and products of others and thus have control over the lives of the majority, necessarily create cultural and conceptual divisions which codify these class relations. Conceptual divisions have their material roots not in the mind but in the world which the mind reflects, through more or less complex mediations. This is one of the basic principles of materialism: ideas are not the product of the (individual) mind; rather, social consciousness is shaped by social existence. Therefore changing how people think and thus act (whether to oneself, other humans, animals or the environment) requires changing the material divisions that produce othering. Philosophy which simply does away with conceptual distinctions in thinking, as Heidegger and other romantics do, not only gets rid of the very concepts (like "class," "exploitation," "determination") needed to understand the structuring principles of class society, but, in effect, displaces material change of objective conditions onto the subjective change of the individual. This is the essential politico-cognitive work that neoromantic theory does for capital. Whether through such concepts as Keats' "negative capability" Kant's "sublime," Heidegger's "Being" or "the question of the animal" that is the more recent focus of such writers as Derrida, Wolfe, and Calarco, romantic machine-thinking celebrates the dissolution of boundaries: between self and other, subject and object, philosophy and poetry, rich and poor, the social (as city) and nature. It constructs a post-rational linguistic realm of higher values which exceed restricting social codes and conventions. Boundaries, in romanticism, are viewed as the imposition of cultural codes and linguistic conventions that rigidly delineate, not as material (as effects of labor relations). It is through the replacement of "mechanical" concepts with speculative ones that romanticism blurs social boundaries and epistemological distinctions in an effort, not to transform capitalism, but to find a freer mode of thinking within it. As Wordsworth puts it in his Preface to Lyrical Ballads, it involves taking familiar incidents and "throw[ing] over them a certain colouring of imagination"—or, in the updated idiom of posthumanism, a "revolution in language and thought" (Calarco, Zoographies 6). Heideggerian pre-reflective experience, like "the question of the animal," is in short the space in which "abstract" binaries like class (not to mention other social differences) evaporate. By blurring lines, romantic theory seeks, as Heidegger puts it, "the liberation of language from grammar" ("Letter on Humanism" 218), rather than social transformation. To liberate language from grammar is of course to free up thinking (from cultural bounds), to suspend the social structures of language and, according to Heidegger, to come closer to understanding Being. Grammarless language is thus the fantasy of the plentitude of meaning outside of the social. No matter how adamantly posthumanism condemns Heidegger's human-centered thinking, the very de-essentializing strategies it deploys to challenge human-animal distinctions are informed by the (Heideggerian) desire to escape existing social conventions, through the relay of the animal.

#### 3] Fetishization of chaos and meaningless impairs systemic analysis, dooming us to political silence and co-option by capital - Harvey ’90:

(David Harvey, Distinguished Professor of Anthropology & Geography at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY) and critically acclaimed Marxist scholar, The Condition of Postmodernity, An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change, pages 116-121)

