# AC

## Overview

#### [1] I don’t take a stance on whether theory is good or not, just that if it’s good, the aff gets it. 1AR Theory – a] the aff gets it because otherwise the 1NC could engage in unchecked, infinite abuse which outweighs anything else, b] it’s drop the debater because the 2AR is too short to win a shell AND substance so theory can only check abuse for the aff if it’s a win condition, c] no neg RVI because otherwise they could dump on the shell for 6 minutes and get away with anything by sheer brute force, d) competing interps – 1AR interps aren’t bidirectional and the neg should have to defend their norm since they have more time.

#### [2] No spec shells or links of omissions – a) Infinitely regressive – I could have specced a defintion from every word in the resolution, an impact calc, a value, or infinitely other list of things. That means I can’t be culpable for these things because there is no way for me to know. Impacts substantive education – AC’s would just be clarification for 6 min and not advantage and then the neg would just beat me with 4 off b) strat skew – if I don’t spec the most infinitely small thing, I would lose on the shell even though I can’t possibly fit everything in 6 minutes along with any aff offense and you put me in a double bind because either a) I spec and I’m not topical and lose on Nebel T or b) I don’t spec and I lose on a spec shell. c) hyperlimiting outweighs, your interp would justify me speccing super small affs to which the neg would never have enough prep to respond, verifiable skew against the neg bad for fairness

#### [3] Allow 2ar responses to blippy 1nc tricks—key to protect time-crunched 1ars and disincentivize blip-storms that aren’t complete arguments

#### [4] Presumption affirms

#### [5] Permissibility affirms

## Framework

#### Subjectivity is the basis of ethics because asking what we ought to do begs the question of what constitutes the subject in the first place

#### Thinking is only a feature of me and doesn’t determine the subject. Subjectivity is fluid— The subject is always fractured through time, each fracture being constantly filled and reopened, meaning stable subjecthood fails.

Deleuze, Gilles. Difference and Repitition. Translated by Paul Patton. 1968. SHS KS

Temporally speaking - in other words, from the point of view of the theory of time - nothing is more instructive than the difference between the Kantian and the Cartesian Cogito. It is as though Descartes's Cogito operated with two logical values: determination and undetermined existence. The determination (I think) implies an undetermined existence (I am, because 'in order to think one must exist') - and determines it precisely as the existence of a thinking subject: I think therefore I am, I am a thing which thinks. The entire Kantian critique [is] amounts to objecting against Descartes that it is impossible for determination to bear directly upon the undetermined. The determination ('I think') obviously implies something undetermined ('I am'), but nothing so far tells us how it is that this undetermined is determinable by the 'I think': 'in the consciousness of myself in mere thought I am the being itself although nothing in myself is thereby given for thought.'8 Kant therefore adds a third logical value: the determinable, or rather the form in which the undetermined is determinable (by the deter­ mination). This third value suffices to make logic a transcendental instance. It amounts to the discovery of Difference - no longer in the form of an empirical difference between two determinations, but in the form of a transcendental Difference between the Determination as such and what it determines; no longer in the form of an external difference which separates, but in the form of an internal Difference which establishes an a priori relation between thought and being. Kant's answer is well known: the form under which undetermined existence is determinable by the 'I think' is that of time ...9 The consequences of this are extreme: my undetermined existence can be determined only within time as the existence of a phenomenon, of a passive, receptive phenomenal subject appearing within time. As a result, the spontaneity of which I am conscious in the 'I think' cannot be understood as the attribute of a substantial and spontaneous being, but only as the affection of a passive self which experiences its own thought - its own intelligence, that by virtue of which it can say I - being exercised in it and upon it but not by it. Here begins a long and inexhaustible story: I is an other, or the paradox of inner sense. The activity of thought applies to a receptive being, to a passive subject which represents that activity to itself rather than enacts it, which experiences its effect rather than initiates it, and which lives it like an Other within itself. To 'I think' and 'I am' must be added the self - that is, the passive position (what Kant calls the receptivity of intuition); to the determination and the undetermined must be added the form of the determinable, namely time. Nor is 'add' entirely the right word here, since it is rather a matter of establishing the difference and interiorising it within being and thought. It is as though the I were fractured from one end to the other: fractured by the pure and empty form of time. In this form it is the correlate of the passive self which appears in time. Time signifies a fault or a fracture in the I and a passivity in the self, and the correlation between the passive self and the fractured I constitutes the discovery of the transcendental, the element of the Copernican Revolution. Descartes could draw his conclusion only by expelling time, by reducing the Cogito to an instant and entrusting time to the operation of continuous creation carried out by God. More generally, the supposed identity of the I has no other guarantee than the unity of God himself. For this reason, the substitution of the point of view of the 'I' for the point of view of 'God' = than is commonly supposed, so long as the former retains an identity that it owes precisely it. If the greatest tmttattve of transcendental philosophy was to introduce the form of time into thought as such, then this pure and empty form in turn signifies indissolubly the death of God, the fractured I and the passive self. It is true that Kant did not pursue this initiative: both God and the I underwent a practical resurrection. Even in the speculative domain, the fracture is quickly filled by a new form of identity - namely, active synthetic identity; whereas the passive self is defined only by receptivity and, as such, endowed with no power of synthesis. On the contrary, we have seen that receptivity, understood as a capacity for experiencing affections, was only a consequence, and that the passive self was more profoundly constituted by a synthesis which is itself passive (contemplation ontraction). · The possibility of receiving sensations or impressions follows from this. It is impossible to maintain the Kantian distribution, which amounts to a supreme effort to save the world of representation: here, synthesis is understood as active and as giving rise to a new form of identity in the I, while passivity is understood as simple receptivity without synthesis. The Kantian initiative can be taken up, and the form of time can support both the death of God and the fractured I, but in the course of a quite different understanding of the passive self. In this sense, it is correct to claim that neither Fichte nor Hegel is the descendant of Kant - rather, it is Holderlin, who discovers the emptiness of pure time and, in this emptiness, simultaneously the continued diversion of the divine, the prolonged fracture of the I and the constitutive passion of the self.10 Holderlin saw in this form of time both the essence of tragedy and the adventure of Oedipus, as though these were complementary figures of the same death instinct. Is it possible that Kantian philosophy should thus be the heir of Oedipus?

