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#### The subject is alienated when it articulates its desires – incomplete signifiers structure the emergence of subjectivity and produce repetitive drives to fill the lack that justify coercive violence. Thus, the ROB is to traverse the fantasy – that means exposing drives.

Matheson 15 Calum Matheson, PhD, 2015, “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive,” University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, [Calum Matheson is author of Desiring the Bomb: Communication, Psychoanalysis, and the Atomic Age (University of Alabama). He is a former high school debater. His research focuses on intersections of rhetoric, media, and theories of psychoanalysis and deconstruction. His current work focuses on right-wing political extremism, conspiracy thinking, and Lacanian concepts of anxiety and psychosis. He has also published work on argument, history of rhetoric, and games. Dr. Matheson is a former debate coach at Harvard University and a current candidate at the Pittsburgh Psychoanalytic Center.], <https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/concern/dissertations/6682x4537>

The Real Jacques Lacan’s notion of the Real is notoriously difficult to define. In his book on the subject, Tom Eyers calls it the “most elusive” of Lacan’s concepts, but one that is also one that is “central” and “determining” for psychoanalysis (1). There are common elements of the various definitions. First, an agreement that both the economy of tropes that allows the conditions for meaning to emerge (the Symbolic) and the meanings and values invested in these tropes, including the subject itself (the Imaginary), do not and cannot perfectly capture all of existence or experience. Second, this unassimilable remainder structures the Symbolic and Imaginary, just as they structure each other, and thus all three registers are knitted together as demonstrated in Lacan’s famous “Borromean Knot.” The Real is what escapes mediation, what disrupts language itself. To explain its significance and relationship to desire requires examining its foundational role in the formation of the subject. The Real can be understood as the constitutive lack of the subject, its separation from the rest of existence by the self-definition necessary for it to come into being in the first place. This is made clear in the mirror stage, where the subject moves from a fragmented, disorganized concept of the body to the “finally donned armor of an alienating identity that will mark his [sic] entire mental development with its rigid structure” (Lacan, “Mirror Stage” 78). The formation of a discrete subject (a function in the Imaginary register) is a compromise. Its formation allows for participation in the Symbolic because to participate in that economy of exchange requires a “social I” (Lacan, “Mirror stage,” 79). This participation comes at the cost of alienation because the subject trades in a world of symbols which by their nature stand in for what is not present, and thus inescapably mediate the (Real) world outside of the subject, rather than making it present. This lack built in to the subject is the engine of desire: the subject’s divide from an object is a prerequisite for the desire of such an object, but the condition of mediation makes it impossible to ever incorporate it in a perfectly satisfying way. Thus desire remains unfulfilled and each chase for a symbol leads to another in loop which the very constitution of the subject dictates must be endless. This is the basic operation of the death drive which is not distinct from Eros. Were the impossible to occur and the drive of Eros to be fulfilled, it would be extinguished, as there would be nothing left to desire. Thus all drives aim, in a sense, at their own extinction, and therefore there is in a sense only one—the drive that aims towards the extinction of desire through its complete fulfillment in continuity with the world that was lost when the subject became distinct from it in the mirror stage. Although the death drive might stand in for the singular character of the drive, it should not be understood as a desire for the actual biological death of the subject’s body, or even the desire to inflict death on others. The self-destruction of the death drive is a desire to break the limits of the self as the alienating armor of the subject by experiencing unmediated contact with the Real. Death still defines its operation in other ways. The last portion of Lacan’s “The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis” explains the metaphorical centrality of death as the center of a torus formed by incessant symbolization. The fort-da game is most significant not because it shows that the child wishes to destroy its mother or even