# GBX Round 7

## 1AC

### Part 1 is the World Story

#### The world is structured by Semiocapitalism — information is an infinite commodity that depends on the exploitation of our time and our collective brain power. Unproductive time for our leisure becomes replaced with measuring how we “spend” or “waste” our time - this is an economized view of time that hollows the subject into mere production.

**Bray 15** [Bray K (2015) The monstrosity of the multitude: unredeeming radical theology. Palgrave Communications. 1:15030 doi: 10.1057/palcomms.2015.30.] //Lex VM + DD

Under SemioCapitalism value has been divorced from all referent points. When Richard Nixon cancelled the direct convertibility of the US dollar to gold the referential logic of value was discarded in favour of what Berardi (2009: 148) calls **“generalized indeterminacy”.** From a radical theological point of view a sense of generalized indeterminacy may sound ideal in that, like radical theology, it denies a determinate telos. It might resonate, for instance, with Robbins’s call for a radical democratic resistance to all forms of hegemony that will come by way of an immanent exodus, one that, Robbins notes quoting Negri, is an “exodus from obedience, that is to say, from participation in measure, i.e., as the opening to the immeasurable” (Robbins, 2013: 191). Or it might resonate with the indefinite or infinite eschatology proposed by Crockett (2011: 102). Yet as Berardi notes, the indeterminacy of value and the process of economic deregulation brought on by SemioCapitalism did not result in anarchic freedom. It remains tamed and obedient to a certain eschatological vision: “Deregulation does not mean that society is freed from all rules, not at all: it is instead the imposition of monetary rule on all domains of human action. And monetary rules are in fact the sign of a relationship based on power, violence and military abuse” (Berardi, 2009: 148). In other words, as Philip Goodchild (2009: 188) has noted, neoliberal deregula- tion has trapped us in the eschatological shadow of money, within which spending time is subordinated to saving it. While this eschatological promise may be indeterminate because money no longer refers to a stable referent, it serves not as a source of freedom, but rather as one of entrapment. To counter this mode of violent entrapment Berardi (2009: 140) **redefines wealth as time** (or in Goodchild’s framing, spending time): “time for pleasure and enjoyment”, which includes time to travel, learn and make love. This wealthy time is not a time that asks, “What have you done for me lately?” Rather it is unproductive time, it is a time to be lazy, to be pleasured, to just be. It is not discipleship in action; it is not worth in productivity; it is not a man who is a worker or nothing at all; rather, it is a soul who is wealthy because she is much more and much less than her labour. To be sure, there is political work to be done to democratize the availability of this wealth of time,6 but by reorienting wealth and worth away from work, indeed in finding it in **the refusal of work**, Berardi **rejects hegemonic structures of value**. Both SemioCapitalism’s rejection of wealth as time and its degradation of unproductive time lead to a mental and soulful breakdown in individual and social psyches. Berardi diagnoses this breakdown as a panic-depressive cycle (Berardi, 2009) and exhaustion and depression (Berardi, 2011). Acknowledging Baudrillard’s prescience, Berardi (2009: 179) further notes that “The dominant pathology of the future will not be produced by repression, but instead by the injunction to express, which will become a generalized obligation”. The constant demands to be expressive and productive combined with the overwhelming **flow of information and signs** without stable referents lead to panic, which eventually **leads to depression**. Elsewhere, Berardi (2011: 135–138) marks the panic-depression cycle with Baudrillard’s concept of exhaustion. Exhaustion sets in because, “In semiocapitalist hyperreality, **the brain is the market**. And the brain is not limitless, the **brain cannot accelerate indefinitely**” (Berardi, 2011: 136). Rather than, or perhaps as both counter and supplement to, an emphasis on the plasticity of the brain (an emphasis embraced by followers of Catherine Malabou),7 Berardi asks us to look to the limits of the brain—to our exhaustion —for the rethinking of how we might come to be differently. The depression and exhaustion—markers of the limit of the brain (or perhaps better, the “bodymind”8)—that follow the panic induced by our overstimulation can be traced back to the demands for the brain to accelerate indefinitely. In other words, “the constant mobilization of attention is essential to the productive function: the energies engaged by the productive system are essentially **creative, affective and communicational**” (Berardi, 2011: 107). Rather than rejecting the need for creative and affective communication or for action writ large, Berardi— through his diagnosis of the overstimulation of the brain— illuminates how the demand to be productive and expressive pushes the individual and **collective psyche to their breaking points**. He writes, “Not silence, but uninterrupted noise, not Antonioni’s red desert, but a cognitive space overloaded with nervous incentives to act: this is the alienation of our times” (Berardi, 2011: 108). We might say that “our times” takes on a double meaning in this case, as it is the very demand for more of our time that defines the nature of the Time of Neoliberalism or, in Berardi’s terms, SemioCapitalism.