I also conclude that there is much more continuity than difference between the broad history of modernism and the movement called postmodernism. It seems more sensible to me to see the latter as a particular kind of crisis within the former, one that emphasizes the fragmentary, the ephemeral, and the chaotic side of Baudelaire's formulation (that side which Marx so admirably dissects as integral to the capitalist mode of production) while expressing a deep scepticism as to any particular prescriptions as to how the eternal and immutable should be conceived of, represented, or expressed. But postmodernism, with its emphasis upon the ephemerality of jouissance, its insistence upon the impenetrability of the other, its concentration on the text rather than the work, its penchant for deconstruction bordering on nihilism, its preference for aesthetics over ethics, takes matters too far. It takes them beyond the point where any coherent politics are left, while that wing of it that seeks a shameless accommodation with the market puts it firmly in the tracks of an entrepreneurial culture that is the hallmark of reactionary neoconservativism. Postmodernist philosophers tell us not only to accept but even to revel in the fragmentations and the cacophony of voices through which the dilemmas of the modern world are understood. Obsessed with de constructing and delegitimating every form of argument they encounter, they can end only in condemning their own validity claims to the point where nothing remains of any basis for reasoned action. Postmodernism has us accepting the reifications and partitionings, actually celebrating the activity of masking and cover-up, all the fetishisms of locality, place, or social grouping, while denying that kind of meta-theory which can grasp the politicaleconomic processes (money flows, international divisions of labour, financial markets, and the like) that are becoming ever more universalizing in their depth, intensity, reach and power over daily life. Worst of all, while it opens up a radical prospect by acknowledging the authenticity of other voices, postmodernist thinking immediately shuts off those other voices from access to more universal sources of power by ghettoizing them within an opaque otherness, the specificity of this or that language game. It thereby dis empowers those voices (of women, ethnic and racial minorities, colonized peoples, the unemployed, youth, etc.) in a world of lop-sided power relations. The language game of a cabal of international bankers may be impenetrable to us, but that does not put it on a par with the equally impenetrable language of inner-city blacks from the standpoint of power relations. The rhetoric of postmodernism is dangerous for it avoids confronting the realities of political economy and the circumstances of global power. The silliness of L yotard's 'radical proposal' that opening up the data banks to everyone as a prologue to radical reform (as if we would all have equal power to use that opportunity) is instructive, because it indicates how even the most resolute of postmodernists is faced in the end with either making some universalizing gesture (like Lyotard's appeal to some pristine concept of justice) or lapsing, like Derrida, into total political silence. Metatheory cannot be dispensed with. The postmodernists simply push it underground where it continues to function as a 'now unconcious effectivity' (Jameson 1 984b). I find myself agreeing, therefore, with Eagleton's repudiation of Lyotard, for whom 'there can be no difference between truth, authority and rhetorical seductiveness; he who has the smoothest tongue or the raciest story has the power.' The eight-year reign of a charismatic story-teller in the White House suggests that there is more than a little continuity to that political problem, and that postmodernism comes dangerously close to complicity with the aestheticizing of politics upon which it is based. This takes us back to a very basic question. If both modernity and postmodernity derive their aesthetic from some kind of struggle with the fact of fragmentation, ephemerality, and chaotic flux, it is, I would suggest, very important to establish why such a fact should have been so pervasive an aspect of modern experience for so long a period of time, and why the intensity of that experience seems to have picked up so powerfully since 1970. If the only thing certain about modernity is uncertainty, then we should, surely, pay considerable attention to the social forces that produce such a condition. It is to these social forces that I now turn. Part II The political - economic transformation of late twentieth century capitalism The interval between the decay of the old and the formation and establishment of the new, constitutes a period of transition, which must always necessarily be one of uncertainty, confusion, error, and wild and fierce fanaticism. John Calhoun 7 Introduction If there has been some kind of transformation in the political economy of late twentieth-century capitalism, then it behoves us to establish how deep and fundamental the change might be. Signs and tokens of radical changes in labour processes, in consumer habits, in geographical and geopolitical configurations, in state powers and practices, and the like, abound. Yet we still live, in the West, in a society where production for profit remains the basic organizing principle of economic life. We need some way, therefore, to represent all the shifting and churning that has gone on since the first major post-war recession of 1973, which does not lose sight of the fact that the basic rules of a capitalist mode of production continue to operate as invariant shaping forces in historical-geographical development.

#### 3] We don’t read TFWK and say being non topical is fine – it doesn’t defeat the system, its fine for debate, and their arguments are that they destroy debate but they get offense by refusing work ie striking which is still somewhat topical proving that we also get the same amount of offense

#### 4] Presumption flips negative they have the burden of proof – the aff does nothing to expose the system – extempted

#### 5] Exhaustion turn – both of our theories say that capitalism kills subjectivity and has bad impacts, only the K method of resistance can solve – the only real world solution to depression is by trying to make yourself feel better and create movements – their advocacy just means that we sit around and absolutely nothing

#### 7] Group Hoofd and McLennan – these cards just identify the impacts of capitalism and why being non topical is good, I’m not reading T Framework, which solves all of their offense

#### 8] Their claims about subjectivity appeal to no external standard and have no true impacts – ask yourself WHY does it matter for movements HOW does affect your ballot story, and WHAT does it mean for them to win their theory of subject. Even if you think that matters here are reasons they are wrong:

#### A] Labor is just being exploited by capital interests – facebook and tech companies have overwhelming capital – there is no path to liberation that’s not structural change – sure they have material data but that’s only important insofar the material foundations of their company which is material capitalism

#### B] They are wrong at the level of subjectivity – things like exhaustion miss the fundamental change of subjectivity we need is a collective we – only the alterative can fix subjectivity like that

#### 9] On their advocacy text – a] I’m not engaging in the form of intellectual labor we don’t read topicality, however both of us equally engage in the space which means its non unique b] no impact to the debaters striking judge still has to vote one way or another

#### 10] Group the impact calc – we don’t concede the validity of the aff just because we respond to it – their arguments for capital just prove the alternative we can’t just mentally exhaust and solve all forms of oppression

#### 11] Mimicry is a link in to the K – they abstract away from material solutions and stray away – the thesis of the aff is that we can just magically overcome capitalism by “radically mimicking” practices of debate – that does absolutely nothing and distracts comrades from the end goal and sits in oppression without real change

#### 12] Group theory stuff – this just proves discussions of capitalism come before theory, that means we still have offense, we don’t read theory

#### 13] On their ROB – group the A-C point – we already responded to these its not a question of finding how subjectivity exists rather how we can materially solve capitalism

#### 14] TURN – They say they form good liberation strategies, but feminist movements like ME TOO etc and movements against sexual harrasments – need material change – we can’t redefine what it means absent women being in the work place in the first place, only our alternative structures politics in a way to do so

#### 15] The 1AC’s fatalism toward political change reflects an investment in failure rooted in a negative conception of identity. The horizon of this reactive politics is revenge, inflicting harm with no meaningful blueprint for collective liberation.

Bhambra 10 G­­­­­­urminder Bhambra, professor at the University of Warwick, her research addresses how, within sociological understandings of modernity, the experiences and claims of non-European 'others' have been rendered invisible to the dominant narratives and analytical frameworks of sociology. Her current research project is on the possibilities for historical sociology in a postcolonial world. She is editor of the new monograph series, Theory for a Global Age, published by Bloomsbury Academic. Victoria Margree, School of Humanities at University of Brighton, she lectures in literature, cultural studies and critical theory, with research specialisms in Late-Victorian and Edwardian literature and culture. Her work is informed by literary theory, psychoanalysis, feminism and postcolonial studies. “Identity Politics and the Need for a ‘Tomorrow’” Economic and Political Weekly. April 10, 2010. IB