inoculate itself against that possibility, but because it assimilates the child into the Symbolic order through the repetition of the signifiers fort and da, which stand in for presence and absence. Death is central to language because the symbol itself invokes the absence and loss of nonexistence since its function is to stand in for something that is gone. Language swirls around this absent center of death, a primordial absence encased in the inner ring of the torus, while the outer surfaces of language hold all else that cannot be symbolized at bay on the outside (Lacan, “Function and Field” 260-264). Paradoxically, death is necessarily evoked by the symbol as that which is absent and also made possible in the first place by that same symbol. The separation of the subject into its alienating identity as a social object makes a meaningful concept of death possible because without it there is no dasein, no individual, no singular human to die. George Bataille explains this with an entomological example. If a scientist picks one fly from a swarm, that fly is subject to death, because its end means the end of the discontinuous being selected by the entomologist. Without differentiation of its members, however, the swarm lives on; the selection of the fly is for the entomologist, not the animal (Bataille, “Hegel, Death and Sacrifice” 14-16). Thus it is with human beings. The subject is founded by a rejection of its sole animal nature by participating in a world of work and accumulation, mediated by language—essentially Lacan’s Symbolic. Thus individuals are made discontinuous with the general economy of matter and energy from which all things are formed by a conceptual separation inextricably bound up in death. Our existences are thus defined by discontinuity from a world of continuity, and for Bataille as for Lacan, our drives are singular in the sense that sex is a coupling that unifies with another and momentarily overcomes discontinuity just as death is the end of the subject’s brief separation from a universe differentiated only by the dismembering violence of our imposition of symbols upon it (Bataille, Erotism 13-17). The experience of death may still be unique because it suggests the absence implied by the sign and because it can be experienced only once by the subject—and for obvious reasons, cannot be symbolized by anyone with first-hand experience. As Freud argues in “Thoughts For The Times On War and Death,” we cannot even hope to imagine our own deaths because to do so demands that we imagine them from some perspective which would be destroyed in the experience itself. Death and the Real are therefore not identical, but are closely linked. The most important characteristic of the Real is not just that it suggests existence beyond language, but that this world-for-itself (to borrow from Eugene Thacker) intrudes on human reality and reveals it to be incomplete. Encompassing Max Picard’s concept of silence, the Real is not the absence of human reality so much as the traumatic revelation that that reality was always incomplete, always feigned in the face of existence so much more than human mediation has already covered. Chris Lundberg uses Lacan’s distinction between reality, being the social world of human construction, and the Real, being the occasional but inevitable failure of that reality, to develop his own distinction between failed unicity and feigned unicity. The Symbolic operates as an economy of interconnected and mutually-referential tropes weaving a kind of fabric that is the precondition for meaning, an environment in which social relationships can be understood in context. When the unified illusion of the social fails, we are compelled to stitch the tears in that fabric to maintain the world that gives us meaning (Lacan in Public 2-3). An account by Bill Laurence, the only journalist allowed to witness the Trinity test, provides evidence for this rupture and repair. While “not a sound could be heard” for the period after the flash and before the thunder, Laurence saw civilization itself collapse in an instant: The big boom came about one hundred seconds after the great flash—the first cry of a newborn world. It brought the silent, motionless silhouettes to life, gave them a voice. A loud cry filled the air. The little groups that had hitherto stood rooted to the earth like desert plants broke into a dance—the rhythm of primitive man dancing at one of his fire festivals at the coming of spring. They clapped their hands as they leaped from the ground…The dance of the primitive man lasted but a few seconds, during which an evolutionary period of about 10,000 years telescoped. Primitive man was metamorphosed into modern man—shaking hands, slapping his fellow on the back, all laughing like happy children. (12)