#### Resisting semiocap requires a heuristic of unproductivity instead of overcoming alienation or the loss of subjectivity.

**Bray 2** [Bray K (2015) The monstrosity of the multitude: unredeeming radical theology. Palgrave Communications. 1:15030 doi: 10.1057/palcomms.2015.30.] //Lex VM + DD

While similarly drawing on (both to embrace and move beyond) the work of Antonio Negri as well as the radical thought of others in the 1960s and 1970s Italian Workerist (Operaismo), Autono- mist and Compositionist movements, Franco “Bifo” Berardi resists a rhetoric of productivism and questions the political potency of the concept of the multitude. In both The Soul at Work and After the Future, Berardi explores the affectual effects of post-Fordist modes of production and communication (SemioCapitalism) on our individual and social psyches. In doing so he not only diagnoses the toxic effects of neoliberalism, but also elaborates a politics and poetics of the refusal of work. The unproductivity on offer by Berardi exposes the affectual and ethical issues raised when we remain within the logic of productivism, even that which claims a revolutionary and counter-imperial stance. According to Berardi (2009: 21), **SemioCapitalism “takes the mind, language and creativity** as its primary **tools for the production** of value”. Under SemioCapitalism the soul is not left out of work, but rather becomes the very mode of production and thus the tool of its own estrangement. Hence, while the resistance to alienation through the reassertion of the importance of one’s mind and soul was at the heart of organizing workers on the factory floor, under post- Fordism acts of **resistance must take on a different character**. The goal of autonomy or what Berardi rewrites as out-onomy becomes not how to overcome alienation, but rather how to increase the estrangement between the soul and capitalist labour relations. As Berardi notes: The working class is no longer conceived as a passive object of alienation, but instead as the active subject of a refusal capable of building a community starting out from its estrangement from the interests of capitalistic society ... **Alienation is** then considered not as the loss of human authenticity, but as **estrangement from capitalistic interest,** and therefore as a necessary condition for the construction—in a space estranged from and hostile to labor relations—of an ultimately human relationship. (Berardi, 2009: 23) To become increasingly estranged from labour relations involves for Berardi a multistep process: first, we must understand the way in which SemioCapitalism has redefined value; second, we must identify the affectual effects of SemioCapitalism on our individual and social psyches (effects that Berardi names as exhaustion and depression in After the Future and the panic- depression cycle in The Soul at Work); and third we must engage Deleuze and Guattari’s schizoanalysis as a political therapy that helps us to reorient the field of desire and thus reframes the concept of wealth, re-engaging us in authentic human relation- ships. Each of **these steps happens** not through reasserting our productive capacity, but rather **through refusing to participate** in the systems of production on offer by SemioCapitalism’s labour relations.

#### Our heuristic of unproductivity is an adaptation to Hardt & Negris’ multitude. They see the multitude as an alternative to the capitalist Empire, but the multitude is still based on common productivity.

Bray 3 [Bray K (2015) The monstrosity of the multitude: unredeeming radical theology. Palgrave Communications. 1:15030 doi: 10.1057/palcomms.2015.30.] //Lex VM + DD