#### Our instability means that we’re temporally bound and connected by affect – Our encounters with the world change the way we form relations with everything else.

The Power to be Affected Michael Hardt Published online: 12 December 2014 # Springer Science+Business Media New York 2014 Int J Polit Cult Soc (2015) 28:215–222 DOI 10.1007/s10767-014-9191-x SHS KS

By focusing on the causes of the affects, however, Spinoza points toward a practical project. All affects can be either active (that is, caused internally) or passive (caused externally). Indeed one advantage of using “affect” instead of the more colloquial “emotion” or “feeling” to translate Spinoza’s Latin term “affectus” is that it highlights the causes and effects of actions by and upon us. Once the causes are revealed, the project becomes to shift from passive to active affections, from external to internal causes. The reason to prefer active over passive does not reside in the experience of the affect, which does not change depending on cause or source. A passive affection, Deleuze explains, “does not express its cause, that is to say, the nature or essence of the external body: rather, it indicates the present constitution of our own body, and so the way in which our power to be affected is filled at that moment” (1992, pp. 219–220, translation modified). Just like passive affections, active affections too indicate the present constitution of our body. The crucial difference is really a temporal one and regards duration and repetition. We need the ability to select, as Nietzsche would say, in order to extend and repeat those encounters and affects that are beneficial and prevent those that are detrimental. The repetition of passive affections is completely out of our control. Some random encounters, of course, do bring us joy, but that passes quickly if we cannot make them last or repeat them. And most random encounters, unfortunately, result in sadness. If we leave this to hazard, we will stay stuck with no way forward. “As long as you don’t know what is the power to be affected of a body, as long as you understand it like that, in chance encounters, you will not have a wise life, you will not have wisdom” (1978 “L’affect et l’idée”). The great advantage of the active over the passive affection is that it is no longer dependent on the vagaries of external forces. Since the body causes itself to be affected, chance is removed and it is able to control the duration and repetition of encounters. The issue, then, is not only understanding and expanding your power to be affected but also augmenting proportion of that power that is filled with active rather than passive affections. This notion of active affection could appear obscure or, worse, moralistic if not linked to Spinoza’s definition of bodies (and, ultimately, subjects). From his perspective, there is no basic or default unitary body. “A body,” Spinoza explains, “is constituted by the relation among its parts” (1985 Ethics, IV P39 dem), and the number and constitution of those parts is changeable. We need to shift perspective so as no longer to consider a body as an entity (or even a cluster of entities) but instead as a relation. When a new relation is added, a larger body is composed, and when a relation is broken, the body diminishes or decomposes. All this simply means that the border between the inside and outside of bodies, and hence between internal and external causes, is fluid and subject to our efforts. In order for a passive affection to become an active one, then, it is not necessary for the body that previously experienced the effect of an external body somehow to cut off that relationship and learn to become itself the cause. The body instead can, under certain conditions, envelop the cause—this is the term Deleuze uses—by creating a relation with it or, really, by expanding the relation that constitutes the body. You only gain the knowledge of when these conditions exist through encounters with others: every encounter reveals the extent to which the relations that constitute your body agree with or are “composable” with those of another. And a joyful encounter always indicates that there is something in common to discover. “We must, then,” Deleuze explains, “by the aid of joyful passions, form the idea of what is common to some external body and our own” (1992, p. 283). Once we recognize those common relations, we can compose a new, greater body, which contains the cause of our joy. The cause, then, does not really change. It simply becomes internal—annexed, as it were, by the affected body. The real change is the border between inside and outside and hence the composition of the body. Once the cause is internal and the affection is active, then you are no longer subject to chance: the affect can be prolonged and repeated as long as it brings you joy.8 The practical project to transform passive into active affections thus ultimately involves a strategy of bonds and relations to maintain or transform the constitution of the body. The advice, if Spinoza were your therapist, could be as simple as this: first, discover your body’s power to be affected and the affects that compose it, and, then, if an encounter with someone or something results in joy, form a relationship with it, make it part of you, and transform the passive affection into an active one so that you can repeat the encounter or make it last until the joy no longer results. You have to recognize that you are not a fixed entity but a bundle of relations and your task is to compose new joyful relations and decompose sad ones. Increasing the proportion of active affections does not primarily mean becoming the cause, at least not in a direct way. The bad therapist is the one who simply berates you to take control of your life as if it were an act of sovereign will. Instead you must discover joyful encounters and then make the passive affection into an active one by forming a consistent relation with the cause, thereby enveloping the cause with a new relation that constitutes us as a new body. Spinoza’s and Deleuze’s technical vocabularies might make this process sound obscure when it is really a very practical project. Consider, for example, your power to think together with others. In many intellectual discussions and encounters, you find yourself more confused and less able to think. Occasionally, though, you encounter a person or a group with whom you are able to think more clearly and more powerfully than you could before. Suddenly, you understand things that previously seemed completely incomprehensible. This is a joy as pure as Spinoza can imagine. Well, the practical thing to do is not to leave such joyful encounters to chance and the fluctuations of external causes. Compose a stable relation with the source of intellectual joy; make the encounters repeat and last. Maybe form a discussion group or write a book together. This will change you, of course, since you are defined by relations, but it will change you for the better. It is never as simple as that, of course. Some of those people and things that bring you joy will simultaneously cause you sadness in other ways. Choosing whether to make or break bonds, compose or decompose relationships is always complicated. This tangled terrain of complex, contradictory affects is where so much of Berlant’s work resides. Consider, for example, her eminently Spinozian formulation, which could easily be added to his catalogue of the affects: “A relation of cruel optimism exists when something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing.” (2011, p. 1). Her recognition that we are so often filled by such self-thwarting desires is not, of course, cause for despair. That is the field in which we need to work, the core of the ethical and political project. Conceiving our ethical and political tasks, as do Berlant and Spinoza, in terms of not our power to act as sovereign subjects but instead our power to be affected shifts the orientation of our political landscape and opens new political possibilities. It makes clear, most obviously, that political projects are not only (and not even primarily) a matter of reason and interests but instead an engagement with our power to be affected in all its messiness and, sometimes, its ugliness. This does not mean, however, that we need to abandon the classical goals of human flourishing, the good life, or joy. The mandate Spinoza gives you is first to increase your power to be affected and then, within that power to be affected, seek a greater proportion of active rather than passive affections. And, finally, in order to maximize active affects, focus on your bonds and relations: discover those people and things that bring you joy and form with them lasting relationships to compose a new body and correspondingly decompose the bonds that hold you to what brings sadness. This where Spinoza and Berlant meet: in a political project for nonsovereign subjects.

