### 1

The subject is created through the alienation of language a sacrifice that orients our desire towards a lost object that can never be achieved and is inherently empty to begin with. This creates a lack in the subject as we continue to pursue objects of desire only to become dissatisfied at their emptiness. This cycle of desire and lack is the fantasy an eternal prison that we continue to exist in constantly moving and pursing empty signifiers. Thus, the ROTB is to vote for the debater that best traverses the fantasy or interrogate the desires that we are constantly chasing.

McGowan 13 trigger warning - if you read the non-highlighted part of the card for discussions of eating disorders

Todd McGowan, 2013, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis,” University of Nebraska Press/Lincoln and London, SJBE

The subject as such emerges through the experience of loss. It is the loss of a part of the subject — an initial act of sacrifice — that creates both subject and object, the object emerging through this act as what the subject has lost of itself. The subject takes an interest in the object world because it forms this world around its lost object. As Jacques Lacan notes, “Never, in our concrete experience of analytic theory, do we do without the notion of Obviously, no one literally creates objects through an initial act of sacrifice of an actual body part. This would be too much to ask. But the psychical act of sacrifice allows for a distinction to develop where none existed before and simultaneously directs the subject’s desire toward the object world. In his breakthrough essay “Negation,” Freud describes this process as follows: “The antithesis between subjective and objective does not exist from the first. It only comes into being from the fact that thinking possesses the capacity to bring before the mind once more something that has once been perceived, by reproducing it as a presentation without the external object having still to be there. The first and immediate aim, therefore, of reality-testing is, not to find an object in real perception which corresponds to the one presented, but to refind such an object, to convince oneself that it is still there.”6 Though Freud doesn’t use terms from linguistics, it is clear that he is making refer- ence to the subject’s alienation in language and that he sees this alienation as the key to the emergence of both the subject and the object. When the subject submits to the imperatives of language, it enters into an indirect relation with the object world. The speaking being does not relate to books, pencils, and paper but to “books,” “pencils,” and “paper.” The signifier intervenes between the subject and the object that the subject perceives. The subject’s alienation into language deprives it of immediate contact with the object world. And yet, in the above passage from “Negation,” Freud conceives of the subject’s entrance into language — its “capacity to bring before the mind once more something that has once been perceived, by reproducing it as a presentation without the external object having still to be there” — as the event that produces the very distinction between subject and object. This means that the indirectness or mediation introduced by language deprives the subject of a direct relation to the object world that it never had. Prior to its immersion in the mediation of language, the subject had no object at all — not a privileged relation to objects but a complete absence of relationality as such due to its autoeroticism. In this sense, the subject’s willingness to accede to its alienation in language is the first creative act, a sacrifice that produces the objects that the subject cannot directly access. Language is important not for its own sake but because it is the site of our founding sacrifice. We know that the subject has performed this act of sacrifice when we witness the subject functioning as a being of language, but the sacrifice is not an act that the subject takes up on its own. Others always impose the entry into language on the subject. Their exhortations and incentives to speak prompt the emergence of the speaking subject. But the subject’s openness to alienation in language, its willingness to sacrifice a part of itself in order to become a speaking subject, suggests a lack in being itself prior to the entry into language. That is, the act through which the subject cedes the privileged object and becomes a subject coin- cides with language but is irreducible to it. The subject engages in the act of sacrifice because it does not find its initial autoeroticism perfectly sat- isfying — the unity of the autoerotic being is not perfect — and this lack of complete satisfaction produces the opening through which language and society grab onto the subject through its alienating process. If the initial autoerotic state of the human animal were perfectly satisfying, no one would begin to speak, and subjectivity would never form. Speaking as such testifies to an initial wound in our animal being and in being itself. But subjectivity emerges only out of a self-wounding. Even though others encourage the infant to abandon its autoerotic state through a multitude of inducements, the initial loss that constitutes subjectivity is always and neces- sarily self-inflicted. Subjectivity has a fundamentally masochistic form, and it continually repeats the masochistic act that founds it. The act of sacrifice opens the door to the promise of a satisfaction that autoerotic isolation forecloses, which is why the incipient subject abandons the autoerotic state and accedes to the call of sociality. But the term “sacrifice” is misleading insofar as it suggests that the subject has given up a wholeness (with itself or with its parent) that exists prior to being lost. In the act of sacrifice, the incipient subject gives up something that it doesn’t have. The initial loss that founds subjectivity is not at all substan- tial; it is the ceding of nothing. Through this defining gesture, the subject sacrifices its lost object into being. But if the subject cedes nothing, this initial act of sacrifice seems profoundly unnecessary. Why can’t the subject emerge without it? Why is the experience of loss necessary for the subject to constitute itself qua subject? The answer lies in the difference between need and desire. While the needs of the human animal are not dependent on the experience of loss, the subject’s desires are. It is the initial act of sacrifice that gives birth to desire: the subject sacri- fices nothing in order to create a lost object around which it can organize its desire. As Richard Boothby puts it in his unequaled explanation of the psychoanalytic conception of the emergence of desire, “The destruction and loss of the object . . . opens up a symbolic dimension in which what was lost might be recovered in a new form.”7 He adds: “Sacrifice serves to constitute the very matrix of desire. The essential function of sacrifice is less do ut des, I give so that you might give, than do ut desidero: I give in order that I might desire.”8 The subject’s desire is oriented around this lost object, but the object is nothing as a positive entity and only exists insofar as it is lost. This is why one can never attain the lost object or the object that causes one to desire.9 The coming-into-being of this object originates the subject of desire, but, having no substance, the object can never become an empirical object of desire. We may see an object of desire as embodying the lost object, but whenever we obtain this object, we discover its emptiness. The lost object is constitutively rather than empirically lost. Eating Nothing In this light, we can see the anorexic as the model for all desiring subjectivity. Most cultural critics justifiably see anorexia as the product of oppressive definitions of femininity that abound in contemporary society and force women to starve themselves in order to fit the ideals of feminine beauty. According to Naomi Wolf ’s classic popular account in The Beauty Myth, the ideal of thinness became a way of controlling women — disciplining their bodies — after the idea of natural female inferiority began to evanesce.10 The anorexic embodies female victimization: she has internalized a patriarchal ideal and does violence to her own body in order to live up to this ideal. But the problem with this analysis is that the anorexic doesn’t just try to embody the ideal of feminine beauty.11 She goes too far in her pursuit of thinness and comes to inhabit a body far from the ideal. Even when everyone tells her that she no longer looks good, that she is too thin, the anorexic continues to lose weight. It is for this reason that many feminists have seen her as a subversive figure. As Elizabeth Grosz puts it, “Neither a ‘disorder’ of the ego nor, as popular opinion has it, a ‘dieting disease’ gone out of control, anorexia can, like the phantom limb, be a kind of mourning for a pre-Oedipal (i.e., pre-castrated) body and a corporeal connection to the mother that women in patriarchy are required to abandon. Anorexia is a form of protest at the social meaning of the female body.”12 Grosz accounts for the excessiveness of anorexia by aligning it with feminist resistance to patriarchy rather than obsequious submission to it. But she aligns the anorexic with wholeness and the maternal bond rather than with the lost object. In this sense, she misses the true radicality of the anorexic, a radical- ity that stems from the power of the anorexic’s desire. The anorexic doesn’t simply refuse to eat but eats nothing, the nothing that is the lost object. While all positive forms of food fail to address the subject’s lack, nothing does speak to the subject’s desire and allows that desire to sustain itself. The anorexic starves not because she can’t find, in the mode of Kafka’s hunger artist, any food that would satisfy her but because she has found a satisfying food, a food that nourishes the desiring subject rather than the living being. The logic of anorexia lays bare the hidden work- ings of desire that operate within every subject. Subjects believe that they pursue various objects of desire (a new car, a new house, a new romantic partner, and so on) and that these objects have an intrinsic attraction, but the real engine for their desire resides in the nothing that the subject has given up and that every object tries and fails to represent. Objects of desire are desirable only insofar as they attempt to represent the impossible lost object, which is what the anorexic reveals. Still, the anorexic is exceptional; most nonanorexic subjects imagine that their lost object can be found in something rather than nothing. Despite its resonances with the structure of desire, anorexia cannot be dissociated from the imposition of the ideal of thinness as a mode of control- ling female subjectivity. Though this ideal distorts the anorexic’s relationship to her own body, it also renders the nature of desire itself apparent. The impossible ideal of perfect thinness allows the anorexic subject to avow, albeit unconsciously, the structural impossibility of desire itself. Unlike male subjects (or other female subjects who manage to distance themselves from the ideal), the anorexic cannot avoid confronting the impossibility of her object. The oppressive ideal of perfect thinness allows the anorexic to bear witness with her body to the truth of desire.13 Understanding the impossible nature of the lost object — what the anorexic makes clear — allows us to rethink the nature of the political act. Rather than being the successful achievement of some object, the accomplishment of some social good, the political act involves insisting on one’s desire in the face of its impossibility, which is precisely what occurs in the death drive. The key to a politics of the death drive is grasping, in the fashion of the anorexic, the nothingness of the object and thereby finding satisfaction in the drive itself. But the subject’s relationship to its object inherently creates an illusion that makes this possibility almost impossible. Though the lost object that initiates subjectivity has no substance, its status for the subject belies its nothingness. For the subject, the originary lost object is the object that seems to hold the key to the subject’s very ability to enjoy. Subjects invest the lost object with the idea of their own completion: the loss of the object retroactively causes a prior state of comple- tion to arise — a state of completion that never actually existed — and the object itself bears the promise of inaugurating a return to this imaginary prior state.14 In short, it promises to fill in the subject’s lack and answer its desire. As a result of this investment on the part of the subject, the initial lost object becomes the engine for all the subject’s subsequent desiring. Without the initial act of sacrifice, the would-be subject neither desires nor enjoys but instead suffocates in a world of self-presence, a self-presence in which one has no freedom whatsoever. Through the loss of the privileged object, one frees oneself from the complete domination of (parental or social) authority by creating a lack that no authority can fill. Ceding the object is thus the founding act of subjectivity and the first free act. Every subsequent effort by authority to give the subject what it lacks will come up short — or, more correctly, will go too far, because only nothing can fill the gap within the subject. For this reason, dissatisfaction and disappointment are correlative with freedom: when we experience the authority’s failure to give us what we want, at that moment we also experience our distance from the authority and our radical freedom as subjects.