In Occupy Religion: Theology of the Multitude, Rieger and Kwok (2012: 67) draw on Paul’s epistles to discuss the importance of the multitude’s common productivity: “The eye cannot say to the hand, **‘I have no need of you,**’ nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’ On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensible, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we cloth with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect (1Cor. 12:21–24)”. According to Rieger and Kwok, the productivity of the multitude honours the contributions to the social body made by those considered inferior. For Hardt and Negri the multitude’s ability to resist the capitalist empire stems from the fact that even those who we normally assume to be **outside the traditional labour economy are part of social production**. That all classes produce in common allows them to resist in common—common productivity as bond. But what of the blind woman who does not need the eye or the amputee who does not need the hand? What of those cut off or breaking away from the community that is the social body? Is the focus on common productivity too eerily resonate with a soteriological structure embedded in neoliberalism that ties our worth to our work—who we are to what we can do for one another? Rieger and Kwok continue: The multitude picks up the concerns of working people, the so-called working class, because it values the notion of production. While the multitude is forced to endure the pressures of the system, it does not remain passive. Working people make substantial contributions to society, which are often overlooked and underappreciated. Hardt and Negri **extend the multitude to the unemployed**, unpaid domestic laborers, and the poor, who also make substantial contribu- tions to society. We agree with their idea that ‘the multitude gives the concept of the proletariat its fullest definition as all those who labor and produce under the rule of capital’ [10]. (Rieger and Kwok, 2012: 61) While, as Rieger and Kwok make clear, Hardt and Negri include the unemployed and underpaid in their definition of the productive multitude, that political emphasis remains on production and societal contribution is problematic. To be sure, the dismantling of what we can recognize as the “We Built This” notion made famous by Mitt Romney’s 2012 presidential bid is key for the work of solidarity sought by Rieger and Kwok. Members of the 1% rallied behind the notion that those in the lower classes owed our livelihoods to those at the top, to the wealth the rich claimed to have built and then benevolently shared with the rest of us. An emphasis on the productivity of the multitude resists this narrative, helpfully bringing to the fore the ways in which wealth relies on the work of the impoverished. Yet, the ways in which the productivity of the multitude not only built the wealth of the 1% but also sustain that wealth are obscured by Rieger and Kwok’s productivism. Hence, the attempt to regain the worthiness of the multitude through what we have done for an economic system that continues to betray us is at best rash and at worst a tightening of the chains that bind us to an exploitative market. If we are to regain power through a reassertion of our worth in directed activity, then we have not unbound ourselves from the tragic narrative that it is what we can do for the system rather than who we are—our singular embodied desires and **becomings—that defines our worth**. Indeed a focus on labour continues to allow the terms of worth to remain within a theological system fortified by, and which fortifies, a productivist ethic summed up in Joseph Conrad’s proposal (critiqued by crip theorists Anna Mollow and Robert McRuer) that **“a man is a worker. If he is not then he is nothing”** (McRuer and Mollow, 2012: 25). The addition of the unemployed and underpaid domestic worker to the definition of the multitude does not refute Conrad’s proposition; rather it affirms that regardless of our employment status **we all are indeed workers**. Instead of a radical refutation of the need to be a worker to be of worth, a productivist theology in the form proposed by Rieger and Kwok borders on apologetics—a theology begging for the recognition of the impoverished as societal contributors. The terms of value remain intact. Rieger and Kwok (2012: 62) continue, “Hardt and Negri focus on economic class, in part because this concept has not received enough attention in recent debates, but also because the multitude needs to be understood in terms of economic production. It is both the ‘**common subject of labor**, that is, the real flesh of postmodern production’ and ‘the **object from which collective capital** tries to make the body of its global **development’** ”. The focus on class can help us to **raise issues of fair wages and just labour practices**. And yet from a theological point of view, Rieger and Kwok’s proposals often obscure the problem of where we place ultimate value, **focusing** instead **on how that value gets determined**, measured and compensated.

#### By combining our understanding of unproductivity and multitude we are able to mobilize against Empire and drain out the system. The capitalist Empire is relational and requires the continuous exploitation of our time, making sure we’re always more productive. Only by turning towards unproductivity can we actualize Hardt & Negris multitude.

Bray 4 [Bray K (2015) The monstrosity of the multitude: unredeeming radical theology. Palgrave Communications. 1:15030 doi: 10.1057/palcomms.2015.30.] //Lex VM + DD

The monstrous multitude While it would be crucial to critique the issue of productivity within a theology of the multitude regardless of its deployment by Hardt and Negri, in turning back to the original we are better able to uncover some crip complexities. Hardt and Negri highlight the autonomy of the multitude from the Empire. **If the Empire relies on the multitude** to produce its wealth, **then to refuse to be productive is to refuse to contribute to the wealth of the Empire**. As Hardt and Negri (2005: 332) note, “Capital, in other words, must exploit the labor of workers but it cannot oppress, repress, or exclude them. It cannot do without their productivity”. They continue, “[The multitude] are, in fact, extremely powerful, because they are the source of wealth” (Hardt and Negri, 2005: 333). This emphasis on the productivity of **the multitude opens pathways for the radical passivity** proposed by Berardi. Instead of asserting that our faith traditions have been built on action, and honouring the demand that the “invalid” in John stand up, take his mat and walk, to locate the potency of the multitude in its unproductivity is to ask why the man was sitting in the first place and for whom and what he would be walking. It is this power that is recognized by Hardt and Negri when they write: If sovereign power were an autonomous substance, then the refusal, subtraction, or exodus of the subordinated would only be an aid to the sovereign: they cannot cause problems who are not present. Since sovereign power is not autonomous, since **sovereignty is a relationship**, then such acts of refusal are indeed a real threat. **Without** the active **participation of the subordinated**, **sovereignty crumbles.** (Hardt and Negri, 2005: 332) Given the multitude’s ability to make sovereignty crumble, why not focus on the unproductive side of the line that has been dismantled between productivity and unproductivity? Perhaps we worry that such a focus will lead the multitude into inertia and despair. Perhaps this is why Žižek’s (2006) own politics of refusal quickly move to a call for a Badiouian event and the revolutionary power of those in the urban slums. And yet, this multitudinous refusal need not be that of revolutionary or eventive action. Rather, we might find a poetics of refusal within the bodies of the **monstrous crip who in her everyday incapacities** to productively come together with the whole **declares** along with Berardi “that the splendor of the world has been enriched by a new beauty: the **beauty** of autonomy. Each to her own rhythm; **nobody should be constrained to march at a uniform pace”** (Berardi, 2011: 165).