2 The Reification of Identity We wish to turn now to a related problem within identity politicsthat can be best described as the problem of the reiﬁcation of politicised identities. Brown (1995) positions herself within thedebate about identity politics by seeking to elaborate on “the wounded character of politicised identity’s desire” (ibid: 55); thatis, the problem of “wounded attachments” whereby a claim to identity becomesover-invested in its own historical suffering and perpetuates its injurythrough its refusal to give up its identity claim. Brown’s argument is that where politicised identity is founded upon an experience of exclusion, for example, exclusion itself becomes perversely valorised in the continuance of that identity. In such cases, group activity operates to maintain and reproduce the identity created by injury (exclusion) rather than– and indeed, often in opposition to – resolving the injurious social relations that generated claims around that identity in the ﬁrst place. If things have to have a history in order to have af uture, then the problem becomes that of how history is con-structed in order to make the future. To the extent that, for Brown, identity is associatedprimarilywith (historical) injury, the future for that identity is thenalready determined by the injury “asbothbound to the history that produced itand as a reproach to the present which embodies that history” (ibid 1995: 73). Brown’s sug-gestion that as it is not possible to undo the past, the focus back- wards entraps the identity in reactionary practices, is, we believe,too stark and we will pursue this later in the article. Politicised identity, Brown maintains, “emerges and obtains its unifying coherence through the politicisation of exclusion from an ostensible universal, as a protest against exclusion” (ibid: 65). Its continuing existence requires both a belief in the legitimacy of the universal ideal (for example, ideals of opportunity, and re- ward in proportion to effort) and enduring exclusion from those ideals. Brown draws upon Nietzsche in arguing that such identities, produced in reaction to conditions of disempowerment andinequality, then become invested in their own impotence through practices of, for example, reproach, complaint, and revenge. These are “reactions” in the Nietzschean sense since they are substitutes for actions or can be seen as negative forms of action. Rather than acting to remove the cause(s) of suffering, that suffering is instead ameliorated (to some extent) through “the estab-lishment of suffering as the measure of social virtue” (ibid 1995:70), and is compensated for by the vengeful pleasures of recrimination. Such practices, she argues, stand in sharp distinction to –in fact, provide obstacles to – practices that would seek to dispel the conditions of exclusion. Brown casts the dilemma discussed above in terms of a choicebetween past and future, and adapting Nietzsche, exhorts theadoption of a (collective) will that would become the “redeemer of history” (ibid: 72) through its focus on the possibilities of creat-ing different futures. As Brown reads Nietzsche, the one thingthat the will cannot exert its power over is the past, the “it was”.Confronted with its impotence with respect to the events of thepast, the will is threatened with becoming simply an “angry spec-tator” mired in bitter recognition of its own helplessness. The onehope for the will is that it may, instead, achieve a kind of mastery over that past such that, although “what has happened” cannotbe altered, the past can be denied the power of continuing to de-termine the present and future. It is only this focus on the future, Brown continues, and the capacity to make a future in the face of human frailties and injustices that spares us from a rancorous decline into despair. Identity politics structured by ressentiment – that is, by suffering caused by past events – can only break outof the cycle of “slave morality” by remaking the present againstthe terms of the past, a remaking that requires a “forgetting” of that past. An act of liberation, of self-afﬁrmation, this “forgettingof the past” requires an “overcoming” of the past that offers iden-tity in relationship to suffering, in favour of a future in whichidentity is to be deﬁned differently. In arguing thus, Brown’s work becomes aligned with a posi-tion that sees the way forward for emancipatory politics as re-siding in a movement away from a “politics of memory” (Kilby 2002: 203) that is committed to articulating past injustices andsuffering. While we agree that investment in identities prem-ised upon suffering can function as an obstacle to alleviating the causes of that suffering, we believe that Brown’s argument as outlined is problematic. First, following Kilby (2002), we share a concern about any turn to the future that is ﬁgured as a complete abandonment of the past. This is because for those who have suffered oppression and exclusion, the injunction to give up