#### The 1ac attempts to fill the lack with the right to strike, but they fail to resolve the fundamental commodity fetishism that motivates workers policies.

Böhm and Batta 10 Steffen Böhm (University of Essex) and Aanka Batta (University of Essex), 2010, “Just doing it: enjoying commodity fetishism with Lacan,” Organization, 17(3), 345–361, doi:10.1177/1350508410363123

It is within this context that the anti-sweatshop campaign has emerged. It has brought to our attention the difficult working conditions, the exploitation and dehumanization that are part and parcel of the global economy and hence has helped to politicize consumption, to put Nike and other multinationals and their production practices on the spot. One of the aims of this campaign has been to improve the working conditions and wages of the workers in low-cost countries. However, what has also been caught up in this campaign is the call by many Western critics for this production to be brought back ‘home’. That is, multinationals like Nike are criticized—particularly by labour unions—for just running virtual operations in Western countries, concentrating on design and branding. In this way, it is argued, the West simply becomes an ‘experience economy’ (Gilmore et al., 1998)—or we could call it an ‘enjoyment economy’, a kind of big Disneyland—rather than developing its own ‘real economy’, its own industrial and manufacturing strength. Both the ‘anti-sweatshop’ and ‘bring-our-production-home’ responses are, in our view, limited, as they seem to fall short of a critique of the workings of commodity fetishism. ‘If only Nike would be more of a “real economy” company, paying its workers decent wages and pensions, then things would be better’, some of the campaigners seem to be arguing. Although this kind of argument seems to be particularly attractive in today’s deep economic crisis, we would maintain that some caution needs to be applied. In fact, as we are arguing in this article the workings of commodity fetishism, are proper to all capitalist production and consumption processes, and tie individual consumers and the mass social body as such to a continuous reproduction of capitalist commodity relations. Even if Nike produced its trainers say in the US, paying its workers a decent living wage, there would still be an alienation and perversion at the heart of its commodity relations making it fundamentally problematic. Equally, even if ‘sweatshop’ workers in the so-called ‘third world’ would be paid better wages, commodity fetishism would not disappear, tying individuals to a continuous consumption cycle, which many critics (e.g. Klein, 2000) have shown to have a range of negative effects on people, societies and the environment. What is important for us is to realize that—in the words of Guy Debord—‘it is not just that the relationship to commodities is now plain to see—commodities are now all that there is to see, the world we see is the world of the commodity’ (1994: 29). That is, humankind is enmeshed in commodity relations. A study of NikeTown in Chicago, for example, argues that a visit to this consumer haven gives one the sense of a ‘festive nature of the processions through the site, with customers cast in the role of explorers and tourists in search of clothing, souvenirs and meanings’ (Peñaloza, 1998: 379). Our perceptual apparatus cannot ‘not see’ the commodity; it is everywhere. The commodity is being produced and reproduced at a variety of different levels of reality and representation, resulting in what Debord calls a ‘spectacle’: ‘The Spectacle is not a collection of images; rather it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images’ (Debord, 1994: 12). These images—in the form of news, advertising and entertainment—are continuously produced and reproduced by the media and culture industries (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1979), resulting in what Lacanians would call ‘Homo Symbolicus’, which implies a shift from a naturalist to a culturalist conception of need and desire (Stavrakakis, 2006: 89). The important Lacanian contribution to this debate is that the ‘enjoyment economy’ (Baudrillard, 2001; Gilmore et al., 1998) is not only a post-World War II or ‘postmodern’ invention. Instead, enjoyment must be seen at the heart not only of capitalist organization but also of how human subjectivity and hence society as such function. What is important to realize here is that, for Lacan, desire is located in the realm of the symbolic Other, the relational structure of language that makes up society. As the fetishist deals with his or her anxiety (lack) by accepting the Law of the Nameof-the-Father, the Other becomes, what Deleuze and Guattari (1988) call a ‘desiring machine’ that constitutes the subject. With Lacan—as with Deleuze and Guattari—this fetishization process exits the realm of the Freudian clinic to enter the wider scene of social relations. Lacan’s formula to describe what Deleuze and Guattari (1988) later call the ‘desiring machine’ is $ ◊ a, where ‘$’ is the ‘barred’ or ‘divided’ subject (as the subject, according to Lacan, can never have a full identity) and the small ‘a’ is the object of desire that is, nevertheless, always unattainable. The Nike brand, for example, promises all sorts of amazing experiences and enjoyments when one buys a pair of one of their latest trainers. Yet, once bought, we realize that we cannot jump quite as high as ‘Air Jordan’ or play golf as skillfully as Tiger Woods. The symbolic regime of the Other is thus always lacking, which, however, does not prevent us from desiring and believing in it. This is what Lacan (2007: 108) calls fantasy. It is this fantasy that is at the heart of Lacan and Granoff’s (1956) conception of ‘fetishism’, which they describe as a process of the subject transferring his or her anxiety to a symbolic system, or what Lacan calls the Name-of-the-Father. What contemporary consumer capitalism has arguably achieved is that it has provided a symbolic system onto which the subject’s constitutive anxieties (lack) can be transferred, creating a set of fantasies for people to believe in. Nike and its global brand appeal is at the heart of this relationship. However, as we have already discussed, this Other, this symbolic system, can never be fully functioning. According to Lacan, there will always be a lack at the heart of the Other, which he calls jouissance, operating in the realm of the Real, which cannot be symbolized. In other words, Nike’s brand is always vulnerable, as we have seen with the anti-Nike resistance campaign that started in the 1990s. There is thus a radical openness in the Other, which introduces contingency and possibility of change right at the heart of the symbolic order. On the one hand, this change is the very stuff (object a) that keeps Nike’s marketing machinery going, introducing ever more fantasies for the consuming subject ($) to believe in. That is, because of this lack Nike has the opportunity to create ever new products (object a, corporate innovation) for consumers to desire, leading to new accumulation potentials. On the other hand, it is precisely this lack that points to the Lacanian realization that every fantasy has to break down at some point. Jouissance, or failure, is at the very heart of the structure of a marketing fantasy.

#### That destroys politics, ethics, and the value to life

Ruti ‘14 (mari, English, Toronto, Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society (2014) 19, 297–314)

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.

#### Vote negative to embrace the lack – this requires being open to the anxiety that occurs from an encounter with the other and breaks down fantasy and drives.