#### Objectivity is a myth, it is impossible to convey subjective experiences through a lens of objectivity and the affs valorization of objectivity acts as a method to fill the lack of their subjectivity with an inevitably empty fantasy of reason and control

Hewitson 13 “Shades of Subjectivity” https://www.lacanonline.com/2013/07/shades-of-subjectivity-i/

In common parlance subjectivity is often held to be the antonym of objectivity, the latter being used to refer to the side of facts, reason, measurability and – ultimately – control. But in the psychoanalytic use of the term subjectivity is not opposed to objectivity. ‘Subjectivity’ in psychoanalysis does not imply a relativism but rather an ontology. Psychoanalysis is a practice which insists on the absolute specificity of each individual’s experience, meaning that subjectivity escapes all attempts at objectification. As the [Edinburgh Encyclopedia of Psychoanalysis](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0748639764/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=0748639764&linkCode=as2&tag=lacan-20) defines it, subjectivity is “The subjective experience of the individual person which can never be reduced to objectivity” (p.442) Without falling into the trap of ‘psychoanalytic exceptionism’, this understanding of subjectivity goes very much against the grain of the current climate in the psy- field and in other specialist fields. In these, ‘objectivity’ is increasingly valourised as being equivalent to the demonstrable, whilst ‘subjectivity’ is equated with a lack of rigour or specificity. Indeed, this is perhaps how the two terms are understood in everyday parlance. This has several consequences in the psy- field. Let’s look at a couple of examples. The first is in the use of randomised control trials (RCTs) as determinants of clinical accuracy. Their applicability to certain branches of medicine notwithstanding, a psychotherapy demands that the analyst or therapist respect the absolute specificity of an individual’s experience for the very simple reason that a particular symptom may indicate a very different problem for two different people, or for the same person at different times in their life. RCT’s, by their nature, require the lumping into groups of patients assumed to present with precisely the same characteristics – a control group, for instance. The logic of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence ([NICE](http://www.nice.org.uk/)) here in the UK seems to be that if RCTs did not do so they would not be effective – the fact that they do means they must be effective and so proposed treatments be measured against the outcomes they purport to reveal. The strangeness of this logic has not gone unchallenged. The Alliance for Counselling and Psychotherapy in the UK recently [intervened](http://alliance.drupalgardens.com/content/alliance-letter-limits-rcts) in a letter to the Times Higher Education supplement to point out that RCTs are not applicable to a psychotherapeutic clinic where the question to be answered is rather how to respond best to a unique individual who makes a demand for help. Another consequence of the facile equation objective-real/subjectivity-indefinite-or-imprecise is the seemingly pervasive idea that there has to be a physical correlate to something in the mind in order for a subjective experience to be ‘real’. Subjectivity is completely experiential. Simply understanding chemical processes in the brain that lead to it does not make it any more or less real, and nor can it provide an explanation of that subjective experience. Author of [Bad Science](http://www.amazon.com/s/?_encoding=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&field-keywords=bad%20science&linkCode=ur2&rh=i%3Aaps%2Ck%3Abad%20science&sprefix=bad%20science%2Caps%2C309&tag=lacan-20&url=search-alias%3Daps) Dr Ben Goldacre has written eloquently about what he cites as this ‘neuro-realism’: “All mental states have physical correlates, if you believe that the physical activity of the brain is what underlies our sensations, beliefs and experiences: so while different mental states will be associated with different physical states, that doesn’t tell you which caused which…. But far stranger is the idea that a subjective experience must be shown to have a measurable physical correlate in the brain before we can agree that the subjective experience is real, even for matters that are plainly experiential. If someone is complaining of persistent low sex drive, then they have persistent low sex drive, and even if you could find no physical correlate in the brain whatsoever, that wouldn’t matter, they do still have low sex drive. It’s a slightly strange world when a scan of blood flow in the brain is taken as vindication of a subjective mental state, and a way to validate our experience of the world.” ([source](http://www.badscience.net/2010/10/neuro-realism/)) The reality that is at stake here is no less real for it being subjective in nature. We often see an inability to appreciate this point coming from within the psy- field as well as from outside it, a point not lost on Lacan during his lifetime. In 1964 Lacan gave a warning very pertinent for the contemporary understanding of subjectivity in reference to a reality: “In analytic practice, mapping the subject in relation to reality, such as it is supposed to constitute us, and not in relation to the signifier, amounts to falling already into the degradation of the psychological constitution of the subject” (Seminar XI, p.142). It is worth remembering here that Lacan had very little respect for psychology and saw the object of its study as different from that of the that of the subject as conceived through psychoanalysis. More on this [elsewhere on this site](https://www.lacanonline.com/index/2010/10/what-does-psychoanalysis-have-to-do-with-psychology/v.48340889,d.d2k&cad=rjt). That is not to say that psychoanalysis is the sole guardian of subjectivity, but it does mean that a certain insensitivity to a person’s subjectivity, resulting from an overly-zelous commitment to ‘objectivity’ as a supposed alternative to the relativism of ‘subjectivity’, is unwise, at least as far as psy- practices go. A nice example of this is given in a [vignette](http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2008/sep/09/psychology.humanbehaviour) related by Lacanian analyst Darian Leader. It illustrates the folly that popular current therapies such as CBT are founded on – simply aiming to correct a person’s mistaken beliefs by convincing them that what they think is not in accordance with reality: “A woman convinced that she emits an unpleasant smell is persuaded to travel around on public transport with a portion of fish and chips to monitor how people react to her. This will allow her to assess the “evidence”: she will realise that there is a difference between times when she is the bearer of a strong smell and when she is not, and this will help her to “correct” her beliefs […] “After her strange sojourn on the tube, the woman with the fish and chips would meet her therapist and discuss the events of the day. If she realised that people in fact reacted to her less when she didn’t have the malodorous meal, then she might be able to change her thought pattern, to see her life in a more positive way. She would learn that her symptom was an incorrect interpretation of reality and hopefully come to see the world as everyone else does. But why did she suffer from this olfactory symptom in the first place? What function did it have in her life? If she was certain about it, what role did certainty play for her? Could it have been a solution to some other, less obvious problem? And if so, what would be the consequences of trying to remove it?” ([source](http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2008/sep/09/psychology.humanbehaviour)) The approach of psychoanalysis to the truly human, subjective experience is to interrogate how it is that something a subject relates about him or herself – an element of their story, their history, however fragmentary or arbitrary – has come to be invested with a particular meaning. This meaning is always very personal, and its resonance for that subject cannot be responded to – or intervened on – except with respect for these particularities. Ways in which this is smothered or ignored are many – sometimes by prescribing a pill, sometimes by offering advice, sometimes by offering the subject the label of a particular symptom or behavioural disorder – but what they all do is ignore the absolute specificity on which subjectivity insists. Rather than dealing with a symptom in a way that seeks to eliminate its mode of expression (the problem someone complains about) it is better to see it as telling some truth about the nature of that person’s subjectivity itself. This is nothing new. Four hundred years before Christ, Hippocrates wrote of how “It is more important to know what sort of person has a disease than to know what sort of disease a person has.” To illustrate these points about subjectivity we can borrow from an analogous and perhaps related field, that of studies into the nature of consciousness. The answer to the question ‘what is consciousness?’ is certainly one of the great philosophical debates yet to be settled. That Freud did not consider himself equal to the task of writing a metapsychological paper on consciousness alongside his others in 1914-15 can be taken as an indication of the respect with which we should treat this subject and the utility we can find in the considerations that animate it. The argument so far has been that whenever we try to use objective means to understand subjectivity there is always something that appears to get left out, to be amiss. This problem has been articulated by the American philosopher Thomas Nagel with the question that forms the title of his famous paper [‘What is it like to be a bat?’](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Nagel#What_it_is_like_to_be_a_something). Nagel was writing about consciousness but his argument is apt for our purposes in examining subjectivity. His proposal is that when we think about consciousness we have to think about subjective experiences, specifically the ‘what is it like’-ness of something. When we talk about a subjective experience like pain or love there is often a tendency to account for it by appealing to objective coordinates, just like the researchers cited by Goldacre above did. But the two cannot be so easily conflated. We might think that we can understand what it is like to be a bat because we know so much objectively about how bats sense and perceive their environment through echo-location, but this does not answer the question of what it feels like to be a bat. It only gives us an idea of what it would be like for us humans to live as bats. We can know all we want about the bat’s brain and its physiology but not what it feels like to be a bat. Last month in London we saw an example of one of the common ways in which this dimension is completely elided in Dr Allen Frances’ address as the 2013 Freud Memorial Lecture. The topic of his talk was Freud’s legacy, and he focused his critique of Freud’s thought on what he saw as the latter’s incorrect conceptualisation of human nature. Perhaps he was right, as he suggested, that Freud created a “Procrustean bed” for himself in how he saw the subject, stretching his theory so far as to be meaningless. But Frances simply traded one Procrustean bed for another. Freud “Developed a metaphor but the wrong metaphor”, he argued. For Frances, Freud saw the mind as working on the model of a steam engine whereas Frances countered that it is well-known nowadays that “the brain is not a powerplant, it’s a computer”. As one of the bullet points in [his Powerpoint presentation](http://www.artofpsychiatry.co.uk/category/other/) confidently declared, the correct metaphor was that of “Information processing, not engines”, and “Symptoms [were the] result of hardware and software malfunction”. What is wrong with this? We can see that it falls into the same trap highlighted by Goldacre above. To say that the brain is just a computer does not tell us anything about subjectivity, a topic at the heart of Freud’s project – indeed, perhaps a reason for his abandonment of neurology – even if Freud does not use the term itself. As the Australian philosopher David Chalmers notes, as adept as we may be in pinpointing causal roles and physical realisations in the physiology or brain chemistry of human beings, we can say the same for inanimate objects like robots or computers. The need to explain phenomenal consciousness, or subjectivity, remains. Chalmers’ point can be seen as a modern version of an argument made by Leibniz, in his [Monadology](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0822954494/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=0822954494&linkCode=as2&tag=lacan-20) (1840): “Suppose that there be a machine, the structure of which produces thinking, feeling and perceiving; imagine this machine enlarged, but preserving the same proportion, so that you could enter it as if it were a mill. This being supposed, you might visit it inside; but what would you observe there? Nothing but parts which push and move each other, and never anything that could explain perception.” (Leibniz. Monadology. Section 17. 1714. Paul Schrecher and Anne Martin Schrecher, trans. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965. 150.) If humans are just machines, if the brain is just a computer, we still need to answer the riddle of subjectivity – a question different to that of the workings of these physical mechanisms. In other words, if the brain is just a computer, we need to explain how what we experience as subjectivity – indeed, the mind itself – is just an epiphenomenon of the brain, emitting puffs of subjective smoke from the steam engine of the brain (to borrow Frances’ caricature of Freud’s metaphor). Another nice apologue that illustrates this point can be found in Frank Jackson’s famous thought experiment known as [Mary’s Room](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge_argument). Mary, a neuroscientist in the future, knows everything there is to know about human vision and colour perception. Having studied this subject for years she has an expert knowledge of the objective, measurable, physiological workings of colour perception. Yet, tragically, she has never herself seen any colours herself. But one days she walks out into the street and there she sees a red rose for the first time. At that moment, Jackson claims, her knowledge changes. She understands not just the physical qualities of colour and how it is perceived, but also the subjective experience – what it feels like – to see colour. This knowledge is additional to her academic knowledge but, as Jackson argues, constitutes a crucial phenomenal, experiential, subjective adjunct. Subjectivity here is in an entirely new register to that of what we could call the material or physical. Although Frances credits Freud with pointing out that humans are not rational animals – [something that people win the Nobel Prize for nowadays](http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/bios/Kahneman.html) – Frances’ view of subjectivity has very little psychoanalytical theory left in it, and he makes no bones about crediting Darwin as the true innovator of human psychology. In his Freud Memorial Lecture he raised the question of where we can recognise the subject of natural selection, but offered the very odd answer that a woman chooses a man with qualities she wants in her children. It is so rare that the choice of sexual partner conforms to this logic that even purely anecdotal knowledge would be enough to dispel this idea. Although in many ways his recent book [‘Saving Normal’](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0062229257/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=0062229257&linkCode=as2&tag=lacan-20) has done so much to counter the absurdities of the DSM-V, the clue is in the title – Frances believes in the category of ‘normal’. With this first article setting the scene by referencing current treatments of the idea of subjectivity, In the second article in this series we will look at subjectivity with reference to Freud and Lacan’s work. We will look at what sort of a subject Freud’s work implies, how Lacan build on this to elevate subjectivity to a place of prime importance in psychoanalysis, and how his ideas have been interpreted by post-Lacanians.

