# 1NC

### 1NC – Framing

If we win the NC vote neg because it means extinction is bad.

#### The meta ethic is consistency with empiricism. Prefer-

#### 1] Non-natural moral facts are epistemically inaccessible

Papinau ’07 (David [David Papineau is an academic philosopher. He works as Professor of Philosophy of Science at King's College London, having previously taught for several years at Cambridge University and been a fellow of Robinson College, Cambridge], “Naturalism”. [http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/naturalism/](http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/naturalism/)) 2007)

Moore took this argument to show that moral facts comprise a distinct species of non-natural fact. However, any such non-naturalist view of morality faces immediate difficulties, deriving ultimately from the kind of causal closure thesis discussed above. If **all physical effects are due to a limited range of natural causes, and if moral facts lie outside this range, then it follow that moral facts can never make any difference to what happens in the physical world** (Harman, 1986). At first sight **this** may seem tolerable (perhaps moral facts indeed don't have any physical effects). But it **has** **very awkward epistemological consequences.** For beings like us, **knowledge of the spatiotemporal world is mediated by physical processes involving our sense organs and cognitive systems. If moral facts cannot influence the physical world, then [we can’t] it is hard to see how we can have any knowledge of them.**

#### 2] Bindingness- only pursuing pleasure and avoiding pain can motivate action consistently- no external system of ethics has anything intrinsic that dictate it be followed. Chemical and biological responses to certain experiences provide objective markers of pleasure and pain while maximizing deontological ethical principles are unverifiable.

#### 3] If something happens 100 times we know it will happen again because of probability and mathematical analysis – only empirical processes can allow us to accurately make deductive predictions. Descionmakers have to use naturalism since its grounded in empirics, science, and facts while other moral theories can’t be reliably used.

#### Thus, the standard is consistency with hedonic act utilitarianism. Prefer-

#### 1] Pleasure/pain is intrinsically valuable

**Moen 16** [Ole Martin Moen, Research Fellow in Philosophy at University of Oslo “An Argument for Hedonism” Journal of Value Inquiry (Springer), 50 (2) 2016: 267–281] SJDI

Let us start by observing, empirically, that a widely shared judgment about intrinsic value and disvalue is that pleasure is intrinsically valuable and pain is intrinsically disvaluable. On virtually any proposed list of intrinsic values and disvalues (we will look at some of them below), pleasure is included among the intrinsic values and pain among the intrinsic disvalues. This inclusion makes intuitive sense, moreover, for there is something undeniably good about the way pleasure feels and something undeniably bad about the way pain feels, and neither the goodness of pleasure nor the badness of pain seems to be exhausted by the further effects that these experiences might have. “Pleasure” and “pain” are here understood inclusively, as encompassing anything hedonically positive and anything hedonically negative.2 The special value statuses of pleasure and pain are manifested in how we treat these experiences in our everyday reasoning about values. If you tell me that you are heading for the convenience store, I might ask: “What for?” This is a reasonable question, for when you go to the convenience store you usually do so, not merely for the sake of going to the convenience store, but for the sake of achieving something further that you deem to be valuable. You might answer, for example: “To buy soda.” This answer makes sense, for soda is a nice thing and you can get it at the convenience store. I might further inquire, however: “What is buying the soda good for?” This further question can also be a reasonable one, for it need not be obvious why you want the soda. You might answer: “Well, I want it for the pleasure of drinking it.” If I then proceed by asking “But what is the pleasure of drinking the soda good for?” the discussion is likely to reach an awkward end. The reason is that the pleasure is not good for anything further; it is simply that for which going to the convenience store and buying the soda is good.3 As Aristotle observes: “We never ask [a man] what his end is in being pleased, because we assume that pleasure is choice worthy in itself.”4 Presumably, a similar story can be told in the case of pains, for if someone says “This is painful!” we never respond by asking: “And why is that a problem?” We take for granted that if something is painful, we have a sufficient explanation of why it is bad. If we are onto something in our everyday reasoning about values, it seems that pleasure and pain are both places where we reach the end of the line in matters of value.

#### 2] There’s no act-omission distinction for states.

Sunstein et al 05 [Cass R. Sunstein and Adrian Vermeule. The University of Chicago Law School. “Is Capital Punishment Morally Required? The Relevance of Life‐Life Tradeoffs.” JOHN M. OLIN LAW & ECONOMICS WORKING PAPER NO. 239. The Chicago Working Paper Series. March 2005]

In our view, **both the argument from causation and the argument from intention** go wrong by **overlook**ing **the distinctive features of government** as a moral agent. Whatever the general status of the act-omission distinction as a matter of moral philosophy,38 the distinction is least impressive when applied to government.39 The most fundamental point is that **unlike individuals, governments always and necessarily** face a choice **between** or among possible **policies for regulating third parties.** The distinction between acts and omissions may not be intelligible in this context, and even if it is, the distinction does not make a morally relevant difference. Most generally, **government** is in the business of **creat**ing **permissions and prohibitions. When it** explicitly or **implicitly** authorizes private action, **it is not** omitting to do anything, or **refusing to act.**40 **Moreover, the distinction between authorized and unauthorized private action—for example, private killing—becomes obscure when the government formally** forbids private action, **but chooses a set of policy instruments that do not** adequately or **fully discourage it.**

#### 3] Substitutability—only consequentialism explains necessary enablers.

Sinnott-Armstrong 92 [Walter, professor of practical ethics. “An Argument for Consequentialism” Dartmouth College Philosophical Perspectives. 1992.]