#### Therefore, the ROTB is to vote for the methodology that best engages in the unproductivity of the multitude.

### Part 2 is the Strike

#### Thus, I defend the resolution Resolved: “A just government ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike”

#### We understand “A just government” as the multitude and “an unconditional right of workers to strike” as an intrinsic affirmation of our unproductivity.

#### Giving up on your job is a form of antiwork politics that refuses to submit to the logic of productivity and economized time, redefining how we spend our time outside of merely just working forever.

Bray 5 [Bray K (2015) The monstrosity of the multitude: unredeeming radical theology. Palgrave Communications. 1:15030 doi: 10.1057/palcomms.2015.30.] //Lex VM + DD

This is not to uphold an utter dulling of the mind, but rather an injunction to seek out new ways of thinking and feeling ourselves through the affectual experiences of the bodymind under such temporal demands. For instance, the **chaotic hyperactivity** of indeterminate signs that often engenders depression **can also contain a sense of creative ecstasy**: “The world-chaos that Guattari talks about in his last book is not only depression, fog, and miasma. Chaos is much more than this. It’s also the infinity of colors, dazzling lights, hyperspeed intuitions, and breathtaking emotions. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, 203)” (Berardi, 2011: 160). In this way, a turn towards our exhaustion or depression need not be the silencing of the sounds of indeterminacy and chaos, **but rather a slowing down** to the point where we take pleasure in the cacophony of singularities; when exhausted we would grant ourselves permission to fall back into bed and just listen. No longer trying to harmonize sounds that will not or will to not come together, we might clear a path to see what can happen on the other side of exhaustion when we are **not fuelled by the panicked desire to numb our depression**. For this fall into bed, the being exhausted, need not be a passive nihilism. Rather, feeling ourselves to be backwards in a society that says we must move forward resonates with the backward feelings of being queer as explicated by Heather Love. Love (2007: 1) notes that backward feelings are “all about action: about how and why it is blocked, and about how to locate motives for political action when none is visible”. In other words, a turn not towards the productivity of the multitude but rather towards its depressing **exhaustion might uncover invisible political possibilities.** The slowness and quotidian nature of depressing passive-acts like the fall into bed, or the listening for the sounds of chaotic miasma and those of the infinity of colours, further troubles a productivist politics found within the work of Rieger and Kwok, Hardt and Negri, and much of radical theology. For instance, we can locate within the field of radical theology (or of theologies and philosophies arising in the wake of the “Death of God”) a problematic emphasis on action. Whether it takes the form of multitudinous productivism, event, exodus, messianism or revolution,9 none of these concepts (no matter how immanent their theological constructions may be) escape a sense of directional movement and change, a sense that often rings as eruptive and/or rapid. This sort of revolving (one that risks its own version of a teleological fantasy) is reflected in leftist movements nostalgic for the time of labour uprisings. As Shaviro (2015: 5–6) has noted, “Given the failure of economism, many Marxists have instead gone to the opposite extreme: they have embraced a kind of voluntarism. Capitalism can be abolished by sheer force of will—as long as this is supplemented by proper methods of organization and mobilization. We see this sort of approach in the Leninist doctrine of the vanguard party, and also, I think, in the ultra-leftism of such contemporary thinkers as Slavoj Žižek and Alain Badiou”. Shaviro (2015: 6) continues, “We cannot wait for capitalism to transform on its own, but we also cannot hope to progress by appealing to some radical Outside or by fashioning ourselves as militants faithful to some ‘event’ that (as Badiou has it) would mark a radical and complete break with the given ‘situation’ of capitalism”. While Shaviro counters the Badiouian/Žižekian eventive-revolution with accelerationism,11 Berardi counters with radical passivity. Instead of viewing exhaustion as the inability to escape capitalism, the position of radial passivity acknowledges exhaustion’s capability to clear a way towards an autonomous collectivity (Berardi, 2011: 138). Might the slow-down of exhaustion serve as a radical opening for radical thought? In other words, can radical theology embrace its own depression? To counter the radicality of the event we may need to look to the radicality of the everyday. We may need to seek out a slowness performed in quotidian acts of refusal. For instance, instead of waiting for the revolution we might wander towards ways of slow living proposed by Lauren Berlant in her counter to “slow death”. Berlant (2011: 95) defines **slow death as “the physical wearing out of a population in a way that points to its deterioration** as a defining condition of its experience and historical existence”. Slow death might come in the form of the panic-depressive cycle, a crash from the overstimulation of the brain, or as Berlant traces it, in the wearing down of bodies through excessive food consumption, which she ties not only to exploitative food and labour policies, but also to the exhaustion of work and the search for momentary pleasure in food (Berlant, 2011, Chapter 3). This is a slow death made worse by the glorification of health and ability, states easier to achieve if one is privileged to have the wealth of time to spend on the cultivation of such abilities. **As a counter** to slow death, Berlant (2011, Chapter 3, footnote 64: 276) offers the possibility of counter- exploitative activities, those **that are anarchist, cooperative and radically antiwork**. Examples of such activities might be found in the European “slow food” movement briefly touched on by Berlant. Slow food marks a movement in which practices of food cultivation, preparation and consumption “[recalibrate] the pacing of the day into a collective program for deliberative being in the world in a way opposed to the immediatist productive one of anxious capital” (Berlant, 2011, Chapter 3, footnote 64: 276). Berardi similarly offers counter-exploitative practices through the slow life of a “**relaxed soul”** (Berardi, 2011: 148): “Rather than a swift change in the social landscape, we should expect the slow surfacing of new trends: communities abandoning the field of the crumbling economies, more and more individuals **giving up their search for a job** and **creating their own networks of services**” (Berardi, 2011: 152). These quotidian microtactics will take time, but if time is wealth then perhaps **slowing time down** is a way of **honouring** the **holiness of life**. This slow-down will not be easy. Berardi offers a mode in which politics and therapy are no longer separate. He asks us to learn to better take care of those made depressed and anxious by what he names as the “post-growth” economy (Berardi, 2011: 153–154). But who will lead the way? Who are we that are too anxious and on whom are we placing the therapeutic responsi- bility? Who gets to decide which type of depression is being exhibited—the exhaustion that leads to a slow movement towards a new civilization, or that of those made hopeless by the coming of such a civilization? Berardi (2011: 163) proposes that “Poetry and therapy (thera-poetry) will be the forces leading to the creation of a **cognitarian self-consciousness: not a political party**, not the organization of interests, but the reactivation of the cognitarian sensibility”. How will we be able to question this reactivation? What if, like the productivism both Berardi and I hope to counter, it becomes too directed? What if it slides further into the thera—that which seeks to comfort—over the poetry—that which seeks to complicate? Perhaps, moving from the realm of the speculative into the embodied life of **those already living slowly**—already refusing productivity and effi- ciently; those living in the interstices between flesh and body; those we have **marked as monstrous**—will help us to seek out more poetry than therapy. More complication than comfort.