#### The notion of endorsing the plan despite its inability to create actual change is the same empty gesture that defines the sociopath – the refusal to question the validating of this model of communication negates that every choice we make with language is indicative of a meta-choice. Only the criticism answers the question of why we continue to make the choice to defend this pathological method of debate and acknowledges that this foundational decision dictates and limits our potentiality.

Zizek 2009 How to Read Lacan, Empty Gestures and Performatives http://www.lacan.com/essays/?p=88

The notion of the social link established through empty gestures enables us to define in a precise way the figure of sociopath: what is beyond the sociopath’s grasp is the fact that “many human acts are performed … for the sake of the interaction itself.” [3] In other words, the sociopath’s use of language paradoxically fits perfectly the standard commonsense notion of language as purely instrumental means of communication, as signs that transmit meanings. He uses language, he is not caught into it, and he is insensitive to the performative dimension. This determines a sociopath’s attitude towards morality: while he is able to discern moral rules that regulate social interaction, and even to act morally insofar as he establishes that it fits his interests, he lacks the “gut feeling” of right and wrong, the notion that one just cannot do some things, independently of the external social rules. In short, a sociopath truly practices the notion of morality developed by utilitarianism, according to which, morality designates a behavior we adopt by way of intelligently calculating our interests (in the long run, it profits us all if we try to contribute to the pleasure of the greatest possible number of people): for him, morality is a theory one learns and follows, not something one substantially identifies with. Doing evil is a mistake in calculation, not guilt.

Because of this performative dimension, every choice we confront in language is a meta-choice, that is to say, a choice of choice itself, a choice that affects and changes the very coordinates of my choosing. Recall the everyday situation in which my (sexual, political, or financial) partner wants me to make a deal with him; what he tells me is basically: “Please, I really love you, if we come together here, I will be totally dedicated to you! But if you reject me, I may lose my control and make your life a misery!” The catch here, of course, is that I am not simply confronted with a clear choice: the second part of this message undermines the first part – somebody who is ready to ruin me if I say no to him cannot really love me and be dedicated to my happiness, as he claims in the first part. The reality of the choice offered to me thus belies its terms: hatred or, at least, cold manipulative indifference towards me underlies both terms of the choice. There is, of course, a symmetrical hypocrisy, which consists in saying: “I love you and will accept whatever your choice will be; so even if (you know that) your refusal will ruin me, please choose what you really want, and do not take into consideration how it will affect me!” The manipulative falsity of this offer, of course, resides in the way it uses its “honest” insistence that I can say no as an additional pressure on me to say yes: “How can you refuse me, when I love you so totally?”

We can see now how, far from conceiving the Symbolic which rules human perception and interaction as a kind of transcendental a priori (a formal network, given in advance, which limits the scope of human practice), Lacan is interested precisely in how the gestures of symbolization are entwined with and embedded in the process of collective practice. What Lacan elaborates as the “twofold moment” of the symbolic function reaches far beyond the standard theory of the performative dimension of speech as it was developed in the tradition from J.L. Austin to John Searle:

The symbolic function presents itself as a twofold movement in the subject: man makes his own action into an object, but only to return its foundational place to it in due time. In this equivocation, operating at every instant, lies the whole progress of a function in which action and knowledge alternate. [4]

The historical example evoked by Lacan to clarify this “twofold movement” is indicative in its hidden references:

in phase one, a man who works at the level of production in our society considers himself to belong to the ranks of the proletariat; in phase two, in the name of belonging to it, he joins in a general strike. [5]

Lacan’s (implicit) reference here is to Georg Lukacs’ History and Class Consciousness, a classic Marxist work from 1923 whose widely acclaimed French translation was published in the mid-1950s. For Lukacs, consciousness is opposed to mere knowledge of an object: knowledge is external to the known object, while consciousness is in itself ‘practical’, an act which changes its very object. (Once a worker “considers himself to belong to the ranks of the proletariat,” this changes his very reality: he acts differently.) One does something, one counts oneself as (declares oneself) the one who did it, and, on the base of this declaration, one does something new – the proper moment of subjective transformation occurs at the moment of declaration, not at the moment of act. This reflexive moment of declaration means that every utterance not only transmits some content, but, simultaneously, renders how the subject relates to this content. Even the most down-to-earth objects and activities always contain such a declarative dimension, which constitutes the ideology of everyday life. One should never forget that utility functions as a reflective notion: it always involves the assertion of utility as meaning. A man who lives in a large city and owns a land-rover (for which he obviously has no use), doesn’t simply lead a no-nonsense, down-to-earth life; rather, he owns such a car in order to signal that he leads his life under the sign of a no-nonsense, down-to-earth attitude. To wear stone-washed jeans is to signal a certain attitude to life.

