# 1AC

### 1AC – Footnote

TW – Nongraphic mentions of suicide, depression, and drug use  
CSA –  
Jaeggi and Robinson – Alienation – Material Cap  
Gillespie – Black hyperreality and communication  
Lundberg and McGowan – Debate deployment  
Moen – Utilitarian philosophy through maintaining sustainable capitalism  
Kant – Free market principles

### 1AC – Thesis

#### Debate is structured as a marketplace for information where we fetishize notions of “pedagogy” and is an extension of semiocapitalist logic through immaterial manors. Communication within the university isn’t one that develops subjectivities and psychic identity rather a system geared towards fragmentation and futuristic productivity.

**Berardi 12** [David Hugill and Elise Thorburn, 9-26-2012, "Interview with 'Bifo': Reactivating the Social Body in Insurrectionary Times," Critical Legal Thinking, [https://criticallegalthinking.com/2012/09/26/interview-with-bifo-reactivating-the-social-body-in-insurrectionary-times //](https://criticallegalthinking.com/2012/09/26/interview-with-bifo-reactivating-the-social-body-in-insurrectionary-times%20//) JB]

* TW – mentions of suicide
* Impact turns fiat and notions of “the aff is a good idea”
* Debate bad and communication gets coopted

A: First of all because **students are increasingly learning in** small parcels, **small fragments**, small fractals **of knowledge**, and they are becoming **more** and more **accustomed to think** of their **knowledge not as knowledge but** as **intellectual availability to exploitation**.  In North American forms of education this is already well established, it is nothing new. It is new in much of Europe and it has begun to provoke some reactions. But it is also a **fact of a networked and globalized world**.  What does precariousness mean today? What is the relationship between precariousness and globalization? It means that you can **buy a fragment of labor** in Bangkok, a fragment in Buenos Aires, and **a fragment in Milan** and that these three **fragments become** the **same product from** the point of view of **capital**.  **Knowledge is** headed the **same** way. You no longer need – from the point of view of capital – to know in the **humanistic sense**, the meaning, the finality, the **intimate contradictions of knowledge**, you just need to know how **particular parcels of knowledge** can be made **functional**. There is something new and something old in this. Herbert Marcuse’s (1964) One Dimensional Man already identified this problem of the functionalization of knowledge but in his time it was only a kind of prediction about how capitalism would be transformed. Today, this functional consideration is the dominant form of our **relationship to knowledge**. So, we should question people about **what is happening to our knowledge**. Are we really learning things, knowing things? Or are we simply learning how to **become part of** the **productive machine**? Additionally, I think we need to ask people, especially young people, **about** their **suffering in the relationship with knowledge**, with communication and so on. I think that the problem of psychic suffering is of central importance our time. Problems of depression, panic, massive suicide, are **very real**.  Do you know that suicide has become the main cause of death among people between 18-25 years old? **Suicide is** becoming a **political weapon**. I’m not only thinking of Columbine or of Mohamed Bouazizi, the man who killed himself and started the Tunisian revolution.  Suicide has something to do with knowledge.  When your **knowledge** is becoming **more and more something** that does **not belong to you**, this is a problem of personal identity, of **psychic identity**.

#### The new dawn of capitalism has created an age of constant information and signifiers floating through our phones and computers as media. This creates a dyslexia – reduced attention spans, no time for true human interaction – this leads to information overload, which is too fast for our organic minds to keep up with – that causes depression and drug use. It’s no coincidence that the rise of tech in the 80s was complimented with a drug epidemic. These signifiers come prior to action, thus debate should disrupt semiocapitalism.

**Berardi 09** [Franco Berardi, Italian communist theorist and activist in the autonomist tradition, whose work mainly focuses on the role of the media and information technology within post-industrial capitalism Precarious Rhapsody, by Franco Bifo Berardi et al., AK Press, 2009. P. 40-42 // LEX JB]

* TW – mentions of suicide, not read, but it’s in the card if you chose to read it after the round

The acceleration of information exchange has produced and is producing an effect of a pathological type on the individual human mind and even more on the collective mind. Individuals are not in a position to consciously process the immense and always growing mass of information that enters their computers, their cell phones, their television screens, their electronic diaries and their heads. However, it seems indispensable to follow, recognize, evaluate, process all this information if you want to be efficient, competitive, victorious. The practice of multitasking, the opening of a window of hypertextual attention, the passage from one context to another for the complex evaluation of processes, tends to deform the sequential modality of mental processing. According to Christian Marazzi, who has concerned himself in various books with the relations between economics, language and affectivity, the latest generation of economic operators is affected by a real and proper form of dyslexia, incapable of reading a page from the beginning to the end according to sequential procedures, incapable of maintaining concentrated attention on the same object for a long time. And dyslexia spreads to cognitive and social behaviors, leading to rendering the pursuit of linear strategies nearly impossible. Some, like Davenport and Beck , speak of an attention economy. But when a cognitive faculty enters into and becomes part of economic discourse this means that it has become a scarce resource. The necessary time for paying attention to the fluxes of information to which we are exposed and which must be evaluated in order to be able to make decisions is lacking. The consequence is in front of our eyes: political and economic decisions no longer respond to a long term strategic rationality and simply follow immediate interests. On the other hand, we are always less available for giving our attention to others gratuitously. We no longer have the attention time for love, tenderness, nature, pleasure and compassion. Our attention is ever more besieged and therefore we assign it only to our careers, to competition and to economic decisions. And in any case our temporality cannot follow the insane speed of the hypercomplex digital machine. Human beings tend to become the ruthless executors of decisions taken without attention. The universe of transmitters, or cyberspace, now proceeds at a superhuman velocity and becomes untranslatable for the universe of receivers, or cybertime, that cannot go faster than what is allowed by the physical material from which our brain is made, the slowness of our body, the need for caresses and affection. Thus opens a pathological gap and mental illness spreads as testified by the statistics and above all our everyday experience. And just as pathology spreads, so too do drugs. The flourishing industry of psychopharmaceuticals beats records every year, the number of packets of Ritalin, Prozac, Zoloft and other psychotropics sold in the pharmacies continually increases, while dissociation, suffering, desperation, terror, the desire not to exist, to not have to fight continuously, to disappear grows alongside the will to kill and to kill oneself. When, towards the end of the 1970s, an acceleration of the productive and communicative rhythms in occidental metropolitan centers was imposed, a gigantic epidemic of drug addiction made its appearance. The world was leaving its human epoch to enter the era of machinic posthuman acceleration: many sensitive organisms of the human variety began to snort cocaine, a substance that permits the acceleration of the existential rhythm leading to transforming oneself into a machine. Many other sensitive organisms of the human kind injected heroin in their veins, a substance that deactivates the relation with the speed of the surrounding atmosphere. The epidemic of powders during the 1970s and the 1980s produced an existential and cultural devastation with which we still haven’t come to terms with. Then illegal drugs were replaced by those legal substances which the pharmaceutical industry in a white coat made available for its victims and this was the epoch of anti-depressants, of euphorics and of mood regulators. Today psychopathy reveals itself ever more clearly as a social epidemic and, more precisely, a socio-communicational one. If you want to survive you have to be competitive and if you want to be competitive you must be connected, receive and process continuously an immense and growing mass of data. This provokes a constant attentive stress, a reduction of the time available for affectivity. These two tendencies, inseparably linked, provoke an effect of devastation on the individual psyche: depression, panic, anxiety, the sense of solitude and existential misery. But these individual symptoms cannot be indefinitely isolated, as psychopathology has done up until now and as economic power wishes to do.