#### Ethics must be a constant interrogation of static norms. This creation of new lines of flight redefines current concepts of normativity to that of deterritorialization. Thus, the standard and role of the ballot is to embrace deterritorialization.

Smith 03 [Daniel W. Smith (2003) Deleuze and the liberal tradition: normativity, freedom and judgement, Economy and Society, 32:2, 299-324]

Deleuze would no doubt have followed the same approach in his analysis of normativity had he addressed the issue directly. Foucault himself spoke of the power of what he called the process of normalization, which creates us, as subjects, in terms of existing force relations and existing ‘norms’. For Foucault, normalization is not merely an abstract principle of adjudication but an already actualized (and always actualized) power relation. Foucault’s question then became: is it possible to escape, or at least resist, this power of normalization? In Deleuze’s terminology, the same question would be stated in the following terms: within a given social assemblage or ‘territoriality’, where can one find the ‘line of flight’, or the movement of relative deterritorialization, by means of 51Q 08smith (ds) Page 307 Thursday, April 17, 2003 8:45 PM 308 Economy and Society which one can escape from or transform the existing norm (or territoriality)? From this viewpoint, neither Foucault nor Deleuze avoid the issue of normativity, they simply analyze it in terms of an immanent process. The error of transcendence would be to posit normative criteria as abstract universals, even if these are defined in intersubjective or communicative terms. From the viewpoint of immanence, by contrast, it is the process itself that must account for both the production of the norm as well as its possible destruction or alteration. In a given assemblage, one will indeed find normative criteria that govern, for instance, the application of the power of the State, but one will also find the means for the critique and modification of those norms, their deterritorialization. A truly ‘normative’ principle must not only provide norms for condemning abuses of power, but also a means for condemning norms that have themselves become abuses of power (e.g. the norms that governed the treatment of women, slaves, minorities, etc.). An immanent process, in other words, must, at one and the same time, function as a principle of critique as well as a principle of creation (the ‘genetic’ method). ‘The conditions of a true critique and a true creation are one and the same’ (Deleuze 1994: 139). The one cannot and ‘must’ not exist without the other If deterritorialization functions as a norm for Patton, then, it is a somewhat paradoxical norm. Within any assemblage, what is normative is deterritorialization, that is, the creation of ‘lines of flight’ (Deleuze) or ‘resistance’ (Foucault) that allow one to break free from a given norm, or to transform the norm. What ‘must’ always remain normative is the ability to critique and transform existing norms, that is, to create something new (the category of the new should be understood here in the broad sense, including not only social change, but also artistic creation, conceptual innovation and so on.) One cannot have pre-existing norms or criteria for the new; otherwise it would not be new, but already foreseen. This is the basis on which Patton argues that Deleuze’s conception of power is explicitly normative: ‘What a given assemblage is capable of doing or becoming’, he writes, ‘is determined by the lines of flight or deterritorialization which it can sustain’ (Patton 2000: 106). (One might note here that the concept of ‘nomadic war-machines’, which was introduced in A Thousand Plateaus, is Deleuze and Guattari’s attempt to address the question of a social formation that would itself be constructed along such movements or lines of flight. Patton suggests that such assemblages should in fact be called ‘metamorphosis’ machines (2000: 110), since they have only an external relation to war and a historically contingent relation to nomads; this is a suggestion that will no doubt be taken up by others. Metamorphosis machines would be the conditions of actualization of absolute deterritorialization and the means by which relative deterritorialization occurs: ‘They bring connections to bear against the great conjunction of the apparatuses of capture or domination.’ . . . A metamorphosis machine would then be one that . . . engenders the production of something altogether different. (Patton 2000: 110) 51Q 08smith (ds) Page 308 Thursday, April 17, 2003 8:45 PM Daniel W. Smith: Deleuze and the liberal tradition 309 Patton is therefore using the concept ‘normativity’ in a quite different manner than Fraser or Habermas. They would say that deterritorialization is not normative, and cannot be, since it eludes any universal criteria and indeed allows for their modification. Patton in effect responds by saying: for that very reason, it is deterritorialization that should be seen as a normative concept, even if that entails a new concept of what normativity is. At one point in Difference and Repetition, Deleuze writes that ‘one can conserve the word essence, if one wishes, but only on the condition of saying that essence is precisely the accident or the event’ (1994: 191). Patton seems to be saying something similar: one can conserve the word normativity, if one wishes, but only on the condition of saying that the normative is the new or the deterritorialized. Patton’s own trajectory is thus beginning to come into focus: rather than simply dropping or ignoring the concept of normativity, he instead proposes to create a new concept of normativity by critiquing components of the old one, and linking it up with a quite different set of related concepts. In this manner, he is effecting a transformation of the liberal concept, while still attempting to situate his own work fully within the liberal tradition.