#### They destroy the possibility for politics, ethics, and the value of life, and their defense will prove my point— controls the internal link to all other impacts

Ruti ‘14 (mari, English, Toronto, Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society (2014) 19, 297–314) SJBE, recut from Harvard BoSu

On the other hand, Lacan – again like Marcuse – recognizes that the symbolic order is repressive beyond the demands of subject formation, that it includes forms of violence that exceed the ubiquitous violence of the signifier. Indeed, even the violence of the signifier is not equally distributed, so that some of us are much more vulnerable to its injurious effects than others (consider, for instance, hate speech). Lacan does not necessarily talk about the unequal distribution of resources in the manner Marcuse does, but there is no doubt that his analysis of symbolic law as the Law of the Father elucidates a historically specific, deeply heteropatriarchal and hierarchical organization of social life. In point of fact, one reason I have taken a detour through Marcuse is to illustrate the obvious ways in which Lacan’s portraiture of the symbolic mirrors that of Marcuse’s explicitly historical account: what Marcuse calls “the performance principle,” Lacan calls the “service of goods.” Both thinkers identify the underpinnings of a social order dominated by the ideal of productivity – an ideal that is, moreover, placed in direct opposition to the pleasure principle. Both emphasize that the dominant morality of this symbolic – what Lacan calls “the morality of the master” – measures the merit of lives based on largely pragmatic criteria. And both acknowledge that the model citizen of this symbolic is a subject who shows up at work reliably every morning, performs its duties with a degree of diligence, does not let its desires get the better of its productivity, and seeks satisfaction (“enjoys”) in moderate, socially sanctioned ways. “Part of the world has resolutely turned in the directions of the service of goods,” Lacan writes, “thereby rejecting everything that has to do with the relationship of man to desire” (318). This, he adds, “is what is known as the postrevolutionary perspective” (318). In other words, the service of goods reflects the mindset of the levelheaded utilitarian subject who has deemed revolutionary change to be unrealistic. Lacan is here referring to the kind of depoliticization that is arguably the hallmark of Western subjectivity under capitalism. Lacan’s point is by no means, as critics such as Butler have suggested, that a different kind of symbolic is intrinsically impossible but rather that the configuration of subjectivity that Western modernity has produced – a subjectivity that has been subjected to a particular form of surplus-repression (the performance principle, the service of goods) – makes it virtually impossible for us to entertain the idea that the symbolic could be organized differently, that it could be centered around a different version of the reality principle. As Marcuse remarks, one reason the performance principle is so powerful is that it has managed to convince us that all alternatives to it are either utopian or otherwise unpalatable. Yet, for Marcuse, the fact that this principle has been so successful also points to the possibility of transcending it. As he states, “The very progress of civilization under the performance principle has attained a level of productivity at which the social demands upon instinctual energy to be spent in alienated labor could be considerably reduced. Consequently, the continued repressive organization of the instincts seems to be necessitated less by the ‘struggle for existence’ than by the interest in prolonging this struggle – by the interest in domination” (pp. 129–130). This is to say that there is really nothing besides social power that keeps us invested in the notion that our welfare demands relentless toil. The performance principle has outlived its usefulness in the sense that our collective productivity these days surpasses what is necessary for the provision of food, clothing, housing, and other basic amenities. The fact that these amenities have not yet reached all corners of the world, or even all corners of our own society (the homeless, innercity dwellers, etc.), is a function of domination (the unequal distribution of resources) rather than of any deficiencies of productivity. As a result, in Marcuse’s view, all we would need to do to bring about a more “non-repressive civilization” (p. 134) would be to refuse the parameters of the current symbolic; even something as simple as reducing the length of the working day would immediately realign our priorities, perhaps even impacting the very organization of our psychic lives. Our standard of living might drop somewhat, but we might also learn to assess the value of our lives according to other, less performance-oriented, measurements. Psychoanalysis, particularly Lacanian analysis, does not have a normative goal; it does not seek to tell us how we should desire but merely to explore the idiosyncratic contours of our desire. But this does not change the fact that Lacan, at least as a theorist, was exasperated by people’s inability to make their way out of the maze of the master’s morality, including its performance principle; he was frustrated by individuals who were so out of touch with the truth of their desire that they were willing to sacrifice this desire for the sake of social conformity and that they were, furthermore, willing to do so to the point of self-betrayal. As he explains, “What I call ‘giving ground relative to one’s desire’ is always accompanied in the destiny of the subject by some betrayal – you will observe it in every case and should note its importance. Either the subject betrays his own way, betrays himself, and the result is significant for him, or, more simply, he tolerates the fact that someone with whom he has more or less vowed to do something betrays his hope and doesn’t do for him what their pact entailed” (p. 321). Such a betrayal invariably results in the reassertion of the status quo, sending the subject back to the service of goods, what Lacan in this context calls “the common path” (p. 321). And given that desire, for Lacan, is “the metonymy of our being” (p. 321), betraying it in this way leads to the kind of psychic death that extinguishes the subject’s sense of agency. To use Lacan’s wording, “Doing things in the name of the good, and even more in the name of the good of the other, is something that is far from protecting us not only from guilt but also from all kinds of inner catastrophes” (p. 319). It is precisely such inner catastrophes that Lacanian clinical practice was designed to counter, though it may be Julia Kristeva – rather than Lacan himself – who has most clearly developed this interpretation of analytic work. Kristeva depicts psychoanalysis as a means of restoring the subject’s psychic aliveness, as an explicit revolt against the numbing impact of what she calls “the society of the spectacle” (2002, p. 4). This society of the spectacle – of technology, image, and speed – shares many parallels with Adorno’s “culture industry”: a flattened surface of the life world, a constriction of psychic space, a death of critical thought, the worship of efficiency over intellectual curiosity, and the incapacity to revolt. Against this backdrop, psychoanalysis – along with art, writing, and some forms of religious experience – offers, for Kristeva, a gateway to revolt, a way of resurrecting “the life of the mind” (a phrase Kristeva borrows from Hannah Arendt) through ongoing questioning, interrogation, and psychic recreation. “Freud founded psychoanalysis as an invitation to anamnesis in the goal of a rebirth, that is, a psychical restructuring,” Kristeva writes: “Through a narrative of free association and in the regenerative revolt against the old law (familial taboos, superego, ideals, oedipal or narcissistic limits, etc.) comes the singular autonomy of each, as well as a renewed link with the other” (2002, p. 8). In the context of my overall argument in this essay, it is worth stressing that it is “the desire of the subject” that, in Kristeva’s view, reserves a place “for initiative, autonomy” (2002, p. 11). This is in part because the “Freudian journey into the night of desire was followed by attention to the capacity to think: never one without the other” (2010, p. 41). In other words, the exploration of desire, in psychoanalysis, is akin to the critical (or at least curious) movement of thought – the very movement that Arendt also saw as vital to the life of the mind. This is why psychoanalysis has, Kristeva asserts, “the (unique?) privilege today of accompanying the emergence of new capacities of thinking/representing/thinking, beyond the frequent and increasingly noticeable disasters of psychosomatic space – capacities that are so many new bodies and new lives” (2010, pp. 41–42). Kristeva therefore draws the same link between desire and autonomy (in this instance, the capacity for critical thought) as Lacan does. Furthermore, to translate Kristeva’s point into Marcuse’s terminology, one might say that psychoanalysis, at least the kind of analysis that refuses to uphold social adaptation as a therapeutic goal, presents the possibility of sidestepping, or at the very least diminishing, the effects of surplus-repression. This, in turn, creates space for the truth of the subject’s desire in the Lacanian sense. This does not mean that repression as such is defeated. Quite the contrary, as we will see shortly, the truth of the subject’s desire is inextricable from the primary (constitutive) repression that accompanies subject formation. But as I have already suggested, the lifting of surplus-repression renders the imprint of primary repression more clearly discernable, for when surplus-repression is removed, what remains are the always highly singular outlines of primary repression. And if Lacan – like Marcuse – sought to remove surplus-repression, it was because he understood that it was on the level of primary repression (fundamental fantasies) that one could find the most basic building blocks of the subject’s psychic destiny; primary repression was the layer of psychic life that expressed something essential about the distinctive ways in which the pleasure principle, in the subject’s life, had become bound up with the repetition compulsion. This is why Lacan states, “If analysis has a meaning, desire is nothing other than that which supports an unconscious theme, the very articulation of that which roots us in a particular destiny, and that destiny demands insistently that the debt be paid, and desire keeps coming back, keeps returning, and situates us once again in a given track, the track of something that is specifically our business” (p. 319).According to Lacan, analysis aims to enable us to understand something about the eccentric specificity (or truth) of our most fundamental desire as well as about the track of destiny that this desire carves out for us (and that is therefore “specifically our business”). If it is indeed the case, as I have conceded, that most of us tend to be alienated from our desire, Lacanian analysis strives to undo this alienation by familiarizing us with the truth of this desire. This process entails, among other things, recognizing that the destiny we owe to this desire can never be definitively overcome, that the debt of desire can never be fully redeemed (for how are we to compensate the signifier for having brought us into being as subjects of desire?). Our destiny – which might initially coincide quite seamlessly with our repetition compulsion – consists of recurring efforts to pay off this debt, which is why it keeps ushering us to the same track of desire, the same nexus of psychic conundrums, our unconscious hope being that if we wear out the track of our desire by incessant reiteration, one day we might be able to absolve ourselves of our debt. But since we cannot, the only thing to be done is to “own” our destiny even as we might seek to mitigate its more painful dimensions. That is, the only way to arrive at the kind of psychic rebirth Kristeva is talking about is to take full responsibility for our (unconsciously generated) destiny. In the ethical act, our impulse is to embrace this destiny wholesale regardless of consequences (this is one way to understand what it means to plunge into the jouissance of the real). In analysis, the exploration of our destiny is more gradual, more self-reflexive. But in both cases, the point is not to obliterate our foundational destiny (or fundamental fantasies) but merely to elaborate it in more satisfying directions, away from the incapacitating effects of the repetition compulsion and toward the rewards of subjective autonomy. And, if we are to achieve this goal, nothing is more important than staying faithful to the truth of desire that, on the most elementary level, determines our destiny.