A moral reason to do an act is consequential if and only if the reason depends only on the consequences of either doing the act or not doing the act. For example, a moral reason not to hit someone is that this will hurt her or him. A moral reason to turn your car to the left might be that, if you do not do so, you will run over and kill someone. A moral reason to feed a starving child is that the child will lose important mental or physical abilities if you do not feed it. All such reasons are consequential reasons. All other moral reasons are non-consequential. Thus, a moral reason to do an act is non-consequential if and only if the reason depends even partly on some property that the act has independently of its consequences. For example, an act can be a lie regardless of what happens as a result of the lie (since some lies are not believed), and some moral theories claim that that property of being a lie provides amoral reason not to tell a lie regardless of the consequences of this lie. Similarly, the fact that an act fulfills a promise is often seen as a moral reason to do the act, even though the act has that property of fulfilling a promise independently ofits consequences. All such moral reasons are non-consequential. In order to avoid so many negations, I will also call them 'deontological'. This distinction would not make sense if we did not restrict the notion of consequences. If I promise to mow the lawn, then one consequence of my mowing might seem to be that my promise is fulfilled. One way to avoid this problem is to specify that the consequences of an act must be distinct from the act itself. My act of fulfilling my promise and my act of mowing are not distinct, because they are done by the same bodily movements.10 Thus, my fulfilling my promise is not a consequence of my mowing. A consequence of an act need not be later in time than the act, since causation can be simultaneous, but the consequence must at least be different from the act. Even with this clarification, it is still hard to classify some moral reasons as consequential or deontological,11 but I will stick to examples that are clear. In accordance with this distinction between kinds of moral reasons, I can now distinguish different kinds of moral theories. I will say that a moral theory is consequentialist if and only if it implies that all basic moral reasons are consequential. A moral theory is then non-consequentialist or deontological if it includes any basic moral reasons which are not consequential. 5. Against Deontology So defined, the class of deontological moral theories is very large and diverse. This makes it hard to say anything in general about it. Nonetheless, I will argue that no deontological moral theory can explain why moral substitutability holds. My argument applies to all deontological theories because it depends only on what is common to them all, namely, the claim that some basic moral reasons are not consequential. Some deontological theories allow very many weighty moral reasons that are consequential, and these theories might be able to explain why moral substitutability holds for some of their moral reasons: the consequential ones. But even these theories cannot explain why moral substitutability holds for all moral reasons, including the non-consequential reasons that make the theory deontological. The failure of deontological moral theories to explain moral substitutability in the very cases that make them deontological is a reason to reject all deontological moral theories. I cannot discuss every deontological moral theory, so I will discuss only a few paradigm examples and show why they cannot explain moral substitutability. After this, I will argue that similar problems are bound to arise for all other deontological theories by their very nature. The simplest deontological theory is the pluralistic intuitionism of Prichard and Ross. Ross writes that, when someone promises to do something, 'This we consider obligatory in its own nature, just because it is a fulfillment of a promise, and not because of its consequences.'12 Such deontologists claim in effect that, if I promise to mow the grass, there is a moral reason for me to mow the grass, and this moral reason is constituted by the fact that mowing the grass fulfills my promise. This reason exists regardless of the consequences of mowing the grass, even though it might be overridden by certain bad consequences. However, if this is why I have a moral reason to mow the grass, then, even if I cannot mow the grass without starting my mower, and starting the mower would enable me to mow the grass, it still would not follow that I have any moral reason to start my mower, since I did not promise to start my mower, and starting my mower does not fulfill my promise. Thus, a moral theory cannot explain moral substitutability if it claims that properties like this provide moral reasons.

#### 4] Extinction must be relevant given inevitable moral uncertainty

Pummer 15 [Theron, Junior Research Fellow in Philosophy at St. Anne's College, University of Oxford. “Moral Agreement on Saving the World” Practical Ethics, University of Oxford. May 18, 2015] AT

There appears to be lot of disagreement in moral philosophy. Whether these many apparent disagreements are deep and irresolvable, I believe there is at least one thing it is reasonable to agree on right now, whatever general moral view we adopt: that it is very important to reduce the risk that all intelligent beings on this planet are eliminated by an enormous catastrophe, such as a nuclear war. How we might in fact try to reduce such existential risks is discussed elsewhere. My claim here is only that we – whether we’re consequentialists, deontologists, or virtue ethicists – should all agree that we should try to save the world. According to consequentialism, we should maximize the good, where this is taken to be the goodness, from an impartial perspective, of outcomes. Clearly one thing that makes an outcome good is that the people in it are doing well. There is little disagreement here. If the happiness or well-being of possible future people is just as important as that of people who already exist, and if they would have good lives, it is not hard to see how reducing existential risk is easily the most important thing in the whole world. This is for the familiar reason that there are so many people who could exist in the future – there are trillions upon trillions… upon trillions. There are so many possible future people that reducing existential risk is arguably the most important thing in the world, even if the well-being of these possible people were given only 0.001% as much weight as that of existing people. Even on a wholly person-affecting view – according to which there’s nothing (apart from effects on existing people) to be said in favor of creating happy people – the case for reducing existential risk is very strong. As noted in this seminal paper, this case is strengthened by the fact that there’s a good chance that many existing people will, with the aid of life-extension technology, live very long and very high quality lives. You might think what I have just argued applies to consequentialists only. There is a tendency to assume that, if an argument appeals to consequentialist considerations (the goodness of outcomes), it is irrelevant to non-consequentialists. But that is a huge mistake. Non-consequentialism is the view that there’s more that determines rightness than the goodness of consequences or outcomes; it is not the view that the latter don’t matter. Even John Rawls wrote, “All ethical doctrines worth our attention take consequences into account in judging rightness. One which did not would simply be irrational, crazy.” Minimally plausible versions of deontology and virtue ethics must be concerned in part with promoting the good, from an impartial point of view. They’d thus imply very strong reasons to reduce existential risk, at least when this doesn’t significantly involve doing harm to others or damaging one’s character. What’s even more surprising, perhaps, is that even if our own good (or that of those near and dear to us) has much greater weight than goodness from the impartial “point of view of the universe,” indeed even if the latter is entirely morally irrelevant, we may nonetheless have very strong reasons to reduce existential risk. Even egoism, the view that each agent should maximize her own good, might imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk. It will depend, among other things, on what one’s own good consists in. If well-being consisted in pleasure only, it is somewhat harder to argue that egoism would imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk – perhaps we could argue that one would maximize her expected hedonic well-being by funding life extension technology or by having herself cryogenically frozen at the time of her bodily death as well as giving money to reduce existential risk (so that there is a world for her to live in!). I am not sure, however, how strong the reasons to do this would be. But views which imply that, if I don’t care about other people, I have no or very little reason to help them are not even minimally plausible views (in addition to hedonistic egoism, I here have in mind views that imply that one has no reason to perform an act unless one actually desires to do that act). To be minimally plausible, egoism will need to be paired with a more sophisticated account of well-being. To see this, it is enough to consider, as Plato did, the possibility of a ring of invisibility – suppose that, while wearing it, Ayn could derive some pleasure by helping the poor, but instead could derive just a bit more by severely harming them. Hedonistic egoism would absurdly imply she should do the latter. To avoid this implication, egoists would need to build something like the meaningfulness of a life into well-being, in some robust way, where this would to a significant extent be a function of other-regarding concerns (see chapter 12 of this classic intro to ethics). But once these elements are included, we can (roughly, as above) argue that this sort of egoism will imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk. Add to all of this Samuel Scheffler’s recent intriguing arguments (quick podcast version available here) that most of what makes our lives go well would be undermined if there were no future generations of intelligent persons. On his view, my life would contain vastly less well-being if (say) a year after my death the world came to an end. So obviously if Scheffler were right I’d have very strong reason to reduce existential risk. We should also take into account moral uncertainty. What is it reasonable for one to do, when one is uncertain not (only) about the empirical facts, but also about the moral facts? I’ve just argued that there’s agreement among minimally plausible ethical views that we have strong reason to reduce existential risk – not only consequentialists, but also deontologists, virtue ethicists, and sophisticated egoists should agree. But even those (hedonistic egoists) who disagree should have a significant level of confidence that they are mistaken, and that one of the above views is correct. Even if they were 90% sure that their view is the correct one (and 10% sure that one of these other ones is correct), they would have pretty strong reason, from the standpoint of moral uncertainty, to reduce existential risk. Perhaps most disturbingly still, even if we are only 1% sure that the well-being of possible future people matters, it is at least arguable that, from the standpoint of moral uncertainty, reducing existential risk is the most important thing in the world. Again, this is largely for the reason that there are so many people who could exist in the future – there are trillions upon trillions… upon trillions. (For more on this and other related issues, see this excellent dissertation). Of course, it is uncertain whether these untold trillions would, in general, have good lives. It’s possible they’ll be miserable. It is enough for my claim that there is moral agreement in the relevant sense if, at least given certain empirical claims about what future lives would most likely be like, all minimally plausible moral views would converge on the conclusion that we should try to save the world. While there are some non-crazy views that place significantly greater moral weight on avoiding suffering than on promoting happiness, for reasons others have offered (and for independent reasons I won’t get into here unless requested to), they nonetheless seem to be fairly implausible views. And even if things did not go well for our ancestors, I am optimistic that they will overall go fantastically well for our descendants, if we allow them to. I suspect that most of us alive today – at least those of us not suffering from extreme illness or poverty – have lives that are well worth living, and that things will continue to improve. Derek Parfit, whose work has emphasized future generations as well as agreement in ethics, described our situation clearly and accurately: “We live during the hinge of history. Given the scientific and technological discoveries of the last two centuries, the world has never changed as fast. We shall soon have even greater powers to transform, not only our surroundings, but ourselves and our successors. If we act wisely in the next few centuries, humanity will survive its most dangerous and decisive period. Our descendants could, if necessary, go elsewhere, spreading through this galaxy…. Our descendants might, I believe, make the further future very good. But that good future may also depend in part on us. If our selfish recklessness ends human history, we would be acting very wrongly.” (From chapter 36 of On What Matters)