#### Prefer additionally:

#### [1] Performativity – affect is key to the process of debating, being persuasive, making decisions and reacting to what you have learning. Willing that we should abide by their ethical theory presupposes that our affect is not restricted in the first place. Thus, it is logically incoherent to justify any neg argument without first ensuring there are no restrictions to affect.

#### [2] Deterritorialization is a pre-req to every ethical theory. We need to escape current norms to [a] understand what is ethical and what isn’t and [b] create change to act on ethical things. Even if deterritorialization isn’t the best ethical theory, it’s necessary to understand and act on what is. Patton 08,

Patton, Paul. Deleuze and Politics. 2008. //YA//recut SHS KS

The call for resistance to the present in the name of becoming-democratic must be understood in the light of philosophy’s unending struggle against opinion (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 203). The task of philosophy, however, is to engage with philosophical rather than everyday opinions. With regard to the politics of liberal democratic societies, philosophy partakes in this struggle by challenging the ‘considered’ opinions that determine the nature and limits of public reason. That is why, in the brief exergue to Negotiations, Deleuze presents philosophy as engaged in a ‘guerilla campaign’ against public opinion and other powers that be such as religions and laws (Deleuze 1995). In other words, the political vocation of philosophy calls for critical engagement with existing opinions about what is just or acceptable. In his interview with Negri, Deleuze suggests that philosophy provides a way of responding to what is intolerable in the present (Deleuze 1995: 171). This raises the interesting question: in virtue of what does a particular state of affairs become intolerable? If we accept that the contours of the intolerable will be historically determined by the mechanisms through which we are governed and by the ideals and opinions expressed in the prevailing political culture, then there is every reason to think that there is no deﬁnitive escape from the intolerable. As Deleuze comments in his discussion of control societies, there is always a conﬂict within systems of power between the ways in which they free us and the ways in which they enslave us (Deleuze 1995: 178). In democratic societies, responding to the intolerable will inevitably engage with elements of the political normativity through which they are governed. The complex concept of democracy ties together a number of the political norms at the heart of modern political thought. Different forms of democratic political society amount to determinate actualisations of this concept, while many forms of resistance within such societies will draw upon elements of democratic political normativity to suggest ways in which the injustice of existing institutional forms of social life might be removed. In this manner, the concept of ‘becoming-democratic’ serves the political vocation of philosophy as Deleuze and Guattari deﬁne it: becoming-democratic is a means to counter-actualise what passes for democratic society in the present. Philosophy pursues or supports processes of becoming-democratic when it challenges existing opinions about what is acceptable, right or just with the aim of extending the actualisation of democracy within contemporary societies. In principle, there will be as many ways of becoming-democratic as there are elements of the concept of democracy. In practice, philosophy can only effectively advance the becoming-democratic of a given political society when it engages with deterritorialising movements that rely upon actualised or actualisable elements of democratic political normativity. Minoritarian-becomings are one source of such movements. With regard to the minoritarian orientation of ‘becomings’ and their relation to majoritarian politics, we should note that democracy is exclusively a matter of majority only in a relatively simplistic and numerical sense. It is majoritarian insofar as majority vote is the mechanism through which the will of the people is typically determined. However, Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of minority was always deﬁned in terms of quality rather than quantity. In A Thousand Plateaus, they point to the existence of the ‘fact’ that the adult, white, heterosexual, European et cetera male occupies the position of majority, not because he is more numerous than children, non-whites, homosexuals or women, but because he forms the qualitative standard against which these others are measured (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 105). The existence of such a standard presupposes the exercise of power over women, children, non-whites and other excluded groups: ‘Majority assumes a state of power and domination, not the other way around’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 105). At the same time, they point out that this ‘fact’ is a kind of ﬁction that represents no one in particular. It is the public ﬁgure of the majority in a qualitative sense that must be contrasted with the ‘becoming-minoritarian of everybody,’ understood as the creative potential of individuals or groups to deviate from the standard (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 106). Becoming-minor expresses the sense in which individuals and societies never entirely conform to the majoritarian standard but exist in a process of continuous variation.

## Offense

#### Thus, I affirm— Resolved: The appropriation of outer space by private entities is unjust. I’ll spec whatever you want me to in cx as long as it doesn’t force me to abandon my maximum.

### Contention 1: The Cosmic Sublime

#### Subjects appropriate outer space in an attempt to striate and territorialize the boundless flow of outer space. They relentlessly try to incorporate it into their restrictive view and perpetuate a stability foreclosed from any affective engagement.

Ambrozy 20 [Ambroży, Paulina. “‘Our Eyes Adjust to the Dark’: The Cosmic Sublime in Tracy K. Smith’s Life on Mars.” Text Matters, no. 10, 2020, pp. 364–391., <https://doi.org/10.18778/2083-2931.10.20>.] SHS KS

The tropes of the Kantian sublime resonate already in Smith’s opening piece “Sci-Fi,” in which the poet introduces the tension between a limit and the lack thereof:

There will be no edges, but curves.

Clean lines pointing only forward.

History, with its hard spine & dog-eared

Corners, will be replaced with nuance,

Just like the dinosaurs gave way

To mounds and mounds of ice.

