## 1

### TL

#### Capitalism has far surpassed your concept of labor – transferring into the final stage of development, far beyond all exhortations to be different, to be oneself and drink Pepsi®. The affirmative’s optimism of strike’s usefulness is forever misplaced and re-invested into systems of capitalism.

Cline ’11 (Alex Cline, International Journal of Baudrillard Studies, July 2011, "Statues Of Commodus – Death and Simulation in the Work of Jean Baudrillard," <https://baudrillardstudies.ubishops.ca/statues-of-commodus-death-and-simulation-in-the-work-of-jean-baudrillard/>, GS)

Jean Baudrillard is widely considered to be one of the first post-Marxist philosophers and a man who deeply criticized the conservatism of political economy (see also Coulter, 2009). He asserted that “Work is a process of destruction as well as of “production,” and in this way work is symbolic” ([1973] 1975:99). The product, as a simulated resource, became commonplace in the ‘counterfeit’ crafts of the Renaissance, as Baudrillard asserts, but was first found in the manufactured relics of the Scholastic age and the arcane trinkets of Antiquity. The project of modernity was to spread the logic of production and consumption around the globe, but the technologies of industry and media rendered this process relatively complete in a matter of centuries. The mass product, deprived of all aura or specificity, abounded in the productive mayhem of the Twentieth Century. By the end of the century, however, intellectuals were beginning to observe “capital to such a degree of accumulation that it becomes an image” (Debord). According to Baudrillard: “this spectacle, which is at once that of the death throes and the apogee of capital, surpasses by far that of the commodity described by the situationists. This spectacle is our essential force” ([1981] 1994:101). While Debord and others deserved respect for realizing the increasingly semiotic nature of Capital, they fell short by situating their analysis in the realm of political economy. Baudrillard prefers to see semio-capital not as a product of an economic base, but as a more complex form of symbolic exchange, of the sort that Marcel Mauss and other sociologists describe in pre-capitalist economies. The philosopher asserts that in our contemporary civilization as in most cultures throughout history, the material values of commodities are largely unimportant, when compared to their symbolic and structural values.

The innovation of the first order of simulation was the possibility of the manufacture of an object that would “involve social relations and social power” ([1976] 1993:52); it was the potential for the manipulation of exchange value through artifice. In the cultural milieu of 15th Century Italy and later Europe, with the blessing of the Church, such a procedure became generalized. The innovation of the second order was the extension, through industrial labor and wages, of the exchange of simulated products to entire populations. Labor and its resultant processes proved essential to the production of contemporary identity; “death, loss and absence are inscribed in it through this dispossession of the subject, this loss of the subject and the object in the scansion of the exchange ([1973] 1975:99). This process of reproduction was reinforced by the mainstream revolutionary movements of modernity, such as Marxism and Anarcho-Syndicalism, which held firm to the necessity of labor under different conditions. Yet the nature of the third order of simulation is yet more spectacular, since it allows for domination at the metaphysical level. It ensures that the worker remains enamored with the idea of products, even if they are not actually producing anything and are too poor to consume anything. As pure code, its logic ensures continued domination: “social control by means of the end is replaced with social control by means of prediction, simulation, programmed anticipation and indeterminate mutation…” ([1976] 1993:60). Stoppages, strikes, even revolutions no longer matter as long as the logic of production and consumption remains the same; “although the concept of non-labor can thus be fantasized as the abolition of political economy, it is bound to fall back into the sphere of political economy as the sign, and only the sign, of its abolition” ([1973] 1975:41).

The Imperial-Capital Totality has allowed for the production of digital watches and highways, quantum theory and the internet. Our creativity has allowed for the production of self-regulating, virtually self-aware machines; has provided for the complete colonization, for the complete uniformity and regulation, of our conceptions of space and time. Our labor power is irrelevant, provided we reproduce social relations; it is impossible to find a form of meaning that has not itself been produced. Even our boredom becomes used against us, perpetuated by the development of fashion, the planned obsolescence of the omnipotent product. Commoditus, did not just alter the Roman economy, but set about renaming everything after himself, perverting the myths of Hercules to make them about his own exploits. As Baudrillard notes: “we are all victims of production become spectacle, of the aesthetic enjoyment, of delirious production and reproduction, and we are not about to turn our backs on it, for in every spectacle there is the immanence of catastrophe. Today we have made the vertigo of politics that Benjamin denounces in fascism, its perverse aesthetic enjoyment, into the experience of production at the level of the general system.” ([1976] 1993:186).