#### This connection between pain and pleasure and phenomenal conceptions of intrinsic value and disvalue is irrefutable – everything else regresses – robust neuroscience proves.

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**Pleasure** is not only one of the three primary reward functions but it also **defines reward.** As homeostasis explains the functions of only a limited number of rewards, the principal reason why particular stimuli, objects, events, situations, and activities are rewarding may be due to pleasure. This applies first of all to sex and to the primary homeostatic rewards of food and liquid and extends to money, taste, beauty, social encounters and nonmaterial, internally set, and intrinsic rewards. Pleasure, as the primary effect of rewards, drives the prime reward functions of learning, approach behavior, and decision making and provides the **basis for hedonic theories** of reward function. We are attracted by most rewards and exert intense efforts to obtain them, just because they are enjoyable [10].

Pleasure is a passive reaction that derives from the experience or prediction of reward and may lead to a long-lasting state of happiness. The word happiness is difficult to define. In fact, just obtaining physical pleasure may not be enough. One key to happiness involves a network of good friends. However, it is not obvious how the higher forms of satisfaction and pleasure are related to an ice cream cone, or to your team winning a sporting event. Recent multidisciplinary research, using both humans and detailed invasive brain analysis of animals has discovered some critical ways that the brain processes pleasure [14].

Pleasure as a hallmark of reward is sufficient for defining a reward, but it may not be necessary. A reward may generate positive learning and approach behavior simply because it contains substances that are essential for body function. When we are hungry, we may eat bad and unpleasant meals. A monkey who receives hundreds of small drops of water every morning in the laboratory is unlikely to feel a rush of pleasure every time it gets the 0.1 ml. Nevertheless, with these precautions in mind, we may define any stimulus, object, event, activity, or situation that has the potential to produce pleasure as a reward. In the context of reward deficiency or for disorders of addiction, homeostasis pursues pharmacological treatments: drugs to treat drug addiction, obesity, and other compulsive behaviors. The theory of allostasis suggests broader approaches - such as re-expanding the range of possible pleasures and providing opportunities to expend effort in their pursuit. [15]. It is noteworthy, the first animal studies eliciting approach behavior by electrical brain stimulation interpreted their findings as a discovery of the brain’s pleasure centers [16] which were later partly associated with midbrain dopamine neurons [17–19] despite the notorious difficulties of identifying emotions in animals.

Evolutionary theories of pleasure: The love connection BO:D

Charles Darwin and other biological scientists that have examined the biological evolution and its basic principles found various mechanisms that steer behavior and biological development. Besides their theory on natural selection, it was particularly the sexual selection process that gained significance in the latter context over the last century, especially when it comes to the question of what makes us “what we are,” i.e., human. However, the capacity to sexually select and evolve is not at all a human accomplishment alone or a sign of our uniqueness; yet, we humans, as it seems, are ingenious in fooling ourselves and others–when we are in love or desperately search for it.

It is well established that modern biological theory conjectures that **organisms are** the **result of evolutionary competition.** In fact, Richard Dawkins stresses gene survival and propagation as the basic mechanism of life [20]. Only genes that lead to the fittest phenotype will make it. It is noteworthy that the phenotype is selected based on behavior that maximizes gene propagation. To do so, the phenotype must survive and generate offspring, and be better at it than its competitors. Thus, the ultimate, distal function of rewards is to increase evolutionary fitness by ensuring the survival of the organism and reproduction. It is agreed that learning, approach, economic decisions, and positive emotions are the proximal functions through which phenotypes obtain other necessary nutrients for survival, mating, and care for offspring.

Behavioral reward functions have evolved to help individuals to survive and propagate their genes. Apparently, people need to live well and long enough to reproduce. Most would agree that homo-sapiens do so by ingesting the substances that make their bodies function properly. For this reason, foods and drinks are rewards. Additional rewards, including those used for economic exchanges, ensure sufficient palatable food and drink supply. Mating and gene propagation is supported by powerful sexual attraction. Additional properties, like body form, augment the chance to mate and nourish and defend offspring and are therefore also rewards. Care for offspring until they can reproduce themselves helps gene propagation and is rewarding; otherwise, many believe mating is useless. According to David E Comings, as any small edge will ultimately result in evolutionary advantage [21], additional reward mechanisms like novelty seeking and exploration widen the spectrum of available rewards and thus enhance the chance for survival, reproduction, and ultimate gene propagation. These functions may help us to obtain the benefits of distant rewards that are determined by our own interests and not immediately available in the environment. Thus the distal reward function in gene propagation and evolutionary fitness defines the proximal reward functions that we see in everyday behavior. That is why foods, drinks, mates, and offspring are rewarding.