#### Questions regarding ethics are irrelevant in the world of the infosphere. All information gets coopted by the inescapability of capitalism – it’s search is cruelly optimistic in the infosphere.

Berardi 11 [Franco Berardi, Italian communist theorist and activist in the autonomist tradition, whose work mainly focuses on the role of the media and information technology within post-industrial capitalism “0. Bifurications.” Precarious Rhapsody, by Franco Bifo Berardi et al., AK Press, 2011. P. 14-15 // LEX JB]

Because of this, I believe that it is necessary to identify the new forms of social consciousness beginning from generational belonging. And for this reason I will speak of two decisive successive shifts in a mutation that has led to the draining of humanistic categories and of the perspectives on which modern politics was based. These two passages are constituted in the subsumption of the human mind in formation within two successive technological configurations of the media-sphere. The first is that which I call video-electronic, meaning the technologies of televisual communication. It is a case of the passage that Marshall McLuhan speaks of in his fundamental 1964 study, Understanding Media. McLuhan looks at the transition from the alphabetic sphere to the video-electronic one and concludes that when the simultaneous succeeds the sequential, the capacity of mythological elaboration succeeds that of critical elaboration. The critical faculty presupposes a particular structuring of the message: the sequentiality of writing, the slowness of reading, and the possibility of judging in sequence the truth or falsity of statements. It is in these conditions that the critical discrimination that has characterized the cultural forms of modernity becomes possible. But in the sphere of video-electronic communication, critique becomes progressively substituted by a form of mythological thinking in which the capacity to distinguish between the truth and falsity of statements becomes not only irrelevant but impossible. This passage took place in the techno-sphere and media-sphere of the 1960s and 1970s and the generation that was born at the end of the 1970s began to manifest the first signs of impermeability to the values of politics and critique that had been fundamental for the preceding generations of the twentieth century. The more radical mutation was the diffusion of digital technologies and the formation of the global internet during the 1990s. Here, the functional modality of the human mind changes completely, not only because the conditions of communication become infinitely more complex, saturated and accelerated, but rather because the infantile mind begins to form itself in a media environment completely different from that of modern humanity.

#### The topic’s call for unionization and strikes might have worked a century ago, but post digital infosphere, the affirmative bites into a cycle of production of fragmentation and facing the impossibility of the 1NC’s TVA argument.

**Berardi 11** [Franco Berardi, Italian communist theorist and activist in the autonomist tradition, whose work mainly focuses on the role of the media and information technology within post-industrial capitalism “Chapter 4 Exhastion and Subjectivity.” After the Future, by Franco Bifo Berardi et al., AK Press, 2011. P. 107-108 // LEX JB]

The financial cycle is bleeding the social environment dry: sucking energies, resources, and the future. And giving nothing back. Recovery of the financial process of valorization of capital is totally separated from the cycle of material production and social demand. Financial capitalism has obtained autonomy from social life. Let’s consider the political side of the same problem: once upon a time when society was suffering the blows of recession, workers reacted with strikes, struggle and political organization, and forced state intervention in order to increase demand. Industrial growth needed mass consumption and social stability. What is impressive in the ongoing crisis, on the contrary, is the widespread passivity of the workers, their inability to unionize. The political trend in Europe is the meltdown of leftist parties and the labor movement. In the US, Obama is daily attacked by racist and populist mobs, but no progressive social movement is emerging. 1.2 million people have had their mortgages foreclosed upon and lost their houses following the sub-prime swindle, but no organized reaction has surfaced. People suffer and cry alone. In the old time of industrial capitalism, the working class could fight against a target that was precisely identified: the boss, the entrepreneur who was the owner of material things like the factory, and of the product of his laborers. Nowadays the boss has vanished. He is fragmented into billions of financial segments, and disseminated into millions of financial agents scattered all around the world. The workers themselves are part of recombinant financial capital. They are expecting future revenues from their pension fund investments. They own stock options in the enterprise exploiting their labor. They are hooked up, like a fly in a spider web, and if they move, they get strangled, but if they don’t move, the spider will suck their life from them. Society may rot, fall apart, agonize. It is not going to affect the political and economic stability of capitalism. What is called economic recovery is a new round of social devastation. So the recession is over, capitalism is recovering. Nonetheless, unemployment is rising and misery is spreading. This means that financial capitalism is autonomous from society. Capitalism doesn’t need workers: it just needs cellular fractals of labor, underpaid, precarious, de-personalised. Fragments of impersonal nervous energy, recombined by the network. The crisis is going to push forward technological change, and the substitution of human labor with machines. The employment rate is not going to rise in the future, and productivity will increase. A shrinking number of workers will be forced to produce more and more, and to work overtime. The real bubble is the work bubble. We have been working too much; we are still working too much. The human race does not need more goods, it needs a redistribution of existing goods, an intelligent application of technology and a worldwide cut in the lifetime dedicated to labor. Social energies have to be freed from labor dependence, and returned to the field of social affection, education, and therapy. We should take seriously the concept of autonomy. In the present condition autonomy means exodus from the domain of economic law: Out-onomy, abandonment of the field of economic exchange, self-organization of knowledge and of production in a sphere of social life which is no longer dependent on economic culture and expectations – barter, free exchange of time and of competence, food self reliance, occupation of territories in the cities, organization of self-defense.