Women will still be women, but

The distinction will be empty

. . . . Weightless, unhinged,

Eons from even our own moon, we’ll drift

In the haze of space, which will be, once

And for all, scrutable and safe. (7)

The utopian “science-fiction” vision of the future reality, clearly echoing technological representations of the cosmos, is replete with a Deleuzian interplay between smoothness and striation, embracing and destabilizing categories of space, time and body. In the transcendent outer space, the poet imagines a future free of limits, with the edges released from the regime of sharp angles, suggestive of instrumental “striations”—mappings, divisions and possessions—and softened into elusive “curves,” leaving “clean lines pointing only forward” (Smith, Life 7). Those “lines of flight,” to borrow from Deleuze and Guattari again, pointing in the direction of futurity, work to disentangle the self from the linear progress of time and the human narratives evoked in the second stanza through the spatial images of the “hard spine” and “dog-eared corners” of history. Those “textured” and textual material realities will also be transformed, cleansed and smoothed out, allowing the body to escape the past, and become liberated from gravity, mechanisms of control and social labels, “unhinged” to “drift” freely in the indefinable, a-textual “haze of space” (Smith, Life 7). This escape fantasy of the space which is thus de-schematized and detemporalized—“once / And for all, scrutable and safe” (7)—is as seductive as it is unstable, leaving the reader uneasy, given the paradoxical “spacelessness” and haziness of disembodied drifting. Furthermore, the drift carries a threat to the subject’s unity as the borders of his/her existence dissolve, and the mind becomes “unplugged” from the known perimeters of human existence. The faintly ironic tone of the final line also echoes Deleuze and Guattari’s skeptical observation about the human dream of the ultimate deterritorialization and annihilation of the historical self in the silent vastness of Cosmos: “Never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us” (500). Thus conceived, the cosmic deterritorialization, and travelling outside any recognizable perimeters of time and space, prepares the ground for another thematic layer, namely the death of Smith’s father. As the poet admitted in an interview, the book emerged in the shadow of her father’s terminal illness and his subsequent demise: I wrote a poem called “Sci-Fi’” several years ago that offered a clean and glamorous vision of the distant future. . . . Then my father was diagnosed with a terminal illness. My sense of the future became very personal. Life on Mars became a way to move towards my father, to try to understand some part of the mystery of death. (Smith, “Space Poet” 477) Life on Mars can thus be read as an elegy, where death becomes the true unknown, the true dark matter with which Smith confronts us through her cosmic tropes. The stellar landscape and the technological gaze are employed as a tribute to her father, Floyd William Smith, one of the Hubble Telescope engineers. Designed in 1990, the Hubble Space Telescope, orbiting the Earth, brought a revolutionary view of the cosmos, allowing astronauts to observe it with unprecedented clarity and detail, shaping the popular images and representations of Space (Kessler 4). One of the most iconic images from the telescope, “Cone Nebula Close Up,” adorns the cover of Smith’s book, further linking its thematic concerns. Among other things, the cover problematizes the mediated perception of the cosmic sublime, which takes us outside the conditions of human experience. In the poem “My God, It’s Full of Stars,” whose title is borrowed from Kubrick’s 2001: A Space Odyssey, the poet refers directly to her father’s technologically enhanced “star-gazing”:

When my father worked on the Hubble Telescope, he said

They operated like surgeons: scrubbed and sheathed

In papery green, the room a clean cold, and bright white.

. . . . . . My father spent whole seasons

Bowing before the oracle-eye, hungry for what it would find.

His face lit-up whenever anyone asked, and his arms would rise

As if he were weightless, perfectly at ease in the never-ending

Night of space.

. . .

The first few pictures came back blurred, and I felt ashamed

For all the cheerful engineers, my father and his tribe. The second time,

The optics jibed. We saw to the edge of all there is—

So brutal and alive it seemed to comprehend us back. (Smith, Life 12)