articulating a pain that is still felt may seem cruel and impossible to meet. We would argue instead that the “turn to the future” that theorists such as Brown and Grosz callfor, to revitalise feminism and other emancipatory politics, need not be conceived of as a brute rejection of the past. Indeed, Brown herself recognises the problems involved here, stating that [since] erased histories and historical invisibility are themselves suchintegral elements of the pain inscribed in most subjugated identities[then] the counsel of forgetting, at least in its unreconstructedNietzschean form, seems inappropriate if not cruel (1995: 74). She implies, in fact, that the demand exerted by those in painmay be no more than the demand to exorcise that pain throughrecognition: “all that such pain may long for – more than revenge– is the chance to be heard into a certain release, recognised intoself-overcoming, incited into possibilities for triumphing over, and hence, losing itself” (1995: 74-75). Brown wishes to establish the political importance of remembering “painful” historical events but with a crucial caveat: that the purpose of remembering pain is to enable its release . The challenge then, according to her,is to create a political culture in which this project does not mutate into one of remembering pain for its own sake. Indeed, if Brown feels that this may be “a pass where we ought to part with Nietzsche” (1995: 74), then Freud may be a more suit-able companion. Since his early work with Breuer, Freud’s writ-ings have suggested the (only apparent) paradox that remember-ing is often a condition of forgetting. The hysterical patient, who is doomed to repeat in symptoms and compulsive actions a past she cannot adequately recall, is helped to remember that trau-matic past in order then to move beyond it: she must remember inorder to forget and to forget in order to be able to live in the present. 7 This model seems to us to be particularly helpful for thedilemma articulated by both Brown (1995) and Kilby (2002),insisting as it does that “forgetting” (at least, loosening the holdof the past, in order to enable the future) cannot be achieved without ﬁrst remembering the traumatic past. Indeed, this wouldseem to be similar to the message of Beloved , whose central motif of haunting (is the adult woman, “Beloved”, Sethe’s murderedchild returned in spectral form?) dramatises the tendency of theunanalysed traumatic past to keep on returning, constraining, asit does so, the present to be like the past, and thereby, disallow-ing the possibility of a future different from that past. As Sarah Ahmed argues in her response to Brown, “in order to break the seal of the past, in order to move away from attach-ments that are hurtful, we must ﬁrst bring them into the realm of political action” (2004: 33). We would add that the task of analysing the traumatic past, and thus opening up the possibility of political action, is unlikely to be achievable by individuals on their own, but that this, instead, requires a “community” of participants dedicated to the serious epistemic work of rememberingand interpreting the objective social conditions that made up thatpast and continue in the present. The “pain” of historical injury is not simply an individual psychological issue, but stems from objective social conditions which perpetuate, for the most part, forms of injustice and inequality into the present.In sum, Brown presents too stark a choice between past andfuture. In the example of Beloved with which we began thisarticle, Paul D’s acceptance of Sethe’s experiences of slavery asdistinct from his own, enable them both to arrive at new under-standings of their experience. Such understanding is a way of partially “undoing” the (effects of) the past and coming to terms with the locatedness of one’s being in the world (Mohanty 1995). As this example shows, opening up a future, and attending to theongoing effects of a traumatic past, are only incorrectly under-stood as alternatives. A second set of problems with Brown’s critique of identity poli-tics emerge from what we regard as her tendency to individualise social problems as problems that are the possession and theresponsibility of the “wounded” group. Brown suggests that the problems associated with identity politics can be overcome through a “shift in the character of political expression and politi-cal claims common to much politicised identity” (1995: 75). She deﬁnes this shift as one in which identity would be expressed in terms ofdesire rather than of ontology by supplanting the language of “I am” with the language of “I want this for us” (1995:75). Such a reconﬁguration, she argues, would create an opportu-nity to “rehabilitate the memory of desire within identiﬁcatory processes…prior to [their] wounding” (1995: 75). It would fur-ther refocus attention on the future possibilities present in theidentity as opposed to the identity being foreclosed through its attention to past-based grievances.