There have been theories linking pleasure as a required component of health benefits salutogenesis, (salugenesis). In essence, under these terms, pleasure is described as a state or feeling of happiness and satisfaction resulting from an experience that one enjoys. Regarding pleasure, it is a double-edged sword, on the one hand, it promotes positive feelings (like mindfulness) and even better cognition, possibly through the release of dopamine [22]. But on the other hand, pleasure simultaneously encourages addiction and other negative behaviors, i.e., motivational toxicity. It is a complex neurobiological phenomenon, relying on reward circuitry or limbic activity. It is important to realize that through the “Brain Reward Cascade” (BRC) endorphin and endogenous morphinergic mechanisms may play a role [23]. While natural rewards are essential for survival and appetitive motivation leading to beneficial biological behaviors like eating, sex, and reproduction, crucial social interactions seem to further facilitate the positive effects exerted by pleasurable experiences. Indeed, experimentation with addictive drugs is capable of directly acting on reward pathways and causing deterioration of these systems promoting hypodopaminergia [24]. Most would agree that pleasurable activities can stimulate personal growth and may help to induce healthy behavioral changes, including stress management [25]. The work of Esch and Stefano [26] concerning the link between compassion and love implicate the brain reward system, and pleasure induction suggests that social contact in general, i.e., love, attachment, and compassion, can be highly effective in stress reduction, survival, and overall health.

Understanding the role of neurotransmission and pleasurable states both positive and negative have been adequately studied over many decades [26–37], but comparative anatomical and neurobiological function between animals and homo sapiens appear to be required and seem to be in an infancy stage.

Finding happiness is different between apes and humans

As stated earlier in this expert opinion one key to happiness involves a network of good friends [38]. However, it is not entirely clear exactly how the higher forms of satisfaction and pleasure are related to a sugar rush, winning a sports event or even sky diving, all of which augment dopamine release at the reward brain site. Recent multidisciplinary research, using both humans and detailed invasive brain analysis of animals has discovered some critical ways that the brain processes pleasure.

Remarkably, there are pathways for ordinary liking and pleasure, which are limited in scope as described above in this commentary. However, there are **many brain regions**, often termed hot and cold spots, that significantly **modulate** (increase or decrease) our **pleasure or** even produce **the opposite** of pleasure— that is disgust and fear [39]. One specific region of the nucleus accumbens is organized like a computer keyboard, with particular stimulus triggers in rows— producing an increase and decrease of pleasure and disgust. Moreover, the cortex has unique roles in the cognitive evaluation of our feelings of pleasure [40]. Importantly, the interplay of these multiple triggers and the higher brain centers in the prefrontal cortex are very intricate and are just being uncovered.

Desire and reward centers

It is surprising that many different sources of pleasure activate the same circuits between the mesocorticolimbic regions (Figure 1). Reward and desire are two aspects pleasure induction and have a very widespread, large circuit. Some part of this circuit distinguishes between desire and dread. The so-called pleasure circuitry called “REWARD” involves a well-known dopamine pathway in the mesolimbic system that can influence both pleasure and motivation.

In simplest terms, the well-established mesolimbic system is a dopamine circuit for reward. It starts in the ventral tegmental area (VTA) of the midbrain and travels to the nucleus accumbens (Figure 2). It is the cornerstone target to all addictions. The VTA is encompassed with neurons using glutamate, GABA, and dopamine. The nucleus accumbens (NAc) is located within the ventral striatum and is divided into two sub-regions—the motor and limbic regions associated with its core and shell, respectively. The NAc has spiny neurons that receive dopamine from the VTA and glutamate (a dopamine driver) from the hippocampus, amygdala and medial prefrontal cortex. Subsequently, the NAc projects GABA signals to an area termed the ventral pallidum (VP). The region is a relay station in the limbic loop of the basal ganglia, critical for motivation, behavior, emotions and the “Feel Good” response. This defined system of the brain is involved in all addictions –substance, and non –substance related. In 1995, our laboratory coined the term “Reward Deficiency Syndrome” (RDS) to describe genetic and epigenetic induced hypodopaminergia in the “Brain Reward Cascade” that contribute to addiction and compulsive behaviors [3,6,41].

Furthermore, ordinary “liking” of something, or pure pleasure, is represented by small regions mainly in the limbic system (old reptilian part of the brain). These may be part of larger neural circuits. In Latin, hedus is the term for “sweet”; and in Greek, hodone is the term for “pleasure.” Thus, the word Hedonic is now referring to various subcomponents of pleasure: some associated with purely sensory and others with more complex emotions involving morals, aesthetics, and social interactions. The capacity to have pleasure is part of being healthy and may even extend life, especially if linked to optimism as a dopaminergic response [42].

Psychiatric illness often includes symptoms of an abnormal inability to experience pleasure, referred to as anhedonia. A negative feeling state is called dysphoria, which can consist of many emotions such as pain, depression, anxiety, fear, and disgust. Previously many scientists used animal research to uncover the complex mechanisms of pleasure, liking, motivation and even emotions like panic and fear, as discussed above [43]. However, as a significant amount of related research about the specific brain regions of pleasure/reward circuitry has been derived from invasive studies of animals, these cannot be directly compared with subjective states experienced by humans.

In an attempt to resolve the controversy regarding the causal contributions of mesolimbic dopamine systems to reward, we have previously evaluated the three-main competing explanatory categories: “liking,” “learning,” and “wanting” [3]. That is, dopamine may mediate (a) liking: the hedonic impact of reward, (b) learning: learned predictions about rewarding effects, or (c) wanting: the pursuit of rewards by attributing incentive salience to reward-related stimuli [44]. We have evaluated these hypotheses, especially as they relate to the RDS, and we find that the incentive salience or “wanting” hypothesis of dopaminergic functioning is supported by a majority of the scientific evidence. Various neuroimaging studies have shown that anticipated behaviors such as sex and gaming, delicious foods and drugs of abuse all affect brain regions associated with reward networks, and may not be unidirectional. Drugs of abuse enhance dopamine signaling which sensitizes mesolimbic brain mechanisms that apparently evolved explicitly to attribute incentive salience to various rewards [45].