#### The impact is the destruction of the subject—info overload impedes memory retention. This produces a depersonalized subject that gets molded by structures of homogeneity and distorts our ability to engage in affective enjoyment – reducing us to cold automatons that react to stimuli with non-reflective action. This is the internal link to panic, chaos, depression, and conflict.

**Berardi 09** “Precarious Rhapsody: Semiocapitalism and the pathologies of the post-alpha generation” by Franco Berardi 2009 // LHPDD

“The **modalities of memorization depend on the mind’s capacity to store information that has left a deep impression, was active over a long period of time or in repetitive fashion. Memorization modifies the conscious organism and shapes** its **identity, given that identity can be defined as a dynamic accumulation of the memory of places and relations forming the continuity of an experience. But** what happens to memory **when the flow of information explodes, expands enormously, besieges perception, occupies the whole of available mental time, accelerates and reduces the mind’s time of exposure to the single informational impression**? What happens here is that the **memory of the past thins out and the mass of present information tends to occupy the whole space of attention. The greater the density of the info-sphere, the scarcer is the time available for memorization. The briefer the mind’s lapse of exposure to a single piece of information, the more tenuous will be the trace left by this information.** In this way, mental activity tends to be compressed into the present, **the depth of memory is reduced and thus the perception of the historical past** and even of existential diachrony **tends to disappear.** And **if** it’s true that **identity is** in large part **connected to what has** dynamically **settled in personal memory (places, faces, expectations, illusions),** it is possible to hypothesize that **we are moving towards a progressive disidentification, where organisms are increasingly recording a flow that unfolds in the present and leave**s **no deep imprint because of the rapidity with which it appears to the eye and settles in memory. The thickening of the info-spheric crust** and the increase in quantity and intensity of the incoming informational material **thus produces the effect of a reduction of the sphere of singular memory. The things that an individual remembers** (images, etc.) **work towards the construction of an impersonal memory, homogenized, uniformly assimilated and thinly elaborated because the time of exposure is so fast it doesn’t allow for a deep personalization.** Cybertime, eroticism, desensitization It seems to me that the fundamental question of the current mutation – the mutation that flows through individual organisms, populations and the entire planet – can be found at the intersection of electronic and organic cyberspace. Young people are naturally the most exposed to the effects of this mutation, because the invasive power of cyberspace has impacted on them to the full, and as a consequence their potential to adapt cybertemporally (that is the potential of their cognitive, psychic and psycho-physical apparatus) is subject to an extreme solicitation. The essential problem is that the rhythms of the technological mutation are a lot faster than those of the mental mutation. Hence **the expansion of cyberspace is incommensurably faster than the human brain’s capacity to expand and adapt** (cybertime). We can increase the length of time an organism is exposed to information, but experience can’t be intensified beyond a certain limit. **Acceleration provokes an impoverishment of experience, given that we are exposed to a growing mass of stimuli that we can’t digest in the intensive modes of enjoyment and knowledge. Spheres of relationality and behavior that require an extended period of attention such as those of affectivity, eroticism and deep comprehension, are disturbed**, subject to a contraction. **In** these **conditions of acceleration and information overload, automatism tends to become the prevalent form of reaction to stimuli**, in the sense that **automatic reactions are those that don’t demand reflection or a conscious and emotional reaction. They are standard reactions, implicit in the preformatted chain of actions and reactions of the homogenized info-sphere.** The digitalization of the communicative environment and even of the perceptive environment without a doubt acts on the sensibility of human organisms. But how do we address this problematic? What instruments of analysis, what criteria of evaluation allow us to speak of sensibility, of taste, of enjoyment and suffering, eroticism and sensuality? We have no other instrument but ourselves, our antennae, our bodies, our psychic and erotic reactivity. Moreover, the filter of the observer can have a distorting effect. And yet the feeling of rarefaction of contact, **coldness and contraction are at the core of our contemporary pathologies**, particularly evident in the younger generation. The sphere of eroticism is particularly prone to them.” (88-90)

#### Thus, the vote affirmative to symbolically take the system hostage through it’s own method of exhaustion. It’s a reimagination of the status quo through the lens of a radically passive Wu Wei society. T-Framework is just uniqueness and a move towards passivity – the only way to escape the infosphere which proves contradictions affirm because it confuses productivity in debate.