#### 16] Global capitalism relies on a structurally divided form of society which allows it to commodify all logic which accepts the given structure. This is used to cover the unsustainability of its current form. However, the lines of such divisions can be contested from outside the commodification by pursuing valuation of ecology, reproduction, and polity above capital – this responds to Robinson and all their progress impossible arguments – FRASER:

[Fraser, Nancy. “Beyond Marx’s Hidden Abode: For an Expanded Conception of Capitalism.” *Critical Theory in Critical Times*. Pg 142-159]

Likewise, the picture I have sketched differs from the view of capitalism as a reified form of ethical life, characterized by pervasive commodification and monetization. In **that view**, as articulated in Georg Luka.cs's celebrated essay on "Reification and the Consciousness **of** the Proletariat," **the commodity form colonizes all of life**, stamping its mark on such diverse phenomena as law, science, morality, art, and culture.11 In my view**, commodification is far from universal in capitalist society**. On the contrary**, where it is present, it depends for its very existence on zones of noncommodification**. **Social, ecological, and political**, these **noncommodified zones do not simply mirror the commodity logic but embody distinctive normative and ontological grammars of their own**. For example, **social practices oriented to reproduction (as opposed to production) tend to engender ideals of care, mutual responsibility, and solidarity, however hierarchical and parochial these may be**.12 Likewise, **practices oriented to polity, as opposed to economy, often refer to principles of democracy, public autonomy, and collective self-determination, however restricted or exclusionary these may be**. Finally, **practices associated with capitalism's background conditions in nonhuman nature tend to foster such values as ecological stewardship, nondomination of nature, and justice among generations, however romantic and sectarian these may be**. Of course, **my point is not to idealize these "noneconomic" normativities** **but** **to register their divergence from the values associated with capitalism**'s foreground-above all, growth, efficiency, equal exchange, individual choice, negative liberty, and meritocratic advancement This divergence makes all the difference to how we conceptualize capitalism. **Far from generating a single, all-pervasive logic of reification, capitalist society is normatively differentiated, encompassing a determinate plurality of distinct but interrelated social ontologies.** What happens when these collide remains to be seen. But the structure that underpins them is already clear: capitalism's distinctive normative topography arises from the foreground-background relations we have identified**. If we aim to develop a critical theory of it, we must replace the view of capitalism as a reified form of ethical life with a more differentiated, structural view.** If capitalism is neither an economic system nor a reified form of ethical life, then what is it? My answer is that it is best conceived as an institutionalized social order, on a par with, for example, feudalism. Understanding capitalism in this way underscores its structural divisions, especially the institutional separations that I have identified. Constitutive of capitalism, we have seen, is the institutional separation of "economic production" from "social reproduction," a gendered separation that grounds specifically capitalist forms of male domination even as it also enables capitalist exploitation of labor power and, through that, its officially sanctioned mode of accumulation. Also definitive of capitalism is the institutional separation of "economy" from "polity," a separation that expels matters defined as "economic" from the political agenda of territorial states, freeing capital to roam in a transnational no-man's-land, where it reaps the benefits of hegemonic ordering while escaping political control. Equally **fundamental to capitalism**, finally, **is the ontological division, preexisting but massively intensified, between its (nonhuman) "natural" background and its (apparently nonnatural) "human" foreground**. Therefore, to speak of capitalism as an institutionalized social order, premised on such separations, is to suggest its nonaccidental, structural imbrication with gender oppression, political domination-both national and transnational, colonial and postcolonial-and ecological degradation, in conjunction, of course, with its equally structural, nonaccidental foreground dynamic of labor exploitation. This is not to suggest, however, that capitalism's institutional divisions are simply given once and for all. On the contrary, as we saw**, precisely where and how capitalist societies draw the line between production and reproduction, economy and polity, human and nonhuman nature varies historically, according to the regime of accumulation**. In fact, we can con­ ceptualize competitive laissez-faire capitalism, state-managed monopoly capitalism, and globalizing neoliberal capitalism in precisely these terms, as three historically specific ways of demarcating economy from polity, production from reproduction, and human from nonhuman nature. Equally important, **the precise configuration of the capitalist order at any place and time depends on politic**s-on the balance of social power and on the outcome of social struggles. **Far from being simply given, capitalism's institutional divisions often become foci of conflict, as actors mobilize to challenge or defend the established boundaries separating economy from polity, production from reproduction, human from nonhuman nature.