### Part 3 is the Monstrous Crip

#### We adopt this figure to explain how radical passivity as individual acts of unproductivity connect to a wider multitude — one not based on our common productivity but instead on our monstrous and unproductive deviance.

**Bray 6** [Bray K (2015) The monstrosity of the multitude: unredeeming radical theology. Palgrave Communications. 1:15030 doi: 10.1057/palcomms.2015.30.] //Lex VM + DD

What would it mean to embody an **unproductive monstrosity?** Re-reading the productivity of the multitude through a crip sensibility helps us to unpack this question. Crip theory is a version of disability theory that rejects assimilationist politics and apologetics. **To be crip is to be unwilling to come back together as part of a productive** whole. It is to refuse to wear the prosthesis so that the non-crip need not rethink the wholeness of her body. It is to refuse the cochlear implant such that mainstream society might rethink what communication looks and sounds like. It is **to learn to live differently from** within exhaustion and **depression** and not only to medicate them. According to crip theorists McRuer and Mollow (2012: 32), a crip politics says, “Fuck employability: I’m too sick to work”. To embrace the stigma of sickness is to question the demands of productive labour on offer by society. Hence, a similar crip politics, one that tells the Empire it is too sick to work and that it is too depressed to produce, might **loose the multitude from its redeployment** in the very technologies of power it hopes to resist. In other words, to say fuck employability might also be to say fuck productivity, as long as productivity too easily slips into redemption. As McRuer and Mollow (2012: 31) note, many disability studies projects “often [emphasize] the project of securing places for disabled people within what Deborah A. Stone calls the ‘work- based system’ (21), rather than challenging the structure of that system itself”. Hence, similar to the apologetics risked by Rieger and Kwok’s reading of the multitude, access-based disability studies often seek to return a sense of productivity to the disabled. Crippness on the other hand refuses to apologize, and **rejects recognition** by the systems that have betrayed us. Therefore, to say fuck employability: I’m too sick to work might be to embrace a poetics of refusal on offer by Berardi’s out- onomy. For instance, in Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability (2006) McRuer exegetes Gary in Your Pocket: Stories and Notebooks of Gary Fisher, the collection of Gary Fisher’s work published by his former teacher Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick 3 years after his death from HIV/AIDS. Fisher identified himself as a “black, queer, sociopath” (McRuer, 2006: 104). In this work Fisher’s identities as queer, sociopathic and black destabilize one another as well as compulsory hetero- sexuality and able-bodiedness. This destabilization is found in what McRuer names as Fisher’s non-compliance with demands for rehabilitation and redemption. Fisher’s acts of non- compliance included sadomasochistic, often anonymous, sex, which included fantasies of racial degradation, and his frequent refusal to take his medication. In rejecting secur(e)ity and salvific health Fisher refused the system that had always already marked him as crip: as an untouchable monster. These acts of refusal performed a political stance of autonomy within Fisher’s everyday life. They are not eventive revolutionary acts, but rather the wealthy embodiments of time by a man **rejecting the pressures to be sane, able** and healthy. Fisher’s crip sensibility, while bringing on death more quickly, honoured the time of life through his refusal to be redeemed. One might locate similar acts of non-compliance in the work of poet Janet Miles (whom Susan Schweik names as a poet writing in part through the lens of disability). Miles refused to be marked as disabled. In her discussion of Miles’s life and work in the edited volume Beauty is a Verb: The New Poetics of Disability (2011), Schweik draws on Henri-Jacques Stiker’s 1999 History of Disability to illuminate the importance of such acts of refusal: The ‘thing’ has been designated, defined, framed. Now it has to be scrutinized, pinpointed, dealt with. People with “it” make up a marked group, a social entity ... The disabled, henceforth of all kinds, are established as a category to be reintegrated and thus to be rehabilitated. Paradoxically, they are designated in order to be made to disappear, they are spoken in order to be silenced. (Schweik, 2011: 70) Like (and as one of) the “mad” figures traced by Michel Foucault in History of Madness (2006) and the figure of the “homosexual” traced in History of Sexuality I (1978), **the disabled are** named to **either be saved** out of disability (like the worker recognized as productive) **or confined** and silenced. Stiker’s call in response to such confinement is to refuse the categories on offer. Fisher’s non-compliance is similar, but instead of refusing to be marked he embraces the stigma carried by the mark sociopathic. By refusing to be named as redeemable Fisher wilfully goes unredeemed. This is the sensibility of the crip who embraces “the cripple” and thus cannot be made straight. **The term “disabled**” (the term as deployed by disability projects critiqued by McRuer, Stiker and Schweik) **marks those whom we work to fix**, and in fixing reassemble back into an efficient economy of production. But what of she who chooses to stay bent? Like the mad who plague society and hence need to be tamed, the wilfully bent take on a monstrous character.

#### This concludes our story of the multitude — it is an assemblage of unproductivity and its commonality is its very disunity. This is a process of *unbecoming army —* an unbecoming of the social order based on our refusal to no longer produce.

**Bray 8** [Bray K (2015) The monstrosity of the multitude: unredeeming radical theology. Palgrave Communications. 1:15030 doi: 10.1057/palcomms.2015.30.] //Lex VM + DD