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The process of collective subjectivation (i.e. social recomposition) implies the development of a common language-affection which is essentially happening in the temporal dimension. The semiocapitalist acceleration of time has destroyed the social possibility of sensitive elaboration of the semio-flow. The proliferation of simulacra in the info-sphere has saturated the space of attention and imagination. Advertising and stimulated hyper-expression (“just do it”), have submitted the energies of the social psyche to permanent mobilization. Exhaustion follows, and exhaustion is the only way of escape: Nothing, not even the system, can avoid the symbolic obligation, and it is in this trap that the only chance of a catastrophe for capital remains. The system turns on itself, as a scorpion does when encircled by the challenge of death. For it is summoned to answer, if it is not to lose face, to what can only be death. The system must itself commit suicide in response to the multiplied challenge of death and suicide. So hostages are taken. On the symbolic or sacrificial plane, from which every moral consideration of the innocence of the victims is ruled out the hostage is the substitute, the alter-ego of the terrorist, the hostage’s death for the terrorist. Hostage and terrorist may thereafter become confused in the same sacrificial act. (Baudrillard 1993a: 37) In these impressive pages Baudrillard outlines the end of the modern dialectics of revolution against power, of the labor movement against capitalist domination, and predicts the advent of a new form of action which will be marked by the sacrificial gift of death (and self-annihilation). After the destruction of the World Trade Center in the most important terrorist act ever, Baudrillard wrote a short text titled The Spirit of Terrorism where he goes back to his own predictions and recognizes the emergence of a catastrophic age. When the code becomes the enemy the only strategy can be catastrophic: all the counterphobic ravings about exorcizing evil: it is because it is there, everywhere, like an obscure object of desire. Without this deep-seated complicity, the event would not have had the resonance it has, and in their symbolic strategy the terrorists doubtless know that they can count on this unavowable complicity. (Baudrillard 2003: 6) This goes much further than hatred for the dominant global power by the disinherited and the exploited, those who fell on the wrong side of global order. This malignant desire is in the very heart of those who share this order’s benefits. An allergy to all definitive order, to all definitive power is happily universal, and the two towers of the World Trade Center embodied perfectly, in their very double-ness (literally twin-ness), this definitive order: No need, then, for a death drive or a destructive instinct, or even for perverse, unintended effects. Very logically – inexorably – the increase in the power heightens the will to destroy it. And it was party to its own destruction. When the two towers collapsed, you had the impression that they were responding to the suicide of the suicide-planes with their own suicides. It has been said that “Even God cannot declare war on Himself.” Well, He can. The West, in position of God (divine omnipotence and absolute moral legitimacy), has become suicidal, and declared war on itself. (Baudrillard 2003: 6-7) In Baudrillard’s catastrophic vision I see a new way of thinking subjectivity: a reversal of the energetic subjectivation that animates the revolutionary theories of the 20th century, and the opening of an implosive theory of subversion, based on depression and exhaustion. In the activist view exhaustion is seen as the inability of the social body to escape the vicious destiny that capitalism has prepared: deactivation of the social energies that once upon a time animated democracy and political struggle. But exhaustion could also become the beginning of a slow movement towards a “wu wei” civilization, based on the withdrawal, and frugal expectations of life and consumption. Radicalism could abandon the mode of activism, and adopt the mode of passivity. A radical passivity would definitely threaten the ethos of relentless productivity that neoliberal politics has imposed. The mother of all the bubbles, the work bubble, would finally deflate. We have been working too much during the last three or four centuries, and outrageously too much during the last thirty years. The current depression could be the beginning of a massive abandonment of competition, consumerist drive, and of dependence on work. Actually, if we think of the geopolitical struggle of the first decade – the struggle between Western domination and jihadist Islam – we recognize that the most powerful weapon has been suicide. 9/11 is the most impressive act of this suicidal war, but thousands of people have killed themselves in order to destroy American military hegemony. And they won, forcing the western world into the bunker of paranoid security, and defeating the hyper-technological armies of the West both in Iraq, and in Afghanistan. The suicidal implosion has not been confined to the Islamists. Suicide has became a form of political action everywhere. Against neoliberal politics, Indian farmers have killed themselves. Against exploitation hundreds of workers and employees have killed themselves in the French factories of Peugeot, and in the offices of France Telecom. In Italy, when the 2009 recession destroyed one million jobs, many workers, haunted by the fear of unemployment, climbed on the roofs of the factories, threatening to kill themselves. Is it possible to divert this implosive trend from the direction of death, murder, and suicide, towards a new kind of autonomy, social creativity and of life? I think that it is possible only if we start from exhaustion, if we emphasize the creative side of withdrawal. The exchange between life and money could be deserted, and exhaustion could give way to a huge wave of withdrawal from the sphere of economic exchange. A new refrain could emerge in that moment, and wipe out the law of economic growth. The self-organization of the general intellect could abandon the law of accumulation and growth, and start a new concatenation, where collective intelligence is only subjected to the common good. The global recession started officially in September 2008 and lasted officially until the summer of 2009. Since the summer of 2009 the official truth in the media, in political statements, in economic talk was: recovery. The stock exchange began to rise again and the banks started again paying huge bonuses to their managers and so on. Meanwhile, unemployment was exploding everywhere, salaries were falling, welfare was curtailed, 90 million more are expected to join the army of poverty in the next year. Is this recovery? Our conditional reflex (influenced by the Keynesian knowledge that recovery is the recovery of the “real economy”) answered: no, this is not recovery, capitalism cannot recover only by financial means. But we should reframe our vision. Finance is no longer a mere tool of capitalist growth. The financialization of capitalism has made finance the very ground of accumulation, as Christian Marazzi (2010) has explained in recent works such as The Violence of Financial Capitalism. In the sphere of semiocapitalism, financial signs are not only signifiers pointing to some referents. The distinction between sign and referent is over. The sign is the thing, the product, the process. The “real” economy and financial expectations are no longer distinct spheres. In the past, when riches were created in the sphere of industrial production, when finance was only a tool for the mobilization of capital to invest in the field of material production, recovery could not be limited to the financial sphere. It took also employment and demand. Industrial capitalism could not grow if society did not grow. Nowadays we must accept the idea that financial capitalism can recover and thrive without social recovery. Social life has become residual, redundant, irrelevant.

### 1AC – Cohering Logic

#### Contradicting statements do not mean that both are wrong. For example, the statements “the next statement is a lie”, and “the previous statement is true” contradict each other, but that does not mean that both are false. This results in Trivialism, a logical theory that all propositions and statements are true. Thus, the standard is consistency with true statements through trivialism. To clarify, consequences don’t link

**Kabay 08** [Paul Douglas Kabay “A Defense of Trivialism” Submitted in total fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy School of Philosophy, Anthropology, and Social Inquiry The University of Melbourne [https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/6714/93693da32d0b9c38aad857672021a950486a.pdf //](https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/6714/93693da32d0b9c38aad857672021a950486a.pdf%20//) LEX JB]

* Thesis

**Trivialism is the claim that every proposition is true**. This is such a bizarre view that one wonders why anyone would have taken an interest in it – **let alone think that it is true**. The reason why there is an interest in trivialism is due to the fact that there has been a revival in a view known as **dialetheism - the claim that some contradictions are true. Trivialism is often understood as an extreme form of dialetheism (all, as opposed to some, contradictions are true).** There has been pressure on dialetheists to distinguish their own view from trivialism. There is no doubt that there is a tendency to conflate the two. This dates back to Aristotle’s formulation and defense of the Law of NonContradiction in his Metaphysics Γ. 1 It is clear, given Aristotle’s intended target, that he is often defending the Law of Non-Triviality, i.e. the law that there is at least one proposition that fails to be true. So, these passages are misunderstood if they are interpreted to be an attack on **dialetheism solely and not also trivialism**. But the temptation to conflate the two positions remains today.