** **Insofar as they aim to relocate contested processes on capitalism's institutional map, capitalism's subjects draw on the normative perspective**s associated with the various zones that we have identified.We can see this happening today. For example**, some opponents of neoliberalism draw on ideals of car**e, solidarity, and mutual responsibility, associated with reproduction, in order **to oppose efforts to commodify education**. **Others** **summon notions of stewardship of nature** and justice among generations, **associated with ecology, to militate for a shift to renewable energy**. Still others invoke ideals of public autonomy, associated with polity, to advocate international capital controls and to extend democratic accountability beyond the state. **Such claims, along with the counterclaims they inevitably incite, are the very stuff of social struggle in capitalist societies-as fundamental as the class struggles over control of commodity production and distribution of surplus value that Marx privileged**. **These boundary struggles**, as I shall call them, **decisively shape the structure of capitalist societies**.13 They play a constitutive role in the view of capitalism as an institutionalized social order.The focus on boundary struggles should forestall any misimpression that the view I have been sketching is functionalist. Granted, I began by characterizing reproduction, **ecology**, and political power **as necessary background conditions for capitalism's economic front story, stressing their functionality for commodity production, labor exploitation, and capital accumulation. But this structural moment does not capture the full story of capitalism's foreground-background relations. It coexists, rather, with another "moment," already hinted at, which is equally central and which emerges from the characterization of the social, political, and ecological as reservoirs of"noneconomic" normativity. This implies that, even as these "noneconomic" orders make commodity production possible, they are not reducible to that enabling function. Far from being wholly exhausted by, or entirely subservient to, the dynamics of accumulation, each of these hidden abodes harbors distinctive ontologies of so­ cial practice and normative ideals.** Moreover, **these "noneconomic" ideals are pregnant with critical­political possibili**ty**. Especially in times of crisis, they can be turned against core economic practices associated with capital accumulation**. In such times, the structural divisions that normally serve to segregate the various normativities within their own institutional spheres tend to weaken. When the separations fail to hold, capitalism's subjects-who live, after all, in more than one sphere-experience normative conflict. **Far from bringing in ideas from the "outside," they draw on capitalism's own complex normativity to criticize it, mobilizing against the grain the multiplicity of ideals** that coexist, at times uneasily, in an institutionalized social order premised on foreground-background divisions. Thus, the view of capitalism as an institutionalized social order helps us understand how a critique of capitalism is possible from within it. Yet this view also suggests that it would be wrong to construe society, polity, and nature romantically, as "outside" capitalism and as inherently opposed to it. That romantic view is held today by a fair number of anticapitalist thinkers and left-wing activists, including cultural femi­ nists, deep ecologists, and neo-anarchists, as well as by many proponents of "plural," "postgrowth," "solidary," and "popular" economies. Too often, these currents treat "care;' "nature;' "direct action," or "commoning" as intrinsically anticapitalist. As a result, they overlook the fact that their favorite practices not only are sources of critique but also are inte­ gral parts of the capitalist order. Rather, the argument here is that society, polity, and nature arose con­ currently with economy and developed in symbiosis with it. They are effectively the latter's "others" and only acquire their specific character in contrast to it. Thus, reproduction and production make a pair, with each term co-defined by way of the other. Neither makes any sense apart from the other. The same is true of polity/economy and nature/human. Part and parcel of the capitalist order, none of the "noneconomic" realms af­ fords a wholly external standpoint that could underwrite an absolutely pure and fully radical form of critique. On the contrary, political projects that appeal to what they imagine to be capitalism's "outside" usually end up recycling capitalist stereotypes, as they counterpose female nurtur­ ance to male aggression, spontaneous cooperation to economic calcula­ tion, nature's holistic organicism to anthropocentric individualism. To premise one's struggles on these oppositions is not to challenge but to un­ wittingly reflect the institutionalized social order of capitalist society. It follows from this that a proper account of capitalism's foreground­ background relations must hold together three distinct ideas. **First, capitalism's "noneconomic" realms serve as enabling background conditions for its economy; the economy depends for its very existence on values and inputs from the "noneconomic." Second, however, capitalism's "noneco­ nomic" realms have a weight and character of their own, which can, under certain circumstances, provide resources for anticapitalist struggle.** Nevertheless, and this is the third point, these realms are part and parcel of capitalist society, historically coconstituted in tandem with its economy and marked by their symbiosis with it. There is also a fourth idea, which returns us to the problem of crisis with which I began. Capitalism's foreground-background relations harbor built-in sources of social instability. As we have seen**, capitalist production is not self-sustaining; it free rides on social reproduction, nature, and political power. Yet its orientation to endless accumulation threatens to destabilize these very conditions of its possibility**. **In the case of its ecological conditions, what is at risk are the natural processes that sustain life and provide the material inputs for social provisioning.** In the case of its social-reproduction conditions, what is imperiled are the sociocultural processes that supply the solidary relations, affective dis­ positions, and value horizons that underpin social cooperation while also furnishing the appropriately socialized and skilled human beings who con­ stitute "labor." In the case of its political conditions, what is compromised are the public powers, both national and transnational, that guarantee property rights, enforce contracts, adjudicate disputes, quell anticapital­ ist rebellions, and maintain the money supply.