#### The ideology of the 1AC fills the void of the death drive with a fantasy of truth and goodness, Thus the alternative is to confront the death drive and our desires head on rather than to hid behind empty gesture of symbolic progress or semiotic victory’s. These things only feed the fantasy and trap us in endless repression and psychological violence.

Zizek**,** Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies, Ljubljana 1999 Slavoj, The Ticklish Subject, page 160-161

In Lacanese, the subject prior to subjectivization is the pure negativity of the death drive prior to its reversal into the identification with some new Master-Signifier.27 Or - to put it in another way - Lacan's point is not that the subject is inscribed into the very ontological structure of the universe as its constitutive void, but that *'subject' designates the contingency of* *an Act that sustains the very ontological order of being.* 'Subject' does not open up a hole in the full order of Being: ‘subject’ is the contingent-excessive gesture that constitutes the very universal order of Being. The opposition between the subject qua ontological foundation of the order of Being and the subject qua contingent particular emergence is therefore false: the subject is the contingent emergence/act that sustains the very universal order of Being. The subject is not simply the excessive *hubris* through which a particular element disturbs the global order of Being by positing itself - a particular element - as its centre; the subject is, rather, the paradox of a particular element that sustains the very universal frame.

Lacan's notion of the act as real is thus opposed to both Laclau and Badiou. In Lacan, act is a purely *negative* category: to put it in Badiou's terms, it stands for the gesture of breaking out of the constraints of Being, for the reference to the Void at its core, *prior to filling this Void.* In this precise sense, the act involves the dimension of death drive that grounds a decision (to accomplish a hegemonic identification; to engage in a fidelity to a Truth), but cannot be reduced to it. The Lacanian death drive (a category Badiou adamantly opposes) is thus again a kind of ‘vanishing mediator' between Being and Event: there is a 'negative' gesture constitutive of the subject which is then obfuscated in 'Being' (the established ontological order) and in fidelity to the Event.28

This minimal distance between the death drive and sublimation, between the negative gesture of suspension-withdrawal-contraction and the positive gesture filling its void, is not just a theoretical distinction between the two aspects, which are inseparable in our actual experience: as we have already seen, the whole of Lacan's effort is precisely focused on those limit-experiences in which the subject finds himself confronted with the death drive at its purest, prior to its reversal into sublimation. Is not Lacan's analysis of Antigone focused on the moment when she finds herself in the state 'in between the two deaths’, reduced to a living death, excluded from the symbolic domain?29 Is this not similar to the uncanny figure of Oedipus at Colonnus who after fulfilling his destiny, is also reduced to 'less than nothing', to a formless stain, the embodiment of some unspeakable horror? All these and other figures (from Shake­speare's King Lear to Claudel's Sygne de Coufontaine) are figures who find themselves in this void, trespassing the limit of 'humanity' and entering the domain which, in ancient Greek, was called *ate,* 'inhuman madness'. Here, Badiou pays the price for his proto-Platonic adherence to Truth and the Good: what remains beyond his reach, in his violent (and, on its own level, quite justified) polemics against the contemporary obsession with depoliticized 'radical Evil' (the Holocaust, etc.) and his insistence that the different facets of Evil are merely so many conse­quences of the betrayal of the Good (of the Truth-Event), is this domain 'beyond the Good', in which a human being encounters the death drive as the utmost limit of human experience, and pays the price by undergoing a radical ‘subjective destitution', by being reduced to an excremental remainder. Lacan's point is that this limit-experience is the irreducible/ constitutive condition of the (im)possibility of the creative act of embrac­ing a Truth-Event: it opens up and sustains the space for the Truth-Event, yet its excess always threatens to undermine it.

Classic onto-theology is focused on the triad of the True, the Beautiful and the Good. What Lacan does is to push these three notions to their limit, demonstrating that the Good is the mask of 'diabolical' Evil, that the Beautiful is the mask of the Ugly, of the disgusting horror of the Real, and that the True is the mask of the central Void around which every symbolic edifice is woven. In short, there is a domain 'beyond the Good' that is not simply everyday 'pathological' villainy, but the constitutive background of the Good itself, the terrifying ambiguous source of its power; there is a domain 'beyond the Beautiful' that is not simply the ugliness of ordinary everyday objects, but the constitutive background of Beauty itself, the Horror veiled by the fascinating presence of Beauty; there is a domain 'beyond Truth' that is not simply the everyday domain of lies, deceptions and falsities, but the Void that sustains the place in which one can only formulate symbolic fictions that we call 'truths'. If there is an ethico-political lesson of psychoanalysis, it consists in the insight into how the great calamities of our century (from the Holocaust to the Stalinist *desastre)* are not the result of our succumbing to the morbid attraction of this Beyond but, on the contrary, the result of our endeavour to avoid confronting it and to impose the direct rule of the Truth and/or Goodness.