Addictive substances are voluntarily self-administered, and they enhance (directly or indirectly) dopaminergic synaptic function in the NAc. This activation of the brain reward networks (producing the ecstatic “high” that users seek). Although these circuits were initially thought to encode a set point of hedonic tone, it is now being considered to be far more complicated in function, also encoding attention, reward expectancy, disconfirmation of reward expectancy, and incentive motivation [46]. The argument about addiction as a disease may be confused with a predisposition to substance and nonsubstance rewards relative to the extreme effect of drugs of abuse on brain neurochemistry. The former sets up an individual to be at high risk through both genetic polymorphisms in reward genes as well as harmful epigenetic insult. Some Psychologists, even with all the data, still infer that addiction is not a disease [47]. Elevated stress levels, together with polymorphisms (genetic variations) of various dopaminergic genes and the genes related to other neurotransmitters (and their genetic variants), and may have an additive effect on vulnerability to various addictions [48]. In this regard, Vanyukov, et al. [48] suggested based on review that whereas the gateway hypothesis does not specify mechanistic connections between “stages,” and does not extend to the risks for addictions the concept of common liability to addictions may be more parsimonious. The latter theory is grounded in genetic theory and supported by data identifying common sources of variation in the risk for specific addictions (e.g., RDS). This commonality has identifiable neurobiological substrate and plausible evolutionary explanations.

Over many years the controversy of dopamine involvement in especially “pleasure” has led to confusion concerning separating motivation from actual pleasure (wanting versus liking) [49]. We take the position that animal studies cannot provide real clinical information as described by self-reports in humans. As mentioned earlier and in the abstract, on November 23rd, 2017, evidence for our concerns was discovered [50]

In essence, although nonhuman primate brains are similar to our own, the disparity between other primates and those of human cognitive abilities tells us that surface similarity is not the whole story. Sousa et al. [50] small case found various differentially expressed genes, to associate with pleasure related systems. Furthermore, the dopaminergic interneurons located in the human neocortex were absent from the neocortex of nonhuman African apes. Such differences in neuronal transcriptional programs may underlie a variety of neurodevelopmental disorders.

In simpler terms, the system controls the production of dopamine, a chemical messenger that plays a significant role in pleasure and rewards. The senior author, Dr. Nenad Sestan from Yale, stated: “Humans have evolved a dopamine system that is different than the one in chimpanzees.” This may explain why the behavior of humans is so unique from that of non-human primates, even though our brains are so surprisingly similar, Sestan said: “It might also shed light on why people are vulnerable to mental disorders such as autism (possibly even addiction).” Remarkably, this research finding emerged from an extensive, multicenter collaboration to compare the brains across several species. These researchers examined 247 specimens of neural tissue from six humans, five chimpanzees, and five macaque monkeys. Moreover, these investigators analyzed which genes were turned on or off in 16 regions of the brain. While the differences among species were subtle, **there was** a **remarkable contrast in** the **neocortices**, specifically in an area of the brain that is much more developed in humans than in chimpanzees. In fact, these researchers found that a gene called tyrosine hydroxylase (TH) for the enzyme, responsible for the production of dopamine, was expressed in the neocortex of humans, but not chimpanzees. As discussed earlier, dopamine is best known for its essential role within the brain’s reward system; the very system that responds to everything from sex, to gambling, to food, and to addictive drugs. However, dopamine also assists in regulating emotional responses, memory, and movement. Notably, abnormal dopamine levels have been linked to disorders including Parkinson’s, schizophrenia and spectrum disorders such as autism and addiction or RDS.

Nora Volkow, the director of NIDA, pointed out that one alluring possibility is that the neurotransmitter dopamine plays a substantial role in humans’ ability to pursue various rewards that are perhaps months or even years away in the future. This same idea has been suggested by Dr. Robert Sapolsky, a professor of biology and neurology at Stanford University. Dr. Sapolsky cited evidence that dopamine levels rise dramatically in humans when we anticipate potential rewards that are uncertain and even far off in our futures, such as retirement or even the possible alterlife. This may explain what often motivates people to work for things that have no apparent short-term benefit [51]. In similar work, Volkow and Bale [52] proposed a model in which dopamine can favor NOW processes through phasic signaling in reward circuits or LATER processes through tonic signaling in control circuits. Specifically, they suggest that through its modulation of the orbitofrontal cortex, which processes salience attribution, dopamine also enables shilting from NOW to LATER, while its modulation of the insula, which processes interoceptive information, influences the probability of selecting NOW versus LATER actions based on an individual’s physiological state. This hypothesis further supports the concept that disruptions along these circuits contribute to diverse pathologies, including obesity and addiction or RDS.

#### 5] Phenomenal introspection --- it’s the most epistemically reliable --- historical moral disagreement over internal conceptions of morality such as questions of race, gender, class, religion, etc prove the fallibility of non-observational based ethics --- introspection means we value happiness because we can determine that we each value it --- just as I can observe a lemon’s yellowness, we can make those judgements about happiness.

#### 6] Use epistemic modesty for evaluating the framework debate:

#### A] Substantively true since it maximizes the probability of achieving net most moral value—beating a framework acts as mitigation to their impacts but the strength of that mitigation is contingent.

#### B] Clash—disincentives debaters from going all in for framework which means we get the ideal balance between topic ed and phil ed—it’s important to talk about contention-level offense

#### Theory first – determines the validity of substance. Prefer util:

#### 1] Ground – every impact functions under util whereas other ethics flow to one side exclusively. Kills fairness since we both need arguments to win and

#### 2] Topic lit – most articles are written through the lens of util because they’re crafted for policymakers and the general public who take consequences to be important, not philosophy majors. Key to fairness and education – the lit is where we do research and determines how we engage in the round.

#### 3] Engagement – Complex disad scenarios, links, and CPs allow a plethora of engagement with affirmatives from different angles that maximizes engagement and education on the depths of the literature. Vote on it since clash on issues is the purpose of debate.

#### 4] Reciprocity –the aff gets plans and advantages, while negs get DAs and CPs that perfectly counteract the aff’s scenarios. Other scenarios can only be answered with turns and defense but never possess counter scenarios and advocacies that operate under one.

#### 5] Turn Ground – philosophical frameworks mostly have authors who speak directly on matters at hand and descriptively flow one way. Util calculus allows contestation on multiple angles which leaves it’s conclusion up to debaters which outweighs on debatability.

#### 6] Predictability – debate is policy and resolutions assume government action. Plans and advantages are the entirety of the west coast and a large portion of the East which makes it substantially more predictable than your philosophy. Predictability link turns your arguments since any reason why we couldn’t answer them is because you read something I didn’t know about.

#### 7] Resource disparities – disclosure makes it so underprivileged debaters can engage. Complex philosophies might not need evidence, but the analytics are foreign to people who don’t know what an abstract framework says. People disclose all evidence on the wiki but not always analytics which makes our debate accessible.