The evocation of her father’s relentless, “surgical” efforts to penetrate and reterritorialize the smooth space of the universe, by pushing the boundaries of human vision and knowledge, serves Smith to connect the experience of the cosmic sublime with the experience of death. The Hubble Telescope becomes a vehicle for a desire to carry oneself to the position from which one can attain a totalizing, near-divine perspective of the universe. The sublime, as argued by Michel Deguy in his rereading of Pseudo-Longinus, always brings to view the question of our mortal condition. In his words, the sublime is “the concentration, the start of the startling that weighs in speech against death. . . . The sublime is the ephemeral immortality of the point gained, adverse speech snatched from death where the totality of becoming-and-passing-away concentrates itself ” (11). Focusing on the relationship between cognition and affect, David E. Nye sees the sublime as a “broken figure of thought, which permitted both the imagination of an ineffable surplus of emotion and its recontainment” (282). Given its ephemerality, the sublime opens an unbridgeable gap between the experience and the senses, but its true nature can be grasped only through the failure to represent. In Deguy’s apt words, “[the] sublime measures our failure,” showing our distance from the sacred, “our incapacity to navigate through the straits of difference between immortal and mortal” (7). Smith’s recourse to the sublime tropes in her grappling with mortality seems to fulfill a similar role: the topoi try to capture her response to the absolute emotion grounded in her anxiety of a nothingness at once physical, metaphysical, and spiritual. Her father’s ease in “the never-ending / Night of space” and the metonymic telescope image, which can take us to “the edge of all there is— / So brutal and alive it seemed to comprehend us back” (Smith, Life 12), become part of the elegiac movement away from the excesses of grief, through the recognition of loss, towards a possibility of consolation. This elegiac process of grieving and the search for solace that allows the self to “recontain” the surplus of feeling, to bring the excessive into view, informs all of the poet’s subsequent inquiries into the nature and mysteries of Space. Further in the poem “My God, It’s Full of Stars,” the poet repopulates her earlier “clean” and “smooth” sci-fi vision, as if reflecting back on her own “fearlessness” (Smith, “Space Poet” 477), as well as an overconfident belief in transcendence and the cosmic space’s security, totality, weightlessness and “smoothness.” The disquieting image of Kubrick’s protagonist, the astronaut Dave Bowman, “whisked into the center of space,” “across the wide-screen of unparceled time” (Smith, Life 11), takes on a double significance in Smith’s poem. It indicates a liberation from the constraints of gravity and human perceptions of time; simultaneously, however, it uncovers a dissolution of the self. Furthermore, the image of the “widescreen” introduces a tension between the sublime moment and its aesthetic framing. The screen undermines the representational efficacy of the mind striving to grasp the scale of infinitude, threatening the sublime with stasis and fixation. In a Lyotardian sense, the sublime collapses, for the self ’s leap outside time requires a mediating intervention, “a screen,” and as such it is always already at a second remove. The timeless emptiness and lack of “anchor” in her “sanitized,” bodiless futuristic metaphysics is replaced by a fractured, striated earthly landscape. The shift is enacted through a series of anguished questions concerning the body’s physical demise and dissolution (Smith, “Space Poet” 477). This earthbound fall expresses the speaker’s doubt about her father’s final journeying “toward the ecstatic light” (Smith, Life 27). “What happens when the body goes slack? / When what anchors us just drifts off toward . . .,” the speaker anxiously asks, adding: “You stepped out of the body. Unzipped it like a coat / And will it drag you back / as flesh, voice, scent?” (Smith, Life 33). Confronted with the absolute fact of death, symbolized by the silence, quietude, materiality and stillness of the dead body in the funeral parlor, the poet’s imagination begins to “replenish” the cosmic void, as if to clip its previous “lawlessness” and utopian weightlessness. Groping its way out of the dark matter of a terrifying absence, its absolute mystery, the speaker’s mind remains uneasy with its own abstract appropriations of the sublime, and produces a very physical and energetic image of the “humanized” space “choc-full of traffic”:

Perhaps the great error is believing

we’re alone,

That the others have come and gone—

a momentary blip—

When all along, space might be choc-full of traffic,

Bursting at the seams with energy we neither feel

Nor see, flush against us, living, dying, deciding,

Setting solid feet down on planets everywhere,

Bowing to the great stars that command, pitching stones

At whatever are their moons. They live wondering

If they are the only ones, knowing only the wish to know,

And the great black distance they—we

—flicker in. (Smith, Life 10)

The image of the alien beings, “setting solid feet down on planets everywhere / Bowing to the great stars that command, pitching stones / At whatever are their moons” again references the central scene from Kubrick’s Odyssey, in which the alien super-race steps down from their galaxy to intervene in the Earth’s affairs. The rectangular black monolith left behind by the God-like visitors proves a turning point in the history of our planet. As observed by Benson, this “totemic extraterrestrial artifact . . . channels the species toward survival, success—and, eventually, technologically mediated global domination” (2). The cinematic contexts of Smith’s poetic glimpses beyond the earthly limits are rich in significance. In an interview for Nature, Smith acknowledges her interest in popular sci-fi movies of the 1960s and 70s: In Stanley Kubrick’s majestic film 2001: A Space Odyssey, his most suspenseful moments are the slowest and quietest, and his associative leaps have been instructive. I have been influenced by the visual sensibilities of classic 1970s sci-fi films, such as The Andromeda Strain and The Omega Man.” (Smith, “Space Poet” 477) Kubrick’s odyssey “beyond the infinite” and his stellar gaze inform Life on Mars, as they represent the consciousness and the body released into spaces of imagination. The film’s narrative, as noted by Michelson, “becomes a voyage of discovery, a progress toward disembodiment, [and] explores . . . the structural potentialities of haptic disorientation as agent of cognition” (56). However, the epistemological confusion and displacement of the body do not exhaust the movie’s philosophical concerns, inspiring Smith’s own grappling with existential mysteries. The adopted cosmic view allows Kubrick to reconsider the Western civilization’s values of progress and humanism, which, as suggested by the film’s plot, have their dark undercurrent, as they have always been coupled with violence, conquest and destruction. Interestingly for Smith, Kubrick also addresses the question of art’s role in the explorations of the sublime, using the black monolith trope as an ambiguous symbol of the sublime which connects the mythological past and the metaphysical future, while defying human comprehension and interpretation. Sensitive to those darker psychological tones of Kubrick’s interstellar dystopias, Smith’s verses resonate with a similar sense of fragility, isolation and uncertainty. As Robert Kolker observes, “Kubrick’s narratives are about the lack of cohesion, center, community, about people caught up in a process that has become so rigid that it can be neither escaped nor mitigated—a stability that destroys” (110). Evoking the mystical aura of Kubrick’s central scenes, Smith at once displaces her anguish onto the medial “other” and self-reflexively signals the intertext’s mediating aspect—the constructed nature of the cosmic sublime, whose absolute, as Lyotard observes, is nullified by any mediation. The references to Kubrick’s classic, which fuse poetry with cinematic language, hint at humanity’s endless efforts at representing the unknown, uncovering the paradoxical nature of sublime aesthetics. The conditional qualifiers “perhaps,” “might” and “as if ” in Smith’s text further distance the poetic image from the “truth” of the sublime experience and foreground doubt at the core of the postmodern sublime. In subsequent poems, the speaker tries to shorten the “great black distance” between the universe and the self by resorting to various discourses and codes. In the poem titled “The Universe: Original Motion Picture Soundtrack,” the space becomes “a soundtrack,” with “synthetized strings. Then something like cellophane / Breaking in as if snagged to a shoe. Crinkle and drag. White noise, / Black noise” (Life 24), until the “dark we’ve only ever imagined” becomes “audible, thrumming” and “Everything that disappears / Disappears as if returning somewhere” (24). In another poem, the Universe is a “house party,” with “postcards / And panties, bottles with lipstick on the rim” and “radio waves from a generation ago / Drifting to the edge of what doesn’t end” (Smith, Life 13). The speaker is clearly back in the loop of human perceptions, enmeshed in a powerful sensory influx which is thrown against the incomprehensible and infinite expansion of the cosmos. The final phrase, “we flicker in,” however, carries an undertone of ambiguity—a fear of instability and of the potential disappearance of our visual trace in the vastness of the universe.