#### A] Authority – The theory is constitutive and impossible to deny – everything collapses

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* Trivialism is the conjunction of every proposition
* You can’t deny a conjunctions with more conjuncts, it just proves validity of conjunction with truth
* Every speech act requires conjuncts, else it’s incoherent
* That means nontrivialism isn’t a coherent speech act. The performance of denial is impossible

There we have it – trivialism is true and it is both possible and reasonable to believe that it is true. I have reached this conclusion in the following way. First, as I argued in chapter 3, the consensus view on trivialism – that trivialism should be denied – is not sustainable in the sense that it is literally impossible. This is for two reasons. **First, trivialism is the conjunction of every proposition. Secondly, it is not possible to express a denial of a conjunction by asserting one or more of its conjuncts. It follows that nontrivialism cannot be performed or expressed – there is no such speech act. As such, the nontrivialist does not exist and there is nothing that one can believe that would enable one to be a nontrivialist**. In the dialectic between the trivialist and the nontrivialist, the trivialist wins by default, as there is no such thing as the nontrivialist. But **even if we assume a different account of denial that enables one to successfully deny trivialism** (one in **which** denial **does not involve asserting something asserted by the trivialist**, as it does not involve asserting anything at all), **it still remains the case that there is nothing that one can assert that results in the performance of the speech act of nontrivialism and so nothing that one can believe that would make one a nontrivialist**. But, as I have pointed out, there are reasons for thinking that such alternative accounts of denial are not entirely satisfactory.

#### B] More warrants – Even if you negate, you still affirm

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* Every statement/speech act requires propositional content and illocutionary force to make a statement.
  + Propositional content is the claim of the sentence
  + Illocutionary force means the claim is enforced
* Every statement, like the resolution is true then
* If you affirm x, x is true. If you negate x, you affirm -x which means it’s still true
* That’s because the propositional content is still there

**Denial is a speech act along with, but not limited to, other speech acts (or illocutionary acts) such as assertion, commanding, questioning, and accusing.**124 Like all speech acts, **denial necessarily has two components – without both of these being present, there cannot be a speech act. First, it has a propositional content. Secondly, it has an illocutionary force with which the proposition is uttered.** Searle refers in this regard to an ‘illocutionary force operator’ and a ‘propositional operator’: … we can distinguish between two (not necessarily separate) elements in the syntactical structure of the sentence, which we might call the propositional operator and the illocutionary force indicator. **The illocutionary force** indicator **shows** how **the proposition is to be taken**, or to put it another way what illocutionary force the utterance is to have; that is, what illocutionary act the speaker is performing in the utterance of the sentence.125 A proposition on its own without illocutionary force plays no role in speech – it does nothing, so to speak. An illocutionary force without a proposition associated with it has no content and so says nothing. There is therefore no speech act without both of these components being present. Also of relevance for the purposes of this chapter is the fact that one and the same proposition can be uttered with a different force to give rise to different speech acts. **Take, for example, the proposition ‘the cat sat on the mat’. This can be uttered with the illocutionary force of an assertion to give rise to the speech act, “the cat is sitting on the mat.” Alternatively it can be uttered with the force of a question, giving rise to the speech act, “is the cat sitting on the mat?” Or the proposition could be uttered with the force of a command: “sit the cat on the mat!” It should also be noted that one can perform a speech act without actually uttering anything i.e. without actually using language. A command can be issued with the click of the fingers or a denial by stomping off in rage or tearing a piece of paper in half. Alternatively one can make an inquiry with the raising of the eyebrows. But even if one does not actually utter anything, it is still the case that such a speech act has the same dual nature of a proposition and an illocutionary force. It is just that sometimes, however, the propositional content is not actually spoken.** **Denial**, along with other speech acts, **has the dual nature of propositional content and illocutionary force**. To provide a sneak preview of what is to come: I will show that the **denial of trivialism is impossible because** necessarily **one cannot meet the requirement of propositional content**. Having said that, there are at least two accounts of denial on offer and they differ in how they characterize the illocutionary force of the speech act, one of which I will examine in this section and the other I will examine in section 5. The first of these, which is associated with the tradition of Frege and Geach, characterizes denial as the assertion of the negation of some proposition.126 Quine is certainly one of the champions of this position: **To deny a statement is to affirm another statement**, known as the negation or the contradictory of the first.127 **If I deny that the cat sat on the mat, I am asserting that it is not the case that the cat sat on the mat. That the denial of p is equivalent to the assertion of ¬p is really the orthodox view and, as can be seen from the names that have advocated it, has considerable authority behind it.**

### 1AC – Offense

#### I affirm – A just government ought to recognize a worker’s unconditional right to strike – the resolution is true

### 1AC – UV

#### Theory is incoherent:

#### 1] The ballot is always determined off inequalities

#### 2] Theory is evaluating off the flow rather than making the better norm

#### 3] Things get proven true in debate rounds all the time that aren’t true in the real world

#### 4] No competitive activity would establish rules in the middle of a competition.

#### 5] It sets bad norms because we vote for interps that are marginally better rather than the best version

#### 6] It’s paradoxical because it limits arguments but uses arguments to do that

#### Disability as ontological doesn’t stand up to scrutiny – it marginalizes individuals with severe or chronic impairments and essentializes disability