#### 1] The lack of suffering is not intrinsically good, it is just neutral. Only the possibility for pleasure is a good thing.

#### 2] Turn – the potential for pleasure through life is better than the definite lack of suffering because pleasure is the only intrinsic moral good, so the possibility for pleasure to increase is the only morally correct thing.

#### 3] Even if life causes the potential for suffering, existence is preferable because it allows the possibility for happiness and future goods.

Brueckner and Fischer 86 Why Is Death Bad? Author(s): Anthony L. Brueckner and John Martin Fischer Source: Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition, Vol. 50, No. 2 (Sep., 1986), pp. 213-221 Published by: Springer Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/4319856

Perhaps it is this temporal asymmetry in our attitudes toward certain goods, and not the asymmetry in our attitudes toward bads, which explains our asymmetric attitudes toward prenatal and posthumous nonexistence. Death is a bad insofar as it is a deprivation of the good things in life (some of which, let us suppose, are "experienced as good" by the individual). If death occurs in the future, then it is a deprivation of something to which we look forward and about which we care - future experienced goods. But prenatal nonexistence is a deprivation of past experienced goods, goods to which we are indifferent. Death deprives us of something we care about, whereas prenatal nonexistence deprives us of something to which we are indifferent. Thus we can defend Nagel's account of the badness of death by explaining the asymmetry in our attitudes toward prenatal and posthumous nonexistence. This explanation makes use of a principle clearly related to (but dif- ferent from) Parfit's principle concerning the asymmetry in our attitudes toward past and future experienced bads. If we have asymmetric attitudes toward past and future experienced goods, then death is a bad thing in a way in which prenatal nonexistence is not.14

#### 4] Even if all human death would be good, that doesn’t mean death of individuals is a good thing – death of individuals causes suffering for others around them which is bad - nonexistence may be a good thing, but that doesn’t mean people dying is good, too.

#### 5] This argument is morally repugnant and should be rejected – it justifies mass atrocities on the basis of death being good and creates an unsafe debate space because debaters can say things like certain lives have no value

#### 6] No impact – our offense doesn’t rely on death being bad, our offense comes from [insert aff offense] being a bad thing which you do not contest. Independent privilege DA – you ignore material suffering and psychological trauma – even if death in the abstract might be good, things like poverty are a bad thing that we should stop.

#### 7] Your argument is Empirically denied – on balance, people are happy to be alive even when they are in disadvantaged scenarios.

Diener et al 96 Ed Diener and Carol Diener. “Most People are Happy.” Research Report. Psychological Science. University of Illinois. Volume 7, Number 3, May 1996. American Psychological Society.

Meyers and Diener {1995) asked “'Who is happy?'" but examined the question of who is more and who is less happy In fact, most people report a positive level of subjective well-being {SWB), and say that they are satisfied with domains such as marriage, work, and leisure People in disadvantaged groups on average report positive well-being, and measurement methods in addition to self-report indicate that most people's affect IS primarily pleasant Cross-national data suggest that there is a positive level of SWB throughout the world, with the possible exception of very poor societies In 86% of the 43 nations for which nationally representative samples are available mean SWB response was above neutral Several hypothese explain the positive levels of SWB are discussed Many thinkers charactenze life as a tragedy Sophocles (1959) wrote, "Not to be bom surpasses thought and speech The second best is to have seen the light and then to go back quickly whence we came" (p 134) Many behavioral scientists also believe that humans are predominantly dissatisfied and unhappy Extensive evidence, however, suggests otherwise Subjective well-being (SWB), referred to colloquially as "happiness," is a person's evaluation of his or her life This evaluation is both cognitive (e g , life satisfaction judgments) and affective (pleasant and unpleasant emotional reactions) Most life satisfaction scales have a neutral point at which the person reports equal amounts of satisfaction and dissatisfaction Above this point, response alternatives are labeled with varying degrees of satisfaction, and below this point, the options indicate dissatisfaction For moods and emotions, the neutral point refers to that place at which the individual expenences equal amounts of pleasant and unpleasant affect A poshedonic level refers to expenencing positive affect more of the time than negative affect EVIDENCE FOR POSITIVE SWB In every U S national survey, most people have reported a positive level of SWB For example, Gunn, Veroff, and Feld (1960) found that 89% of Americans placed themselves in the 'very happy" or "pretty happy" groups, only 11% said they were "not too happy " Andrews and Withey (1976) conducted nationally representative surveys and found that about 84% of respondents scored above neutral, with only about 5% sconng below neutral In 1988, Andrews (1991) found that all socioeconomic groups, and both whites and Afncan Amencans, scored well above the neutral point on life satisfaction Table 1 shows the results of SWB surveys in the United States from 1946 to 1989 (Veenhoven, 1993) The data reveal a positive level of global SWB throughout this penod Surveys also show that respondents say they are satisfied with specific domains such as health, finances, and fnendships (Andrews & Withey, 1976, Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976) Table 1 also presents SWB responses of the French and Japanese In those countnes, too, there was not a single year when scores dropped below the midpoint of the scale Figure 1 provides a global perspective, presenting the results of almost 1,000 representative surveys of SWB summanzed by Veenhoven (1993) When there was more than one survey in a nation, we computed the mean Only in two poor nations, India and the Dominican Republic, did the mean report fall below the neutral point of the SWB scale Veenhoven" s rating scale extends from 0 {most unhappy) to 10 {most happy) Most nations were above the neutral point, including less westernized nations such as Brazil, Egypt Japan South Korea, Mexico, and Thailand, 86% of the nations fell in the positive range' Yet most people are not elated most of the time—they are just mildly happy (Diener, Fujita, & Sandvik, 1994) The majonty of disadvantaged individuals also report positive levels of well-being For example, Andrews and Withey (1976) found that people in the lowest income group reponed positive SWB Persons with disabilities ranging from quadnplegia to blindness also report positive well-being (e g , Cameron, Titus, Kostin, & Kostin, 1973, Chwalisz, Diener, & Gallagher, 1988) Allman (1990) showed that the positive reports of SWB by individuals who use wheelchairs are supported by other measures of well-being such as the reports of fnends and a recall measure (disabled subjects recalled more positive than negative events in their lives) Silver (1982) found that respondents with spinal cord injuries were very unhappy immediately following their trauma, but by the 3rd week after their accidents, happiness was the strongest emotion for 58% of the subjects Hellmich (1995) reported that of individuals with extreme quadnplegid, 93% repon being glad to be alive, and 84% consider their life is average or above average.