### Contention 2: Space for everyone

#### The aesthetics of outer space and “usable” resources become cosmic commodities that become incorporated into the everyday markets of capitalism. Private entities territorialize the unknown universe as a means to strengthen striation on Earth, and control the fluidity of space.

Crouch and Damjanov 18 [Crouch, David and Damjanov, Katarina. "Sensational Interfaces and the Aesthetics of Space Apps" Open Cultural Studies, vol. 2, no. 1, 2018, pp. 440-450. <https://doi.org/10.1515/culture-2018-0040>] SHS KS

Just a bit over a half century into the space age, and our planetary exterior is steadily incorporated into the circuits of global capitalism. Space exploration involves the massive mobilisation and investment of military-industrial complexes—an unabashed display of political and economic power that unfolds as a spectacular demonstration of the full potential of techno-science and its capacity to radically extend the generation of knowledge and wealth. And not only are our daily lives already dependent upon space technologies—consider for instance, the array of satellites that supports global communication and surveillance networks, sustaining services from GPS and Google Maps, to maintenance of ballistic missile ranges—our technological means of capturing and relating to the world extend well-beyond the Earth, onto myriad other celestial bodies and regions. As we continue to design more powerful rockets, speculate about mining asteroids, aspire to space travel and tourism and consider terraforming and settlement, extraterrestrial riches become increasingly central to the logics of expansion that characterise capitalism and the ongoing technological evolution of its explorative and exploitative processes. Outer space, however, is an odd place. Its vast, inhuman environment is not merely one more region where we seek to be present and establish ourselves; rather, it is an “unearthly” space that calls for particular re-arrangements of our world-making strategies and their technological apparatus. In the perceived and apparent bareness of outer space—where environments are extreme, technologies necessary and life scarce—the exploitative logics of capitalism do continue—but in a form that is stripped back, intensified, and marked by the progression of its own technological character. As our technological advances in space progressively alter the ways in which we conduct its physical occupation, scientific examination and its social absorption, all our extraplanetary activities are enculturated, drawn back down, through and into, the muddle and confusion of global media and popular imaginaries from which they arise. This incorporation has itself undergone its own evolution, beginning with the militarised imaginations of rocket science and the futuristic fashions of life beyond Earth (Benjamin, Rocket Dreams; Rosenberg, “Far Out”; Bell and Parker, Space Travel and Culture; Parker, “Capitalists in Space”; Geppert, Imagining Outer Space), and spreading onto the online and interactive content through which contemporary creative and media industries have further domesticated outer space. Such assimilation of the cosmos has become part of a continuum of earthly activities along which our “material relations and historical processes … extend into, unfold within and structure this extraterritorial domain” (Parks, “Mapping Orbit” 64). And as many have begun to observe (Harris, “The Influence of Culture on Space Developments”; Ormrod and Dickens, The Palgrave Handbook of Society, Culture and Outer Space), these processes also involve reshaping, restructuring and redefining the imagination, visualisation and occupation of space.1 And of course, the enculturation of outer space feeds back, returning to Earth as a series of slow but seemingly fundamental transformations to the practices through which the human species inhabits, interrelates and attends to what is outside. All our interest, interaction and imaging stretch far out into space, drawing its distant reaches back into our own tiny universes and social spheres. While the attention and activity we collectively direct towards outer space might solidify a sense of global citizenry and revisions of shared planetary collectivities, it is also what allows our darker tendencies toward domination, conquest and consumption to be transported outward, onboard our extraplanetary progress. Although expressions of the “cosmic” expansion of capitalism can be found in all manner of products and enterprises on Earth, perhaps the most symptomatic expression of an ongoing convergence of technoscientific, military-industrial and socio-cultural interfaces is the rise of space apps. The data-driven processes of capitalism’s calculative ordering come together in software which offers myriad space environments and events for mass consumption by media literate and techno-savvy audiences. One needs only to look as far as the large collection offered by NASA within its NASA Apps For Smartphones, Tablets and Digital Media Players portal to appreciate their variety, potential and scope.2 Space apps package the data gathered through space exploration and observation into digital “experiences.” Taking up and reflecting advances in the rendering of video game environments (Galloway, Gaming; Lammes, “Spatial Regimes of the Digital Playground”) and perpetuating the mass-production of virtual tourism (Damjanov and Crouch, “ExtraPlanetary Mobilities”), they make these experiences part of everyday life. Marketed largely as a leisure activity, the allure and availability of space apps might suggest yet another opiate for the masses, an antidote—or more precisely, a placebo—for our limited progress and presence in space. Yet they also offer a unique blend of coetaneous tensions: their mix of the raw data generated by multibillion-dollar technologies, procedures of computation and creative visualisation, the commodification of data and the aestheticisation of information, results in ways of making sense of space that are forged from both the politico-economic drive to expand and exploit, and the socio-cultural need to absorb and relate. Indicative of the distinctly techno-social modes that capitalism takes on in order to maintain its expansion into outer space, space apps become part of an appropriation of our collective relational activity, attention and aspirations. The exploitation of outer space thus first becomes a matter of manipulating the activity and interest we take in things outside the planet—a matter of managing how we see, sense, experience and understand an inhuman space wholly mediated by technical devices. Through the work of culture and the interfaces of digital media, large-scale, all-encompassing organisational systems such as capitalism assert their own extraplanetary extension. In lieu of moon mining, Martian settlement or other hard forms of resource extraction, outer