We have built a dead world, a meaningless abandon of hyperreal sensations. Yet resistance is still possible. In ‘On Nihilism’, perhaps the closest thing Baudrillard has to a political manifesto, he observes the metaphysical structural revolutions of the nineteenth century, which entailed “the destruction of appearances in the service of meaning”, and of the late twentieth century, which resulted in “the immense process of the destruction of meaning.” Popular struggles have generally remained behind the times; the rise of the proletariat was confounded by conceptions of national history and identity, by commodities and the occlusion of racial, ethnic and sexual oppressions. The biggest barrier, however, came in the form of Marxism: “Marx objectified the convulsion of a  social order, its current subversion, the speech of life and death, the liberator of  the very movement, in a long-term dialectical revolution, in a spiraling finality that was  only the endless screw of political economy” ([1973] 1975:163-64). The objective destruction of reality by capital provided for objective conceptions of revolution that ignored subjectivity and desire, agency and hierarchy.

#### The affirmative is caught in an exaltation of use-value that perpetuates capitalism

Baudrillard 76 (Jean, Prof of Phil at EGS, “When Bataille Attacked the Metaphysical Principle of Economy, trans David Miller)  
The central idea is that the economy which governs our societies results from a misappropriation of the fundamental human principle, which is a solar principle of expenditure. Bataille's thought goes, beyond proper political economy (which in essence is regulated through exchange value), straight to **the metaphysical principle of economy**. Bataille's target **is utility**, in its root. Utility is, of course, an apparently positive principle of capital: accumulation, investment, depreciation, etc. But in fact it is, on Bataille's account, **a** principle of **powerless**ness, an utter **inability to expend**. Given that all previous societies knew how to expend, this is, an unbelievable deficiency : it cuts the human being off from all possible sovereignty. All economics are founded on that which no longer can, no longer knows how to expend itself, on that which is incapable of becoming the stake of a sacrifice. It is therefore entirely residual, it is a limited social fact; and it is against economy as a limited social fact that Bataille wants to raise expenditure, death, and sacrifice as total social facts--such is the principle of general economy. The principle of utility (use value) blends with the bourgeoisie, with this capitalist class whose definition for Bataille (contrary to Marx) is negative: it no longer knows how to expend. Similarly, **the crisis of capital**, its increasing mortality **and its** immanent **death throes**, **are not bound**, as in the work of Marx, **to** a history, to **dialectical reversals**, **but to** this fundamental law of **the inability to expend**, **which give capital over to** the cancer of production and **unlimited reproduction**. There is no principle of revolution in Bataille's work: "**The terror of revolutions** has only done more and more (de mieux en mieux) to **subordinate human energy to industry**." There is only a principle of sacrifice-the principle of sovereignty, whose diversion by the bourgeoisie and capital causes all human history to pass from sacred tragedy to the comedy of utility. This critique is a non-Marxist critique, an aristocratic critique; because it aims at utility, at economic finality as the axiom of capitalist society. **The Marxist critique is only a** critique of capital, a critique coming from the heart of the middle and petit bourgeois classes, for which Marxism has served for a century as a latent ideology: a **critique of exchange value**, **but an exaltation of use value**-and thus a critique, at the same time, **of what** **made the** almost delirious **greatness of capital**, the secular remains of its religious quality: investment at any price, even at the cost of use value. The Marxist seeks a good use of economy. **Marxism is** therefore only a limited petit bourgeois critique, **one more step in the banalization of life toward the** "**good use**" **of the social**! Bataille, to the contrary, sweeps away all this slave dialectic from an aristocratic point of view, that of the master struggling with his death. One can accuse this perspective of being pre or post-Marxist. At any rate, Marxism is only the disenchanted horizon of capital-all that precedes or follows it is more radical than it is. What remains uncertain in the work of Bataille (but without a doubt this uncertainty cannot be alleviated), is to know whether the economy (capital), which is counterbalanced on absurd, but never useless, never sacrificial expenditures (wars, waste . ..), is nevertheless shot through with a sacrificial dynamic. Is political economy at bottom only a frustrated avatar of the single great cosmic law of expenditure? Is the entire history of capital only an immense detour toward its own catastrophe, toward its own sacrificial end? If this is so, it is because, in the end, one cannot not expend. A longer spiral perhaps drags capital beyond economy, toward a destruction of its own values; the alternative is that we are stuck forever" in this denial of the sacred, in the vertigo of supply, which signifies the rupture of alliance (of symbolic exchange in primitive societies) and of sovereignty. Bataille would have been impassioned by the present evolution of **capital in this era of floating currencies**, of values seeking their own level (which is not their transmutation), and the drift of finalities (which is neither sovereign uselessness nor the absurd gratuitousness of laughter and death). But his concept of expenditure would have permitted only a limited analysis : it is still too economic, too much the flip side of accumulation, as transgression is too close to the inverse figure ofprohibition.4 In an order which **is** no longer that of utility, but **an aleatory order of value**, pure expenditure, while retaining the romantic charm of turning the economic inside out, is no longer sufficient for radical defiance -it shatters the mirror of market value, but is powerless against the shifting mirror of structural value. Bataille founds his general economy on a "solar economy" without reciprocal exchange, on the unilateral gift that the sun makes of its energy : a cosmogony of expenditure, which he deploys in a religious and political anthropology . But Bataille has misread Mauss: the unilateral gift does not exist. This is not the law of the universe. He who has so well explored the human sacrifice of the Aztecs should have known as they did that the sun gives nothing, it is necessary to nourish it continually with human blood in order that it shine. It is necessary to challenge the gods through sacrifice in order that they respond with profusion. In other words, the root of sacrifice and of general economy is never pure and simple expenditure-or whatever drive [pulsion] of excess that supposedly comes to us from nature-but is an incessant process of challenge [Wfi]. The "excess of energy" does not come from the sun (from nature) but from a continual higher bidding in exchange-the symbolic process that can be found in the work of Mauss, not that of the gift (that is the naturalist mystique into which Bataille falls), but that of the counter-gift . This is the single truly symbolic process, which in fact implies death as a kind of maximal excess-but not as individual ecstasy, always as the maximal principle of social exchange. In this sense, one can reproach Bataille for having "naturalized" Mauss (but in a metaphysical spiral so prodigious that the reproach is not really one), and for having made symbolic exchange a kind of natural function of prodigality, at once hyper-religious in its gratuitousness and much too close still, a contrario, to the principle of utility and to the economic order that it exhausts in transgression without ever leaving behind. It is "in the glory of death" [d hauteur de mort] that one rediscovers Bataille, and the real question posed remains: "How is it that all men have encountered the need and felt the obligation to kill living beings ritually? For lack of having known how to respond, all men have remained in ignorance of that which they are." There is an answer to this question beneath the text, in all the interstices of Bataille's text, but in my opinion not in the notion of expenditure, nor in this kind of anthropological reconstruction that he tries to establish from the "objective" data of his day: Marxism, biology, sociology, ethnology, political economy, the objective potential of which he tries to bring together nevertheless, in a perspective which is neither exactly a genealogy, nor a natural history, nor a Hegelian totality, but a bit of all that. But the sacred imperative is flawless in its mythic assertion, and the will to teach is continually breached by Bataille's dazzling vision, by a "subject of knowledge" always "at the boiling point." The consequence of this is that even analytic or documentary considerations have that mythic force which constitutes the sole-sacrificial-force of writing.