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Although it is wise to remember that policies about health and medical discourses may conceal ideological content, it also seems quite radical to argue that disability is exclusively a social phenomenon to be dealt with by social measures. Yet, such is the claim of social modelists. As the “new paradigm,” the social model of disability, underwent various criticisms; this essay suggests that many of them misfired by attempting to be ontological rather than political arguments. Conversely, I also suggest that social modelists may overstep the boundaries of their criticism of the ideological/oppressive use of the medicalization of disability by being over-suspicious of all individualist/experiential standpoints on disability. It is not clear whether all such standpoints hinder the full inclusion of disabled people within society; in fact, their proponents think the contrary. My overarching claim is that the disagreement between individual and social modelists about whether disability should qualify individual experiences or social experiences, or both, is largely based on the political consequences of doing so. Since individual and social modelists have substantially different ethical issues in mind, it may be a more productive approach to focus on these more specific ethical issues and either use an ethically open version of the concept of disability or abandon it altogether. I grant that potentially valid political reasons may be weighed against such a proposal. These reasons, however, should be presented in terms of political costs,4 rather than as confused ontological arguments. II. THE DICHOTOMY CRITICISM One very widespread and important criticism of the social model is that it severs the connection between impairment/biology/medicine, on the one hand, and disability, on the other. When we talk about “disability,” social modelists hold that we ought to be referring only to a social phenomenon rather than to a medical one. This disconnect is negatively criticized because it is said to amputate important dimensions of disabled people’s lives. Some people experience disability as an individual rather than a social problem, such as people with severe and chronic illnesses that cause them constant discomfort. Still others do not perceive themselves to be an oppressed minority and resist the idea that they have a false consciousness or have internalized the oppression victimizing them (Shakespeare and Watson, 2001, 9). Some may well associate their identity with discrimination (for instance, toward their gender, race, or sexuality) but not mainly with disability. The social model focuses on a standpoint external to these individual experiences of disability and therefore neglects and discredits them (Morris, 1991; Shakespeare and Watson, 2001). Social modelists indeed claim that (these subjective experiences of) impairments ought not to contribute to an understanding of disability. Because the social model of disability creates a clear dichotomy between impairment and disability by denying the causal relation or equivalence between both, let us call this criticism the dichotomy criticism. The dichotomy criticism is the most obvious criticism one can make of the social model. It is also one of the gravest, one that the social model could not survive if it were accurate. It is the most obvious and fatal criticism because it squarely denies its starting point. The initial insight offered by the social modelist is that we ought to take our distance from the medical model because this traditional model of disability is masquerading a social problem as an individual one and is dissimulating social oppression under medical categories and biological misfortune. III. HOW THE DICHOTOMY CRITICISM MERGES INTO THE “NEGLECTING/DENYING IMPAIRMENTS” CRITICISM It is facile to criticize the social model for its claim that we ought to disconnect the notions of impairment and disability because it is their main and most provoking or counterintuitive claim. Critics need to provide arguments to substantiate their criticism and we should expect these arguments to say why it would be unwise to follow the apparently well-founded social modelist agenda of reserving the word “disability” for social barriers and oppression. It is striking, however, how little argument is provided to support the dichotomy criticism per se. These arguments exist,5 but they are not generally brought up along with the dichotomy criticism in a way that would substantiate a constructive discussion about this disagreement. Instead, the denial of the validity or desirability of the impairment/disability distinction is surprisingly tautological. When authors write that “in maintaining that disability is squarely socially caused, the social model theorists are over-socialising their position” (Terzi, 2004, 152), or that “it would be neither straightforward or desirable to make the distinction between impairment and disability that [Oliver] takes for granted” (Shakespeare and Watson, 2001, 18), they are saying little more than that they disagree with making disability an exclusively social affair. When others write that impairment cannot be considered separately from disability “[b]ecause the dichotomy between impairment and disability … is not ontological” (Anastasiou and Kauffman, 2013, 447) or “precisely because impairment and disability are not dichotomous” (Shakespeare, 2014, 25), they are saying little more than “there is no dichotomy because there is no dichotomy.” This kind of answer is evidently insufficient. Social modelists no more take the impairment/disability dichotomy for granted than others take the impairment-disability causality for granted. Social modelists cannot be criticized only for not being in sync with what people commonly mean by “disabilities,” because it is precisely this common meaning that they are denouncing as being rooted in prejudices and oppression. Putting problematic tautological claims aside, many authors substantiate the dichotomy criticism with the claim that the social model underestimates the importance of impairment (Morris, 1991, 10; Anastasiou and Kauffman, 2013, 445). This is a common conceptual confusion that I want to dispel here. The claim that the social model underestimates the importance of impairment does not necessarily support the dichotomy criticism. Instead, it supports what could be called the “Neglecting/Denying Impairments Criticism.” This criticism takes various forms as it attacks various distinct claims that it associates with the social model. It criticizes the social model for “neglecting,” “denigrating,” “denying,” or “dismissing” the phenomenon of impairment (Anastasiou and Kauffman, 2013, 445; Shakespeare, 2014, 18). Normatively, the social model is criticized for underestimating the intrinsic gravity or badness of impairments or certain biological conditions (Morris, 1991, 10). Ontologically, it is criticized for denying the objective reality of impairment (Terzi, 2004, 151). Although there is some sophisticated literature arguing against and in favor of the objective reality of impairment, and whether it should be characterized as a “fact of nature” or a social construct (Abberley, 1987; Amundson, 2000; Vehmas and Mäkelä, 2009, 42; Boorse, 2010), not all variants of the social model of disability are wedded to a social constructivist view of impairment as they are to a constructivist view of disability. Mainstream versions of the social model––or at least its UK version, best represented by Oliver and Finkelstein––simply do not deny that impairments are real and that they matter. One senses a clear irritation in Michael Oliver’s writings (Oliver, 2013, 1024), because he has spent two decades repeating that the social model never meant to deny that impairments are real and important or that they may cause real harm independently from social intervention: As a severely disabled tetraplegic, who every day of my life needs to make the necessary arrangements to be able to get up in the morning and go to bed at night and, indeed, use the toilet, I find such suggestions galling … Of course, [we] are aware of the limitations that impairments impose. (Oliver, 2009, 48) The social model need not deny that these personal experiences related to biological realities exist and matter or should be taken care of. If anything, Oliver suggested that a “social model of impairment” be developed alongside a sociology of disability (Oliver, 1996, 42). What he denies is only the idea that we should call them “disability.” Therefore, the “Neglecting/Denying Impairments Criticism” misses its target (at least when authors aim it at this mainstream social model, as they still do (cf. Anastasiou and Kauffman, 