Furthermore, the sexual nature of contagion in It Follows begs for a crip reading. Panic over sexually transmitted infections (STIs)—the designation of sexual Others as a plague on the “normal” and healthy, which enlivened decades of homophobia and queer politics—resonates with **the disgust and panic** induced by the creep of the slowness of disability. Disability as contagion. Before Miller voices her search for a horror movie, “Dramatic Monologue in the Speaker’s Own Voice” reads: I walk naked under my clothes like anyone else, And I’m not a bomb to explode in your hands. Of course, you are not (I would not accuse you of) Thinking of holding me down, but of holding me up. Yet sometimes I’d love to be eased from the envelope of sleep, Stroked gently open (although it would take some doing— on my part, that is). My lost virginity would hurt me the way ghosts of their limbs make amputees shriek, my womanhood too seldom used. Have you ever viewed me this way? No, none of you ever have ... (Alexander Essbaum, 2011: 50) We have made of those with disability, like those with STIs, untouchables. Either too sexed or too desexed, the disabled are no longer or never were for stroking gently open. The crip may not be held down, but being held up is still not being desired. If ever viewed as desirable, and as Miller makes clear that is a big if, they are now bombs ready to explode in our hands. Careful it might catch you, or worse you might catch it. Tick tick ... boom. We panic, we flee, we fear, to the point of depression, that we will be caught by the **bomb of undesirability**, unproductivity and hence unmeaning—in essence, **inexistence**. Attempts to flee this fate pervade It Follows (what would a horror movie be without a young girl running for her life?). Through modes of speedy mobility, like a car, Jay can get away for a brief time, but eventually it **will always find her/us.** Is this not the function of disability in a society that demands ever-more rapidity? Like the driver of a car that cannot escape a breakdown in a crash, our bodyminds pushed to the break- ing point crash into depression—into disability. Indeed, like the depressive crash that comes from the demands on the bodymind to be ever more expressive, when Jay flees a place where it has attacked she crashes her car and ends up in the hospital with a broken arm. Becoming herself broken, she is slowed down and driven mad by her desperate attempts to escape what follows. Slowness and immobility is that which always follows; the disabled embody the one marginalized group that we are always already on the brink of becoming. The true horror embodied by it might just be, therefore, its slowness. We **run, panic, crash** just so as not to be caught by an infecting immobility, one that will mean the death of our capable, productive and efficient selves. And indeed, in the film if one is caught by it one dies. And at least in the opening death it is a death that is also a cripping. The film begins with a young beautiful girl frantically running. The audience does not see that from which she runs; we only experience her visceral panic. Then the screen jumps to the image of her dead body: her leg is broken and bent at a 45° angle; it hangs over her in a seemingly impossible position, her knee directly over her stomach, the point of her shoe over her chest, the heel reaching up towards the sky. It has caught up with her; no longer mobile, no longer beautiful, she is crooked. I wish you’d learn better before we all totter/into our coffins where there’s no straight way to lie crooked. The death of the straightness of youth and beauty births the crooked. What if we had learned better? What if instead of haunted we were halted by what follows? What if instead of spooked we let what follows spoil us. Can we see that which haunts as also that which halts? That which spooks as that which spoils? Halts and spoils the flow of neoliberalism? For when one reads a “Dramatic Monologue in the Speaker’s Own Voice”, who exactly is in search of a horror movie? Whose “womanhood” (read desirability) haunts like an amputated leg? Who has gone untouched? From whom have others glanced away? Is it not the “I” reading such a monologue now in my own voice? The it that follows me, even in its singularity, is also of course the me that is afraid of being followed. Running counter to the eugenics of neoliberalism, a wealth that is time and a beauty that comes in true singularity encourage the touching and desiring of all, regardless of how bent we might be, regardless of how long it might take to stroke us gently open. **In this wealthy crip time there is a** listening to the **cacophony**, not merely a frantic taming of the noise. In **attending to the monster** that therefore I am follows me14 **we might clear room for a slow living** that would represent a **different kind of assembly** than that birthed by the eventive **productivity of the multitude.** (Un)commonly unredeemed If the horror of disability spreads like that of an STI, then perhaps there is something we can learn from a return to the non-compliant and counter-redemptive quotidian acts embodied by the mark of the sociopath (the mad) as represented in Gary in My Pocket. For instance, a similar counter-redemption can be found in Cvetkovich’s Depression: A Public Feeling (2012). Cvetkovich depathologizes and devindividualizes depression. She rejects cure, or what we might call redemption, in favour of what she names “the utopia of ordinary habit” (Cvetkovich, 2012: 154–202). This utopia is inhabited by acts not of salvation but rather of spending time in manners that counter both panic and the frantic attempt to numb depression. In other words, ordinary utopian habits are habits of **spending time over saving it**. Hence, the concept of the utopia of everyday habit asks us to consider how and with whom we spend the wealth of our time. In her description of a Public Feelings15 event in Toronto Cvetkovich (2012: 188) writes, “[it was] a discussion of art and utopia that included a group sing-along of cover songs ranging from Britney Spears’s ‘ … Baby One More Time’ (in homage to the version sung by Kiki and Herb as much as to Britney herself) to Joni Mitchell’s ‘The Circle Game’ (for Canadian content). As we huddled together in the slightly too close embrace of shag rugs— and crocheted afghans, it felt like there was room both to express loneliness and to feel a little less lonely”. Cvetkovich has not been redeemed out of her loneliness, but in spending the wealth of her time with others willing to attend to such a time she feels a little less lonely. She is not cured, but neither is Cvetkovich chained to the structures—of time, feeling, life and work—that made her so lonely in the first place. **This is not redemption as much as it is remaining with a difference.