McGowan 13 Todd McGowan, 2013, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis,” University of Nebraska Press/Lincoln and London

The alternative — the ethical path that psychoanalysis identifies — demands an embrace of the anxiety that stems from the encounter with the enjoying other. If there is a certain ethical dimension to anxiety, it lies in the rela- tionship that exists between anxiety and enjoyment. Contra Heidegger, the ethics of anxiety does not stem from anxiety’s relation to absence but from its relation to presence — to the overwhelming presence of the other’s enjoyment. In some sense, the encounter with absence or nothing is easier than the encounter with presence. Even though it traumatizes us, absence allows us to constitute ourselves as desiring subjects. Rather than producing anxiety, absence leads the subject out of anxiety into desire. Confronted with the lost object as a structuring absence, the subject is able to embark on the pursuit of the enjoyment embodied by this object, and this pursuit provides the subject with a clear sense of direction and even meaning. This is precisely what the subject lacks when it does not encounter a lack in the symbolic structure. When the subject encounters enjoyment at the point where it should encounter the absence of enjoyment, anxiety overwhelms the subject. In this situation, the subject cannot constitute itself along the path of desire. It lacks the lack — the absence — that would provide the space through which desire could develop. Consequently, this subject confronts the enjoying other and experiences anxiety. Unlike the subject of desire — or the subject of Heideggerean anxiety — the subject who suffers this sort of anxiety actually experiences the other in its real dimension.¶ The real other is the other caught up in its obscene enjoyment, caught up in this enjoyment in a way that intrudes on the subject. There is no safe distance from this enjoyment, and one cannot simply avoid it. There is nowhere in the contemporary world to hide from it. As a result, the contem- porary subject is necessarily a subject haunted by anxiety triggered by the omnipresent enjoyment of the other. And yet, this enjoyment offers us an ethical possibility. As Slavoj Žižek puts it, “It is this excessive and intrusive jouissance that we should learn to tolerate.”27 When we tolerate the other’s “excessive and intrusive jouissance” and when we endure the anxiety that it produces, we acknowledge and sustain the other in its real dimension.¶ Tolerance is the ethical watchword of our epoch. However, the problem with contemporary tolerance is its insistence on tolerating the other only insofar as the other cedes its enjoyment and accepts the prevailing symbolic structure. That is to say, we readily tolerate the other in its symbolic dimen- sion, the other that plays by the rules of our game. This type of tolerance allows the subject to feel good about itself and to sustain its symbolic identity. The problem is that, at the same time, it destroys what is in the other more than the other — the particular way that the other enjoys.¶ It is only the encounter with the other in its real dimension — the encounter that produces anxiety in the subject — that sustains that which defines the other as such. Authentic tolerance tolerates the real other, not simply the other as mediated through a symbolic structure. In this sense, it involves the experience of anxiety on the part of the subject. This is a difficult posi- tion to sustain, as it involves enduring the “whole opaque weight of alien enjoyment on your chest.”The obscene enjoyment of the other bombards the authentically tolerant subject, but this subject does not retreat from the anxiety that this enjoyment produces. If the embrace of the anxiety that accompanies the other’s proximate enjoyment represents the ethical position today, this does not necessarily provide us with an incentive for occupying it. Who wants to be ethical when it involves enduring anxiety rather than finding a way — a drug, a new authority, or something — to alleviate it? What good does it do to sustain oneself in anxiety? In fact, anxiety does the subject no good at all, which is why it offers the subject the possibility of enjoyment. When the subject encounters the other’s enjoyment, this is the form that its own enjoyment takes as well. To endure the anxiety caused by the other’s enjoyment is to experience one’s own simultaneously. As Lacan points out, when it comes to the enjoyment of the other and my own enjoyment, “nothing indicates they are distinct.” Thus, not only is anxiety an ethical position, it is also the key to embracing the experience of enjoyment. To reject the experience of anxiety is to flee one’s own enjoyment.¶ The notion that the other’s enjoyment is also our own enjoyment seems at first glance difficult to accept. Few people enjoy themselves when they hear someone else screaming profanities in the workplace or when they see a couple passionately kissing in public, to take just two examples. In these instances, we tend to recoil at the inappropriateness of the activity rather than enjoy it, and this reaction seems completely justified. The public display of enjoyment violates the social pact with its intrusiveness; it doesn’t let us alone but assaults our senses. It violates the implicit agreement of the public sphere constituted as an enjoyment-free zone. And yet, recoiling from the other’s enjoyment deprives us of our own.