2013)). However, some critics of the social model insist that the Neglecting/Denying Impairments Criticism can count as a Dichotomy Criticism. They argue that the fact of creating a dichotomy between impairment and disability and of choosing to focus on disability has the harmful implication of undervaluing the importance of impairments. Sometimes, this claim is about the theory itself: it is a necessary implication of the social approach. Sometimes, this claim is about the badness of the consequences that the implementation of such a theory is likely to bring about, empirically speaking (Shakespeare, 2014, 17–9). I believe that the second line of argument is promising because it engages with what the social model actually holds by challenging the way in which it assesses the political cost of using disability to refer to individual or social phenomena. However, before turning to those arguments, I want to suggest how the first kind of criticism made against the social model—according to which its exclusive focus on social dimensions of impairment-related limitations obliterates the importance or existence of personal or individual experiences of “disability”—is either very weak or question-begging and should be abandoned. Here is an illustration of this kind of claim: The proponents of the social model use the distinction between impairment and disability in a radically different way, that of ontological (or social) constructionism. First, they draw a vertical line between biological properties and social dimensions of disabilities. After that, they argue only about social processes, that is, subject-dependent properties. However, by choosing to theorize only on sociological grounds, they detach biological and mental elements from the disabled subject. As a consequence, by neglecting or denying the underlying biological conditions of people with disabilities, they leave out a big part of their existence and activity. Finally, their disabled subject is not an individual with a full set of properties (biological, psychological, social) but, at best, a “half-person” with only social properties; a “half-man,” biologically naked and only subjected to social values and roles. In the social model, the methodological distinction between impairment and disability gradually slides into a false distinction that assumes an ontological quality. This is a basic tool of social constructionism, which results in reducing the multidimensionality of disability in a single-sided social constructionist dimension—a narrow caricature of real human conditions and considering disabled humans as “half-humans.” (Anastasiou and Kauffman, 2013, 445) Oliver has answered to this kind of criticism that he does not mean to represent the whole of personal experiences of limitations, pains, or vulnerabilities, but only the experience of being socially oppressed or limited. It is simply a “conceptual misunderstanding” to expect more from his theory: “the social model is not about the personal experience of impairment but the collective experience of disablement” (Oliver, 2009, 48). It is hard to see how social modelists, focus on social oppression, and institutionalized ableism would imply that they do not care about, or discredit, other dimensions of human welfare. Yet, the argument presented above capitalizes on this sort of ad hominem evaluation. To illustrate how tempting and yet dangerously speculative this kind of criticism is, consider another example: a similar argument could be levied against John Rawls for developing a contractualist theory of distributive justice that does not conceptualize severely disabled people as subjects of justice. The fate of these individuals is left for moral and political philosophers to determine at a later time. This is because Rawls’s key interest, i.e., what he sees as “the fundamental question of political justice,” is “what is the most appropriate conception of justice for specifying the terms of social cooperation between citizens regarded as free and equal, and as normal and fully cooperating members of society over a complete life?” (Rawls, 1993, 20). The automatic assumption that not spending one’s academic or even political effort on a cause means that one thinks little of the value of that cause or even that it does not exist is wrongheaded. Granted, it can be the case, in certain academic or political specific contexts, that ignoring an issue speaks volume, but it is far from obvious what exactly is being voluminously spoken. It could be, for instance, a particular theorist’s belief or worldview. To judge people for picking the wrong value to spend their time maximizing or engaging with (for learning German instead of Spanish, for instance) is a rather epistemologically presumptuous terrain for one to step on. To further imply that valuing one thing implies undervaluing another is similarly risky.6 The issue is that focusing on the limitations that society imposes on people with impairments is certainly a worthwhile endeavor, and that to read in it a denial of the importance of other political and philosophical items––either by putting on a psychoanalyst hat or by finding it to be a necessary implication of one’s theory within a specific cultural context where this theory may become an ideological vector––is a conceptually and empirically dubious effort. It would also jeopardize all scientific or philosophical endeavors by keeping their validity hostage to a dangerously speculative scrutiny at best and an ideological witch-hunt at worst. Just like Rawls thought that the key question of political justice was a contractual one, social modelists think that the key question of disability is a social one. It may be held that both are wrong in thinking this, but not that they do not care about other issues, such as the personal experiences of disabled people. Indeed, both have explicitly attested to the contrary. We have to take these arguments at face value if we are to respect the kind of rational discussion that philosophy aims at achieving. Suspicions of prejudices or harmful cultural consequences lurking behind a theory can be used by a critic to better detect the weak points of an argument (inaccurate or conceptually implausible premises), but it is these formal weaknesses that must serve to discredit an argument, not the suspicions. Unless they can avoid falling in the previously mentioned traps, I therefore suggest that critics of the social model should no longer use the impairment/disability dichotomy and/or the exclusive theoretical commitment of the social model on social oppression and barriers as indications of a shortcoming inherent to the theory itself. To blame the social model for proposing a truncated ontology of human beings is “to criticize the social model for not being something that it has never claimed to be” (Oliver, 2009, 49). To further suggest that social modelists are implicitly adopting such an ontology is either question-begging or too speculative and weak an argument. IV. CAN THE DICHOTOMY CRITICISM BE CONCEPTUALLY SUBSTANTIATED? To sum up, social modelists do not deny that impairments exist or matter. However, they do deny that impairments should in any way be called, or seen as causing, disabilities. As we saw, criticisms of that view (the Dichotomy Criticism) take some tautological or speculative forms that are dead-ends. The critics hold that disability is at least partly due to impairment or biological conditions. The social view holds that disability is wholly caused by socially constructed barriers. The social model could limit itself to a strictly pragmatic claim: we ought to reserve the name of “disability” for social oppression alone because of the bad consequences that doing otherwise would have. We will examine this claim afterward. However, social modelists are (or at least many of them sound) ontologically bolder and reserve the term of “disability” to connote a “social situation” (UPIAS, 1976, 3–4) out of politico-semantic opportunism. For instance, social modelists traditionally use a historical-materialist line of argument to argue that disability is a “social relationship.” To understand disability, they claim, is to understand “a definite relationship to the way in which the material conditions of life are created and recreated” (Finkelstein, 1980, 9; Oliver, 1990). The immediate answer to that claim is a counterexample: many individuals who would uncontroversially be said to qualify as “disabled” in society would still be “disabled” if a Utopian discrimination-free society came about (Terzi, 2004). Blindness, for instance, would still constitute a biological dysfunction that would cause, independently of social structures, many experienced limitations. The social modelist’s counter-answer is that the