** At the end of It Follows Jay walks hand in hand with her childhood first kiss Paul, whom she has now slept with and thus we assume she has infected with it. At first glance Jay seems the image of innocence and beauty, her golden locks flowing down onto her white summer dress. But then we feel it, the affect in her eyes: she is exhausted from panicked fleeing and fearful hiding. As Paul and Jay walk, the audience sees a slow-moving “person” following them in the distance. It Follows and this poetics of disability do not offer a happy ending; both refuse to shake the spectre of our own crippness. At the end of After the Future Berardi acknowledges that proposals such as these often leave his audience with a sense of bitterness. He does not have a happy ending either: “And I don’t like to cheat at the game. **I don’t like empty words of self-reassurance**, or rhetoric about the multitude. I prefer to tell the truth, at least, the limited truth as I see it: there is no way out, **social civilization is over**, the neoliberal precarization of labor and the media dictatorship have destroyed the cultural antibodies that, in the past, made resistance possible. As far as I know” (Berardi, 2011: 158). And yet he persists. It persists. **The crip persists**. For instance, writing about Miller’s poetry Jill Alexander Essbaum acknowledges that, “While [Miller’s] poems are often grave and dismal in their imagery, by their tone they are backlit with hope” (Alexander Essbaum et al., 2011: 51). While, as Essbaum notes, Miller’s hope may come from her commitment to her Christianity (Alexander Essbaum et al., 2011: 51), I want to offer an alternate theological reading. Perhaps hope backlights the dismal and the grave, because it is through this gravity (a pulling down as opposed to a speeding up) that we might recognize, perhaps to our horror, our own crooked natures. In recognizing that **we too are bent**, we might be better prepared to wilfully go our own autonomous ways. In other words, perhaps this kind of hope, a hope that comes through and in our **brokenness, illuminates** a desire for and an embrace of the realization that there is **no way to lie straight in the end**. For Berardi this hope comes in the very fact that his brain is limited—that while “his knowledge and understanding don’t see how any development of the social catastrophe could cultivate social well-being”, he also knows that he does not need to know or understand how because “the catastrophe (in the etymology of kata and stopherin) is exactly the point where a new landscape is going to be revealed” (Berardi, 2011: 162). In attending to the catastrophe we hold out faith that we might actually be able to reclaim the wealth of time and the beauty of our singularities. And we might push this faith even farther, asking how we can embrace the crip that follows. We might follow the following where it wills. The wilfully monstrous need not wander away from all senses of collectivity. Monstrosity might come apart from a risky common- ality of productivity on offer by Rieger and Kwok only to come noisily together in what Fred Moten and Stefano Harney name **the Undercommons** (a marooned community, particularly in the University, already considered to be fugitive invaders—never productive or professional enough). For example, Jack Halberstam notes in the introduction to the Undercommons that “the disordered sounds that we refer to as cacophony will always be cast as ‘extra- musical,’ as Moten puts it, precisely because we hear something in them that reminds us that our desire for **harmony is arbitrary** and in another world, harmony would **sound incomprehensible**. Listening to cacophony and noise tells us that there is a wild beyond to the structures we inhabit and that inhabit us” (Moten and Harney, 2013: 7). Halberstam continues, “And when we are called to this other place, the wild beyond, ‘beyond the beyond’ in Moten and Harney’s apt terminology, we have to give ourselves over to a certain kind of craziness” (Moten and Harney, 2013: 7). We can **give ourselves** over **to** this madness, to the ecstasy and **depression** of a chaotic cacophony **murmured by those crip monsters** on whose effacement harmony was built. This crazy (depressed, exhausted, inexpressible and unreasonable) we is not a we that will come from a suppression of each singularity’s maddening noise into a harmonious battle hymn of a productive multitude, even if the we will wage its own, perhaps slow, war. For this cacophony is the sound of Ahmed’s (2014: 184) wilful politics, which “[refuses] to cover over what is missing, a refusal to aspire to be whole”. No common battle hymn, but rather “A queer army ... that is not willing to reproduce the whole, an army of unserviceable parts. You can be assembled by **what support you refuse to give**. A queer army of parts without bodies, as well as bodies without parts, to evoke Audre Lorde’s call for an army of one-breasted women” (Ahmed, 2014: 199). This is a call to arms that in its monstrous handness is also a refusal. It is a refusal not of life, but **of the lives on offer by neoliberalism.** It is a refusal that demands and “exalt[s] tenderness, sleep, and ecstasy, the frugality of needs and the pleasure of the senses” (Berardi, 2011: 166). In other words, I would rather be reclining than redeemed. I would rather be sleeping than saved. I would rather be pleasured than productive.