#### Neuroscience proves Lacanian psychoanalysis is true and falsifiable

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I argue that these three Lacanian orders relate to the basic areas of neural anatomy: the left and right neocortex, plus the subcortical areas (from limbic system to brainstem).21 Humans share with all pre-existing animals, at least as far back as reptiles, a core brainstem that regulates internal functions and processes instinctual responses to outside stimuli, such as the body's instant, unconscious reaction to danger. We share with mammals a limbic system (including the temporal lobes at the sides of the head) that evolved around the brainstem to process more complex emotions and learned behaviors.22 Like other primates, we also have an expanded neocortex as the outermost layer of our brain (with occipital lobes in the back of the head, parietal lobes at the top rear, and frontal lobes).23 However, humans evolved distinct functional areas on each side of the neocortex. The left neocortex has audioverbal, linear, causal, executive, prosocial, routine functions, in contrast to the right hemisphere's visuospatial, holistic, intuitive, devil's advocate, anxiety- biased, novelty-detecting processes.25 Distinctive language systems (syntax and semantics) are in the left hemisphere, in Broca's and Wernicke's areas,2' in nearly all right-handed people and most left-handed.2. The right brain has further ties to the emotional limbic system and instinctual brainstem, but the left tends to operate separately (especially in men28), expressing or inhibiting limbic emotions and right-cortical intuitions, through its rational language and executive controls. Specifically regarding theatrical mimesis, the left inferior parietal lobe (IPL) is used for recognizing "pantomimes executed by others" because it stores the "complex digrams" or schemas used in the "higher level intentional planning" of actions, while the right IPL is used for interpreting spatial orientation (Jacob and Jeannerod 253). Thus, certain left-cortical functions correlate with Lacan's Symbolic order of language, rules, and social codes, the right with the Imaginary, and the limbic system and brain- stem areas with the Real. Yet these three orders arc "inmixed" dimensions (Ragland-Sullivan 190), as are the corresponding areas of our brains. The Symbolic order resides primarily, but not solely within and between left brains, like the Imaginary in and between right hemispheres, and the Real in limbic systems and brainstems.2- I say "primarily" because there are also aspects of Symbolic language, involving imagery and emotions, in certain right-brain functions: making and interpreting metaphors, contextual meanings, puns, prosody, and non- verbal gestures (Ornstcin 103-08; Cozolino, Neuroscience of Psychotherapy 109). Thus, the right brain is used more for language, along with the left, by "expert" readers (Wolf 162). While the right brains Imaginary order is crucial for "sell-image" (Ornstein 132, 175-76), the spatial sense of ego also depends upon the left brain's "orientation area," as I will consider in the first chapter The general correspondence of Real, Imaginary, and Symbolic orders to the brainstem/limbic system, right hemisphere, and left hemisphere is confirmed by research on developmental growth spurts in the neocortex during childhood. As in Lacan's theory of the mirror stage, with the infant's Imaginary ego initially developing through preverbal communication with the (m)Other, neuroscience shows that right-brain to right-brain "attunement" between the mother and child, during its first two years of life, profoundly shapes its emotional and perceptual pathways, especially its sense of self in relation to others (Cozolino, Neuroscience of Human 38, 66-75, 84-85; Neuroscience of Psychotherapy 191-92). The "prosocial self then shifts, through language development, into the left brain, with its growth in subsequent years (118; Wolf 185-88). This relates to the Lacanian Symbolic order of words and laws shaping the child more directly after the initial mirror stage, at 6-18 months. According to neuroscience, the self as a "distributed neural network that encompasses shared self-other representations" continues to be "right- hemisphere based" (Deccty and Sommerville 527). Recognition of one's own face can be lost when the right hemisphere is anesthetized (529)—demon- strating that the Imaginary perception of ego (or the Freudian "imago"), and its possible fading or Lacanian "aphanisis," is based in the right cortex.31 Regarding our potential for therapeutic and theatrical catharsis, there appears to be a crucial filter between Symbolic/Imaginary and Real orders (or superego /ego and id) in the prefrontal area of the neocortex, at the edge of the limbic system.3 Neurologists locate a "stimulus barrier" between the Freudian superego and id in the "ventromesial [or ventromedial regions of the prefrontal lobe [where it] merges into the limbic system" and protects the ego "from the incessant demands of instinctual life" (Kaplan-Solms and Solms 275-76).34 Here, cathartic changes may occur in how remnant natural instincts are expressed (or transformed through greater awareness), from mostly unconscious, limbic, Real emotions, through right-brain, Imaginary perceptions and fundamental fantasies, to the Symbolic order of language, rules, and self identity in relation to the social Other. Neurologists have also found four layers of the prefrontal cortex (PFC) with distinctive, nested, hierarchical functions (Koechlin et al.; Murphy and Brown 133-35). The premotor cortex, at the rear of the PFC, exerts sensory control, selecting specific motor (bodily action) responses to stimuli. The caudal lateral PFC, the next layer moving forward, adds contextual control regarding the current situation when stimuli are received. The rostral lateral PFC, a further anterior layer, then exerts episodic control over the other two, by tracking present and past information regarding general behavior, thus allowing for changing contingencies. (Murphy and Brown give the examples of answering the phone when it rings, not answering it at a friend s house, or answering it there because the friend IS in the shower and asks you to, as illustrating these three levels of stimulus response.) A fourth area is posited in the frontopolar cortex, used for cognitive branching and controlling the shifts between different episodes of behavior, while exerting control over the other three layers. Likewise, the orbitofrontal cortex (OFC) determines "reward value" choices, including the selection of "stimuli on the basis of familiarity and [selection of] responses on the basis of a feeling of Vightness" (Elliott et al. 308). The lateral regions of the OFC arc involved with "the suppression of previously rewarded responses." Brain imaging studies find that these areas are "fundamental" in behavioral choices, especially in "unpredictable situations." One might argue that the Lacanian Symbolic and Imaginary orders of cultural rules and personal perceptions connect with the Real of stimuli and actions through these areas of the PFC (just behind and above the ventrome- dial). The brain responds to familiar or unpredictable stimuli with inner theatrical representations and outer performances, through shifting, time-bound, contextual, sensory controls. Such controls are shaped in each human brain through learned cultural experiences of the social Other, which create further top-down constraints utilized by the PFC's layered functions, in relation to bottom-up stimuli. And yet, theatrical performances are ways that the Other, as well as the individual, may change. A culture can explore extended possibilities of Symbolic and Imaginary shifts in situation, context, and sensation, using a collective dreamlike space. This may also involve divine and demonic characterizations of top-down or bottom-up forces, experienced in nature, in the body and brain, or in social networks. Lacan's three orders relate not only to the brain's anatomy, but also to cognitive psychologist Merlin Donald's theory about the evolutionary stages of cultural development in our hominid ancestors. About two million years ago, early hominids evolved beyond the "episodic" experience of other animals (and prior australopithecines)— with the "mimetic" stage of human evolution.3 Donald cites the evidence of increasing brain size in our hominid ancestors,-' the first stone tools, big game hunting, a more group-oriented way of life, and thus "a cultural strategy for remembering and problem solving" (Mind 261).' Instead of being "immersed in a stream of raw episodic experience, from which they ... [could not] gain any distance," early hominids developed a new cognitive capacity, "mimetic skill, which was an extension of conscious control into the domain of action. It enabled playacting, body language, precise imitation, and gesture" (120, 261). This also included prosody, which is processed today in the brain's right hemisphere: "deliberately raising and lowering the voice, and producing imitations of emotional sounds. About a half