### 1NC – Method

#### The role of the ballot is to determine if the aff’s a good idea—anything else is self-serving, arbitrary and begs the question of the rest of the debate. Evaluate consequences

Christopher A. Bracey 6, Associate Professor of Law, Associate Professor of African & African American Studies, Washington University in St. Louis, September, Southern California Law Review, 79 S. Cal. L. Rev. 1231, p. 1318

Second, reducing conversation on race matters to an ideological contest allows opponents to elide inquiry into whether the results of a particular preference policy are desirable. Policy positions masquerading as principled ideological stances create the impression that a racial policy is not simply a choice among available alternatives, but the embodiment of some higher moral principle. Thus, the "principle" becomes an end in itself, without reference to outcomes. Consider the prevailing view of colorblindness in constitutional discourse. Colorblindness has come to be understood as the embodiment of what is morally just, independent of its actual effect upon the lives of racial minorities. This explains Justice Thomas's belief in the "moral and constitutional equivalence" between Jim Crow laws and race preferences, and his tragic assertion that "Government cannot make us equal [but] can only recognize, respect, and protect us as equal before the law." [281](http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/document?_m=cd9713b340d60abd42c2b34c36d8ef95&_docnum=9&wchp=dGLbVzz-zSkVA&_md5=9645fa92f5740655bdc1c9ae7c82b328) For Thomas, there is no meaningful difference between laws designed to entrench racial subordination and those designed to alleviate conditions of oppression. Critics may point out that colorblindness in practice has the effect of entrenching existing racial disparities in health, wealth, and society. But in framing the debate in purely ideological terms, opponents are able to avoid the contentious issue of outcomes and make viability determinations based exclusively on whether racially progressive measures exude fidelity to the ideological principle of colorblindness. Meaningful policy debate is replaced by ideological exchange, which further exacerbates hostilities and deepens the cycle of resentment.

#### Simulation isn’t absolute and people’s opinions can be changed in spite of media influence

Robinson, political theorist and activist, ‘04

(Andrew, “Baudrillard, Zizek and Laclau on "common sense" - a critique,” http://andyrobinsontheoryblog.blogspot.com/2004/11/baudrillard-zizek-and-laclau-on-common.html)

Baudrillard tends to conflate existing dominant beliefs with thought and meaning per se. As a result, he leaves it impossible to critique dominant ideas in a meaningful way. For instance, he poses political problems in terms of "resistance to the social", **with the social in general being conflated with the EXISTING social system** (SSM 41); **ditto on the existing sign system**, which Baudrillard identifies with meaning per se. In such cases, Baudrillard misses the whole question of countercultural practices and the creation of alternative hegemonies.

Baudrillard's conflation of meaning per se with dominant beliefs leads to a refusal to countenance the possibility of transforming mass beliefs. Raising the cultural level of the masses, Baudrillard claims, is "Nonsense" because the masses, who want spectacle rather than meaning, are resistant to "rational communication" (SSM 10). An "autonomous change in consciousness" by the masses, Baudrillard tells us, is a "glaring impossibility" (SSM 30) - **though he never tells us how he deduces this.** Furthermore, he also claims that people who try to raise consciousness, liberate the unconscious or promote subjectivity "are acting in accordance with the system" (SSM 109). **This anathematisation is a result of Baudrillard's strange claim that the system's logic is based on total inclusion and speech!** It is on this basis that Baudrillard rejects argument based on empirical claims and locates truth outside such claims (SSM 121-2).

From the second pole of his contradictory argument about the masses, which portrays them as de facto agents engaging in resistance, defiance and so on, Baudrillard wants to draw a politics starting from the refusal of meaning (SSM 15), and from the contradictory combination of the two he draws his model of hyperconformity as annulling control (SSM 30-3). **He can't deal with the contradiction, especially since he uses terms which imply consciousness** - such as ruse and offensive practice - **when he admits the object of such terms is acting unknowingly** (SSM 43). Indeed, **he actually writes as if one can UNKNOWINGLY carry out a CONSCIOUS act** (SSM 42). This is sinister, reproducing the Stalinist idea of objective alignment - especially when used against Baudrillard's theoretical rivals (SSM 123).

Further, it is not clear from where he is deducing his idea **that one can destroy a system by pushing its logic to the extreme** (SSM 46), which he sees as a resistance to demands to participate (SSM 106-8). There are a few cases of the letter of the law being used to subvert its implementation, such as go-slows at work; these, however, are rooted in concrete practices elsewhere. There are also a few cases of hyperconformity disrupting official projects - for instance, the disastrous effects of Chinese peasants' literal reading of Maoist imperatives to (eg.) kill all birds. **These, however,** did not actually LIBERATE anyone or DESTROY the system; and most hyperconformity **simply produces a** more oppressive variant **on the system** - for instance, hyperconformist racism produces genocide. He also never sets out the stakes of the conflict between the masses and society or the effects of the masses' victories, though he vaguely links these to the (unspecified) goals of radical critics (SSM 49). Indeed, he uses the opt-out that our present epistemology prevents us knowing what possibilities would be offered by the system's destruction (SSM 52). Furthermore, **to be a resistance, there would have to be an** AGENT CHOOSING to be an object.

Baudrillard's sectarianism is clearly shown by his belief that popular rethinking of ideas is always a "misappropriation" or "radical distortion" rather than an improvement (SSM 8). He also engages in a highly essentialist attack on popular ethics, representing the stress on real practices and small images in popular religion as "degraded", banal and profane, a way of "refusing the categorical imperative of morality and faith", as well as of meaning, because it stresses immediacy in the world (SSM 7-8). Popular ethics, as Hoggart, Scott and others show, is far more than a mere refusal, and its rejection of the transcendentalism of the intellectual allies of dominant strata is hardly evidence that they are degraded, banal or anti-ethical. Furthermore, on an empirical level, fatalism DOES occur in popular ethics, contrary to Baudrillard's claims.

The problem is further complicated by Baudrillard's vague claim that something passes between the masses and terrorism (SSM 52-3), which seems to imply that isolated terrorist acts can somehow transform overnight the entire structure of meaning by rendering representation impossible and meanings reversible (SSM 54, 116), and which is also based on a definition of terrorism which is so restricted that it rules out virtually all actual "terrorists" and which Baudrillard admits (116) does not fit the identities of the Baader-Meinhof group, the one example he gives. His politics results directly from the artificial grimness of his analysis of popular beliefs, since it involves a radical subjectlessness and a random blow against victims who are punished for being nothing (SSM 56-7). Like Zizek, **he calls for the suicidal destruction of one's own perspective** (SSM 69-70), and denounces everything short of this as strengthening the system (SSM 72). Furthermore, his model of social change, which rests on the inevitability of implosive catastrophe (SSM 61), **has no room for any human intervention.** It simply assumes that another reality lies beyond our own perspective which can be reached in this way, but which is presently blocked by our way of thinking (SSM 104). Baudrillard substitutes "logical exacerbation" and "catastrophic revolution" for alternatives (SSM 106), and locates the frontier of struggle at the level of "production of truth" (SSM 123). The progressive side of this struggle seems to involve unknowability and fascination.