space has become a productive domain for harnessing the attention of the mass through affective interfaces which provide a range of simulated spectacles and the sensorial experiences of being “out there.” The extraplanetary in this sense emerges as an arena of conquest dominated by strategies of mediation and techniques of representation. Through various combinations of media saturation and influence, the incorporation of outer space into our cultural fabrics has become what Galloway describes as the “interface” of high-tech-capitalism, serving not only as a screen-based manifestation of its reach but as a set of effects that suggest its operations out of sight. In this way, structures of power and control that are ever-more grounded within registers of media and informatics proliferate within and through the design and dissemination of “cosmic commodities” (Cubitt, Digital Aesthetics)—becoming a matter of market rationalities but also of aesthetic sensations and relationalities. As such, the interfaces of space apps extend the scale and scope not only of how we perceive the cosmos but of the problematics of framing “devices” themselves. Both entrenched in and at the far edge of a still-emerging dynamics of screen spaces, they indicate the extraplanetary operation of what James Ash dubs “the interface envelope”—and thus the techniques of manipulation that cognitive capitalism continues to evolve, even in our absence. Stimulating collective perceptions of what is other and outside, these apps reflect both a greater human immersion in digital interfaces (an extraplanetary form of the media “envelopment” which increasingly conditions and modulates human sensation and experience), and the “envelope power” (Ash, The Interface Envelope) through which political economies assert control and maintain cycles of production and profit through manipulating and shaping perception and reception. Just as attention is captured and contained in “gamic vision” (Galloway, Gaming 62) and in the “foldings of space and time” (Ash, The Interface Envelope 139) of digital games, it is likewise enveloped in the experience of outer space offered through these apps, which are also “designed to modulate user action with the aim, hope and promise of producing desirable outcomes for those that own and operate” them (Ash, et al. “Unit, Vibration, Tone” 168), while directing our interactions and relational systems through the stimulation of affective experience. Behind designs that capture and direct attention toward the cosmos—unfixed foci that offer the illusion of freedom and visual control, immersion and endless movement—capitalism operates at the thresholds and portals, manipulating the affective states of those that access these interfaces in order to promote an outward-looking orientation, a commodification of perception and perspective that stabilises, settles and coheres outer space as a site for further production, extraction and exchange. Considered through the lens of space apps, the extraplanetary spread of capitalism involves more than merely staking claim to new and unexploited territories or establishing physical outposts. It involves a blending of technological infrastructures and networks, the purviews of state-corporate sectors and research institutions, rearrangements of communication and exchange, the orders of play and data, mathematics and leisure— all of which appears to increasingly condition our experience of the world. The interfaces of space apps transform kinds of raw extraplanetary material into digital forms of human sensation—and not only do these sensations intensify the affect of outer space, they repeat it over and over; like GIFS, they are both a “demonstration of cultural knowledge” (Miltner and Highfield, “Analyzing the Cultural Significance of the Animated GIF” 3), and a way of sustaining it in the public eye. An example of the contortions and recalibrations of contemporary capitalism as it transpires beyond the globe, space apps are tiny registers of its larger techno-aesthetic choreographies that seek to control how spaces and relations are seen and sensed, understood and embraced. Detaching them momentarily from the many other arrangements of extraplanetary enculturation, we examine how the aestheticised data, images and information of these digital interfaces—the spectacle and sensation of space exploration—becomes a set of mediated relations that are exploited by the calculative ordering of capitalism and its direction of affective, interactive and participatory dispositions. This essay argues that space apps help illustrate a meeting point between the “society of the spectacle” (Debord) and “the society of control” (Deleuze), a point sharpened and given form in emerging economies of extraplanetary attention—offering a glimpse into the evolving aesthetic order and sensational effects of high-tech capitalism in its space age. Sensation, Simulation and the Smoothness of Interfaces A great many space apps are currently in circulation. Designed for desktop and mobile media devices, they encompass various extraterrestrial locations through an assortment of formats, from interactive maps and images to pocket planetaria and complex AR and VR simulations. Combining spectacular design with hard-science, they are often rigorously precise; the multiple assortment of NASA Apps For Smartphones, Tablets and Digital Media Players, for instance, stem straight from the world’s most well-funded hub of space exploration. Space apps offer different forms of digital sensation, exacting depictions based in optics, graphics and interface exchanges, images and maps layered with signs, interactive information, god-like perspectives, and manipulable objects. They allow one to “zoom into” a galaxy or traverse a 3D Martian landscape, inspect the lunar landing sites, screenshot a trip to Saturn’s moon, ride with comets, scrutinise the exoplanets, or cross the Milky Way, apprehending cosmic geographies, topographies and movements and representing (in its numerous senses) the past, present and future in outer space. Developed and distributed by space agencies, research institutes, private companies, and independent producers, they cater for, stimulate and market a wide range of interests and perspectives and provide diverse aesthetic experiences of cosmic locations. NASA, as one of the biggest producers of such content, claims to bring space exploration to everyone and anyone—freely releasing elements of its data and media content to be used, employed or disbursed by all. And yet, by offering “space exploration for everyone,” they compress the wastes of outer space with the distractions of digital cultures, appropriate the attention of the masses with sensation and simulation, and begin to posit a very particular perspective which guides our collective outlook; they start shaping, in other words, an extraplanetary identity for the species.