million years ago, archaic Homo sapiens gradually evolved a "mythic" stage of culture and brain development, culminating with the emergence of our own subspecies, Homo sapiens sapiens, about 125,000 years ago (Donald, Mind 261). The mythic stage is evidenced by a much higher rate of innovation than in prior hominids: sophisticated tools, "beautifully crafted objects, improved shelters and hearths, and elaborate graves" (261-62). This stage included oral traditions of language and narrative thought — beyond the gesture, mime, and imitation of prior mimetic hominids, or the basic awareness and event sensitivity of episodic primates (260)." It thus involved a fundamental change in the human brain (and vocal tract): an "invasion" of the left parietal lobe by language, replacing spatial perception and movement, which then became a more distinctive function of the right parietal lobe (LcDoux, Synaptic 303, 318).40 Donald's mythic stage shows the evolution of the Symbolic order of mind and society, as well as our current left hemisphere functions. The mimetic stage correlates to right brain processing and the Lacanian Imaginary. Today's human brains also bear the remnant animal emotions and drives of primal episodic awareness in the limbic system and brainstem, as a lost yet disruptive Real or chora\*1 Indeed, each child moves through similar developmental stages, recapitulating hominid phylogeny: from primal episodic awareness to the mimetic "interlinking of the infant's attentional system with those of other people" and then to narrative speech (Donald, Mind 255). Or, in Lacanian terms, a child moves from the Real of natural being to the Imaginary order of mirrored illusions of ego in the (m)Others desires and then, through verbal language, to the Symbolic order of superego incorporation, with the Others discourse and social rules, via the Name and No of the Father. This basic outline of Lacanian orders, brain anatomy, and hominid evolution shows that "theatre" (and dance) in the most primal sense — as Imaginary, mimetic performance —began about two million years ago. At that time, our ancestors developed a new skill that eventually became specialized in the visuospatial, prosodic, Imaginary functions of the right hemisphere, with ties to the emotional/instinctual Real of the limbic system and brain- stem. Later hominids developed oral language and myth-making, as further Symbolic orders, through distinct areas of the left brain about a half million years ago. As with the modern child's development from primary to higher- order consciousness, through the Real and Imaginary dimensions of the mirror stage and the later Symbolic acquisition of language and rules, these layers of the brain and of hominid culture continue to interact today — with each human being transformed by a particular family and society. As Donald points out, primal mimesis in early hominids relates not only to the current playacting of children (Mind 266), but also to the "many institutionalized versions of pretend play in theater and him, and [to the] imaginative role playing [that] is integral to adult social life" (263). A crucial aspect of this evolutionary skill is emotional regulation, which involves the germ of self-consciousness, through a "mimetic controller" in the brain, "a whole-body mapping capacity ... under unified command" (269). Thus, early hominids developed larger frontal lobes, setting the stage for the later evolution of a distinctive left hemisphere (271).'15 Like children today (starting with the Imaginary dimension of the Lacanian mirror stage), our hominid ancestors developed a "kinematic imagination" with the physical "image of self" becoming an anchor to experience and awareness (273). This involved rhythmic body movements, expressing temporal relations, through the intersubjective medium of performance, as a "public theatre of convention" (272-74). However, the full emergence of theatre as narrative performance began with oral storytelling during the hominid "mythic" stage, starting about a half million years ago. Then, about forty thousand years ago, humans evolved a further, "theoretic" stage, through the "externalization of memory ... [using] symbolic devices to store and retrieve cultural knowledge" (Donald, Mind2G2). During this current stage of hominid evolution, the tradition of recorded theatre and drama developed, along with other artistic technologies,44 a "Symptom" of being human that has vastly expanded in recent centuries.45 Thus, theatre in the theoretic sense may have started with Paleolithic cave art (as considered in the first chapter). Eventually, the theoretic technologies of theatre, externalizing and interconnecting the performance elements of the human brain, developed in various ways through different cultures — culminating in the current globalism 01 virtual media screens, often dominated by Western paradigms. Our theoretic stage with its evolving technologies continues to reshape the skills of prior stages and "liberate consciousness from the limitations of the brains biological memory systems" (305). However, such an external memory field can also be a "Trojan Horse," Donald warns, "a device that invades the innermost personal spaces of the mind. It can play our cognitive instrument, directing our minds toward predetermined end states along a set course" (316). Such a Trojan Horse potential, with good and evil effects, becomes even more significant through divine characters and godlike ideals, at various points in Western history, from stage to screen performances, as explored throughout this book. Donald's stages of cognitive psychology match with Stephen Mithens archeological theories and research.4fl According to Mithen, the early hominid social intelligence of Homo erectus> 1.6 million years ago, involved the communication of "contentment, anger or desire" through a "wide range of sounds (Prehistory 144) —as with the mimetic prosody theorized by Donald. Human verbal language with "a vast lexicon and a set of grammatical rules" began 500,000 to 200,000 years ago, with Neanderthals and archaic Homo sapiens, as evidenced by brain and throat structure, indicated in fossils of their bones (140-42, 208). This corresponds to Donald's mythic stage of hominid evolution. Mithen also cites archeological evidence that a dramatic shift occurred 40,000 years ago. Early humans in the Upper Paleolithic period changed from having separate types of intelligence—natural history intelligence (such as interpreting animal hoofprints), social intelligence (with intentional communication), and technical intelligence (producing artifacts from mental templates) — to a new cognitive fluidity between them, creating artifacts with "symbolic meanings ... i.e. art" (163-65).47 This shows the begin- ning of Donald's theoretic stage and relates to the possible shamanic visions and performances evidenced by Paleolithic cave art.48 The evolutionary stages, neurological layers, and psychoanalytic orders of self and Other awareness, developing through shared cultural performances, reflect what might be called an "inner theatre" of the brain.49 By this, I do not mean a "Cartesian theatre" with the mind inside the brain as a single ghostly spectator watching the machinery of inner scenes, or as a play-wright-homunculus inhabiting a central control area (the pineal gland, according to Descartes. 400 years ago). This theory has been fully critiqued by cognitive philosophers, from Gilbert Rylc to Daniel Dennett, as well as by current neurological evidence. However, cognitive scientist Bernard Baars uses theatrical terms in other ways to explain the global workspace of human consciousness. Less than 10 percent of brain activity is conscious, like a "spot- light" on the visible actors and scenery (Theater 46-47).5 The rest involves unconscious agents, like a legislative "audience," competing and collaborating to focus attention on particular perceptions and ideas onstage. There are Deep Goal and Conceptual Contexts, like "backstage" workers, as well as immediate expectations and intentions, forming an unconscious sense of self as "director" of the brains inner theatre (144-45).52

### Case

#### Don’t let them weigh the case the K is an indict of their starting point IE their assumption of objectivity being real in the first place they don’t get to weigh the impacts of objective journalism if they haven’t proved that objectivity is real in the first place

#### Solvency deficit – so long as objectivity is an empty gesture to fulfil the lack of our subjectivity they can never solve any problems through objectivity which means they cant solve their offense because it’s impossible to achieve in the first place

#### Alt solves case – only though interrogating our desire for objectivity can we ever attempt to resolve the problems of the 1ac so long as we stay trapped in the fantasy of they symbolic we can never hope to asses the problems which means the alt is a pre-req to the aff

#### Ballot mining DA

#### Presumption

#### Prefer our ROTB

#### Subsumes

#### Theirs is non classifiable

#### We win under theirs 6. Turn case subjectivity better