**The lack of alternatives seriously blunts Baudrillard's critical force, and can even lead to conservative positions, such as** portraying manipulation **of the media** as better than pursuing truth (GW 46).

#### Their alt does nothing to change common-sense understanding of reality

Robinson, political theorist and activist, ‘04

(Andrew, “Baudrillard, Zizek and Laclau on "common sense" - a critique,” http://andyrobinsontheoryblog.blogspot.com/2004/11/baudrillard-zizek-and-laclau-on-common.html)

Gramsci's work is an outstanding example of this. For Gramsci, philosophy and politics are not the sole preserve of specialists; everyone engages in philosophical activity since everyone holds some conception of the world and life which underlies their practice, and everyone engages in politics since everyone's practical activity promotes some ways of thinking and acting over others. Everyone is also on some level an ethicist, a scientist, an aesthete and so on. Gramsci calls the conception or conceptions of the world which presently occur in everyday life "**common sense**". It is important to treat these everyday worldviews with respect, and not to leave them in the state of voicelessness to which social inequality often consigns them. However, theorists should not automatically endorse these views, which are often confused, contradictory, manipulable, neophobe, and prejudiced. Instead, one needs a CRITIQUE and a critical practice, similar to the critique of a particular theorist's philosophy but directed against common sense instead. This critique should be taken to the masses by "organic intellectuals", who should aim to encourage more critical and coherent beliefs through a political, cultural and pedagogic practice drawing on immanently critical elements within common sense itself. The critique of common sense is for Gramsci the main goal of political and philosophical theory - MORE important in terms of its social relevance than the critique of specialist philosophers.

A similar project can be detected running through the work of many other critical theorists in the period from the 1920s to the 1970s. Barthes, Benjamin, Goffman, Hoggart, Krauss, Marcuse, McLuhan, Negri, Reich, Sartre and Vaneigem, to mention only the a few, embarked on an analysis and critique of everyday beliefs, alignments and practices as part of their diverse theoretical projects.

It is my contention, however, that **this concern has abated substantially** since about the 1980s, and that it is far less common in contemporary political theory. To be sure, a few writers, such as Foucault and Deleuze, still take up these kinds of concerns to some extent. Many recent theorists, however, have moved away from the critique of common sense and the analysis of everyday beliefs, often returning to a purely metaphysical type of theorising. Their politics has similarly moved away from projects of overcoming common sense and towards a faith in the immediate effectiveness of purely INDIVIDUAL acts, pragmatic politics, **or, in a few cases,** waiting for a nihilistic catastrophe. While transgressive acts may have some value in shaping individual identities and constituting countercultural group identities, **they are unlikely to** transform POPULAR beliefs unless they can find a way to bypass the pervasive processes of labelling **transgression as abnormal, immoral or unnatural**. Similarly, it is unlikely that any transformative event, or social reforms with wide-ranging effects, can occur without a prior basis in everyday worldviews, which is unlikely unless common sense can be overcome.

This paper focuses on three theorists who I feel demonstrate this tendency particularly strongly: Slavoj Zizek, Ernesto Laclau (including his collaborations with Chantal Mouffe), and Jean Baudrillard (excluding his early, Barthesian-inspired work). I shall critique each of these thinkers in relation to how they deduce or describe everyday beliefs, the analysis they offer of these beliefs, and how their transformative strategy relates to common sense.

BAUDRILLARD - COMMON SENSE .

The work of Jean Baudrillard, examined over time, shows within one body of work the pattern I am suggesting is affecting contemporary thought as a whole. In his early work, especially The Consumer Society, written in 1970, Baudrillard provides an intriguing account of how everyday perceptions and actions may be influenced, constructed or manipulated by a variety of processes which substitute SIGNS of social phenomena for their actuality and which produce a new, generalised oppression based on consumption as a process of production of sign-value. This insightful approach still shines through from time to time in Baudrillard's work - for instance, in some of his discussions of simulation in the Gulf War. On the whole, however, his recent work is set on a different trajectory, away from this kind of structural discourse analysis and towards an abstract set of asserted claims of dubious theoretical status.

His short **essays on the masses are** particularly problematic **in this regard**. Unlike his earlier work, Baudrillard makes little effort to examine the discursive character of mass subjectivity in essays like "In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities", instead deducing mass alignments from his own, prior assumptions about the nature of society. His basic project - to analyse mass indifference without resorting to ideas of alienation and failure (13) - is valid; but his **means of pursuing it is highly problematic.**

Baudrillard takes a contradictory position on common sense which runs to the roots of his method. On the one hand, he poses as offering an approach which **annihilates the existing system of meaning**, and he attacks it constantly. On the other, several of his **most important concepts**, such as "the masses" and "the social", **are plucked** straight from everyday usage, with their **contradictions intact**. Baudrillard makes no attempt to define these concepts and, indeed, plays constantly with their contradictory usages. This can lead to confusion, as for instance with Baudrillard's indecisiveness over whether peasants are a part of the masses or not. Indeed, **it is not even clear whether the masses exist or not.** Defending his use of the concept, Baudrillard claims he is merely prowling round acritical notions to achieve theoretical effects (SSM 4). It is a leitmotif not a concept (SSM 4) **and has nothing to do with any real body of people (**SSM 5), Baudrillard tells us; "statistics and surveys" are a "ritual" with "no real object", and the masses are constructed by them through circular signals (SSM 31-2). The masses "don't exist", they are merely the shadow cast by power, he says (SSM 48). This implies that the concept of "masses" is a purely discursive construct with no relation to the people who fill in surveys or, if it relates to them, which constructs them entirely.

but **he uses the concept** as if the "masses" ARE a real, more-or-less autonomous group who act and even have strategies. The masses are a group of people with a specific status, he tells us elsewhere (SSM 5). Throughout his account, **the masses are a "they",** who are a stratum (albeit an opaque and blind one - 21), have existential conditions (eg. atomisation)and social effects (eg. causing a vaccuum in society - 6). When he tries to resolve this contradiction, he does so via further contradictions: **the silent majority is an IMAGINARY referent,** but it exists; **the masses exist statistically** **but not socially;** they only exist via simulation (SSM 20). His theory is therefore confused about its relationship to common sense at the very level of his own relationship to language. If surveys construct the masses, the masses cannot be a group with their own dynamics, outside the official discourse; besides, surveys require a "matter" so to speak which is "worked" by them but autonomous of them.