#### Symbolic Death is the new normal and not a form of distortion.

James 14, Robin. "From “no future” to “delete yourself (you have no chance to win)”: Death, queerness, and the sound of neoliberalism." Journal of Popular Music Studies 25.4 (2014): 504-536. (Associate Professor of Philosophy at UNC Charlotte)//Elmer

However, what both Deleuze and Guattari and “MIDIjunkies” demonstrate is that this druggy, irregular temporality is, in neoliberalism, decidedly not queer—it is the very measure of healthy deregulated economy (of capital, of desire) in which rigidly controlled background conditions generate increasingly eccentric foreground events. This deterritorialization is only relative; not even time is liberated because in neoliberalism, labor power is supposed to be offbeat and irregular.41 The real junkies here are the ones addicted to classically liberal concepts of death and resistance as negation—the ones who think “flowers in the dustbin” are actually oppositional, and not the compost fueling neoliberal biopower. Nonmetrical music is an-archic, and like the Pistols, treats death or negation in a classically liberal framework. Because neoliberalism always already co-opts death, randomness, and an-arche, these strategies do not challenge biopolitical hegemonies. Neoliberal regimes use biopolitical administration to regularize death; a normalized variable, death is not a form of distortion. The task, then, is to distort death. This is what happens on “Into the Death,” which hyper-intensifies biopolitical or metric regulation.