¶ How we comport ourselves in relation to the other’s enjoyment indi- cates our relationship to our own. What bothers us about the other — the disturbance that the other’s enjoyment creates in our existence — is our own mode of enjoying. If we did not derive enjoyment from the other’s enjoyment, witnessing it would not bother us psychically. We would sim- ply be indifferent to it and focused on our own concerns. Of course, we might ask an offending car radio listener to turn the radio down so that we wouldn’t have to hear the unwanted music, but we would not experience the mere exhibition of alien enjoyment through the playing of that music as an affront. The very fact that the other’s enjoyment captures our attention demonstrates our intimate — or extimate — relation to it. This relation becomes even clearer when we consider the epistemo- logical status of the enjoying other. Because the real or enjoying other is irreducible to any observable identity, we have no way of knowing whether or not the other really is enjoying. A stream of profanity may be the result of someone hurting a toe. The person playing the car radio too loud while sitting at the traffic light may have simply forgotten to turn down the radio after driving on the highway. Or the person may have difficulty hearing. The couple’s amorous behavior in public may reflect an absence of enjoyment in their relationship that they are trying to hide from both themselves and the public.¶ Considering the enjoyment of the other, we never know whether it is there or not. If we experience it, we do so through the lens of our own fantasy. We fantasize that the person blasting the radio is caught up in the enjoyment of the music to the exclusion of everything else; we fantasize that the public kisses of the couple suggest an enjoyment that has no concern for the outside world. Without the fantasy frame, the enjoying other would never appear within our experience.¶ The role of the fantasy frame for accessing the enjoying other becomes apparent within Fascist ideology. Fascism posits an internal enemy — the figure of the Jew or some analogue — that enjoys illicitly at the expense of the social body as a whole. By attempting to eliminate the enjoying other, Fascism hopes to create a pure social body bereft of any stain of enjoy- ment. This purity would allow for the ultimate enjoyment, but it would be completely licit. This hope for a future society free of any stain is not where Fascism’s true enjoyment lies, however. Fascists experience their own enjoyment through the enjoying other that they persecute. The enjoy- ment that the figure of the Jew embodies is the Fascists’ own enjoyment, though they cannot avow it as their own. More than any other social form, Fascism is founded on the disavowal of enjoyment — the attempt to enjoy while keeping enjoyment at arm’s length. But this effort is not confined to Fascism; it predominates everywhere, because no subjects anywhere can simply feel comfortable with their own mode of enjoying.¶ The very structure of enjoyment is such that we cannot experience it directly: when we experience enjoyment, we don’t have it; it has us. We experience our own enjoyment as an assault coming from the outside that dominates our conscious intentions. This is why we must fantasize our own enjoyment through the enjoying other. Compelled by our enjoyment, we can’t do otherwise; we act against our self-interest and against our own good. Enjoyment overwhelms the subject, even though the subject’s mode of enjoying marks what is most singular about the subject.¶ Even though the encounter with the enjoying other apprehends the real other through the apparatus of fantasy, this encounter is nonetheless genuine and has an ethical status. Unlike the experience of the nonexistent symbolic identity, which closes down the space in which the real other might appear, the fantasized encounter with the enjoying other leaves this space open. By allowing itself to be disturbed by the other on the level of fantasy, the subject acknowledges the singularity of the real other — its mode of enjoying — without confining this singularity to a prescribed identity.¶ The implications of privileging the encounter with the disturbing enjoy- ment of the real other over the assimilable symbolic identity are themselves disturbing. The tolerant attitude that never allows itself to be jarred by the enjoying other becomes, according to this way of seeing things, further from really encountering the real other than the attitude of hate and mis- trust. The liberal subject who welcomes illegal immigrants as fellow citizens completely shuts down the space for the other in the real. The immigrant as fellow citizen is not the real other. The xenophobic conservative, on the other hand, constructs a fantasy that envisions the illegal immigrant awash in a linguistic and cultural enjoyment that excludes natives. This fantasy, paradoxically, permits an encounter with the real other that liberal tolerance forecloses. Of course, xenophobes retreat from this encounter and from their own enjoyment, but they do have an experience of it that liberals do not. The tolerant liberal is open to the other but eliminates the otherness, while the xenophobic conservative is closed to the other but allows for the otherness. The ethical position thus involves sustaining the liberal’s toler- ance within the conservative’s encounter with the real other.

## 2

### Paradigm

#### In order for the resolution to be true, the aff must prove that it is conceptually coherent to have an unconditional right to strike. Hijacks your role of the ballot – a] Strategies against oppression must be pragmatic to avoid ivory-towered theorizing.

#### [There were a lot of exempted analytics here during the round regarding interactions with the case]

### Contention

#### Now negate – there will always be exceptions to the affirmative.