blind person is only disabled when society disables her. Otherwise, she is impaired or limited, but not disabled. These claims and counter-claims make it look like both sides to the debate are emitting a semantic fiat. This is a natural place to already state my conclusion: they are, but their attempt to justify it would be better served by political rather than ontological arguments. Both sides have important but distinct concerns, and their war over naming their respective concern “disability” is doomed to fail. Here is how it could have succeeded. Their fundamental dissension has to do with the causal dimension of disability (whether it is caused by biology or society). In order for the ontological disagreement to progress, we need a benchmark definition that does not include a prior commitment to either view, that is, a definition of “disability” that is neutral on the causality issue. The party who comes up with (1) the most convincing causality-neutral definition of disability that (2) then is best matched by their causality-committed definition of disability will have provided a valid argument for integrating their view of causality in the definition of disability. A neutral definition of disability could look like this one: Disability is not only a (1) limitation (e.g., like not being able to read minds), but (2) a limitation that one has which most people around one do not have (it would have statistical and species-related features). (3) It is a long-lasting or recurrent state and (4) it affects people with an impairment, understood as a biological dysfunction.7 However, it turns out that any such definition will be incomplete because all sides agree that disability has a normative component, in that it calls for a response, medical, social, or otherwise. To know how to respond to disability, one must know the roots of disability: one must know, therefore, what causes the aspects of disability that must be addressed. A thinner concept is imaginable but would be unhelpful. If the idea of causality is key to the notion of disability, disability would be an essentially contested concept.8 If disability is a relational, comparativist, normative notion, an uncontested notion of disability would be a holy grail. It would provide clear answers to a plethora of difficult moral questions concerning whether and how stringently society must attend to the needs of disabled people. We must examine my claim that an axiologically neutral concept of disability would not do much work in solving these difficult questions: is it really the case? Anita Silvers was perceptive to the problem of different theorists or practitioners speaking at cross-purposes when using the concept of disability. This essay also unmasks some confusions typical of this mutual misunderstanding. I am, however, skeptical that conceptual disagreements about the ontology of disability can, or should, be overcome (although I believe that political and empirical disagreement about the consequences of the use of a specific definition of disability might be). Silvers, however, appears more optimistic and proposes a neutral concept of disability. She suggests “some constituents of, and constraints upon the adequacy of, [a neutral notion of disability],” that is, a notion of disability that is not value-laden (Silvers, 2003, 473). Silvers is particularly interested in suspending the assumption of neutral or positive value associated with being disabled.9 (She is particularly interested in the conceptual clashes between bioethicists and disability advocates, just as I am interested in the conceptual disagreement between proponents of individualist and social disability models.) According to her neutral view of disability, one should assume neither that being disabled makes one’s life worse off (she associates this view with the bioethicists) nor that it is neutral (she associates this view with disability theorists). To say that “disability” can connote both positively and negatively valued states does not necessarily translate into a neutral notion of disability. It can just as well translate into two categories of disabilities: those that have (a) no negative impact on the person and those that are (b) negatively value-laden. That seems plausible, if not evident. Silvers suggests that we take “disability” to mean (c) a neutral notion that has not yet fallen into either category (a) or (b). Surely that is good advice for theorists who assume that all disabilities are to be negatively valued and for theorists who assume that all negative value of disability is medically and socially constructed. These two sides appear sometimes unduly to generalize what only holds for some cases of disability. However, I wonder how much philosophical work this neutral notion of disability is supposed to accomplish. My worry is that it is limited to allowing heated debates to cool down. If so, it would contribute to a discursive ethics between proponents of the medical and of the social models, or between (most) (utilitarian) bioethicists and (most) disability theorists. As such, a proto-axiological (i.e., yet to be qualified in terms of value) version of disability is useful but only plays the role of a modest, tactful, peaceful, explicitly ontologically fallible way to engage with contrary views. My concern is that it does not help us otherwise. To put my point more forcefully, Silvers’s proposal could be read as a proposal to abandon the notion of “disability” altogether from ethical discussions and deal with more specific value-laden elements––such as pain, loss of options, limitations (including particular socially-caused limitations), oppression, etc.––instead of the blanket, ambiguous notion of disability, which could, or not, imply all, some, or none of these other notions. This is undoubtedly one of Silvers’s explicit ambitions: that we do not conflate disability with these. What to make, then, of her proposal to develop a “theory” based on a neutral account of disability (Silvers, 2003, 485)? I am not sure that this idea qualifies as a theory as much as a call to keep existing social/medical/normalizing theories in their proper places. It reminds us not to jump the gun by assuming that disability is a bad thing or by assuming that it can never be intrinsically bad but that only social failures create (it and) its badness. However, disability becomes ethically interesting as a phenomenon when it is value-laden, and so it seems that we will quickly have to drop the general proto-axiological/neutral conception of disability as the moral and political discussion about any particular case progress. I note that the neutral conception of disability may still have an identity-building use; this use might helpfully remain value-neutral. Silvers’s analogy with the “construction of a neutral conceptualization of women’s differences” as “one of the great conceptual achievements of the twentieth century” points in this direction (Silvers, 2003, 483). A space for women and disabled people to say “I am neither better or worse off; I am just different” seems desirable, but that kind of claim may be more profitable within identity-building endeavors or claims for recognition than within the kind of moral and political discussions that Silvers has in mind (notably, on issues of inclusion and redistribution).10 To be potentially valued (or associated with more specific notions that are valued) in positive, negative, and neutral ways does not make a concept neutral: it makes it pluralistic value-wise. This is why I find that Silvers’s argument, while pointing to the “possibility and desirability of constructing a neutral conception of disability,” actually buttresses the case for letting go of the essentially contested concept of “disability” in ethical discussions and using more specific items of discussion, such as “oppression” or “physical pain and discomfort.” “Disability” could still be used as a shorthand for these notions: disability qua oppression, disability qua medical condition, etc. It could be that some of these understandings of disability would be wrongheaded (such as disability qua tragedy or disability qua punishment for sinful former lives), but one would then criticize these specific notions (such as being punished for a sinful former life) for their own wrongheadedness, rather than for not matching an objective concept of “disability.” I conclude that (1) the concept of “disability” cannot be used as an objective ontological benchmark because disability is too contested a concept and (2) a neutral version of this conception would not take us far enough to settle substantial disagreements.

Reject monocausal analysis – nothing can explain everything which means we need to modify things to find the best method