#### The subversiveness of a strategy of resistance can only be effective if it begins with the object and deconstructing the metaphysics of value. **Baudrillard 1** (professor of phil at EGS, Jean Baudrillard: Selected Writings, pg. 75//shree)

This is why use-value fetishism is indeed more profound, more “mysterious” than the fetishism of exchange value. The mystery of exchange value and the commodity can be unmasked, relatively —it has been since Marx — and raised to consciousness as a social relation. But value in the case of use value is enveloped in total mystery, for it is grounded anthropologically in the (self-) “evidence” of a naturalness, in an unsurpassable original reference. This is where we discover the real “theology” of value — in the order of finalities: in the “ideal” relation of equivalence, harmony, economy and equilibrium that the concept of utility implies. It operates at all levels: between man and nature, man and objects, man and his body, the self and others. Value becomes absolutely self-evident, la chose la plus simple. Here the mystery and cunning (of history and of reason) are at their most profound and tenacious. If the system of use value is produced by the system of ex­change value as its own ideology — if use value has no autonomy, if it is only the satellite and alibi of exchange value, though system­atically combining with it in the framework of political economy —then it is no longer possible to posit use value as an alternative to exchange value. Nor, therefore, is it possible to posit the “restitution” of use value, at the end of political economy, under the sign of the “liberation of needs” and the “administration of things” as a revolu­tionary perspective. Every revolutionary perspective today stands or falls on its ability to reinterrogate radically the repressive, reductive, rationalizing meta­physic of utility. All critical theory depends on the analysis of the object form.’0 This has been absent from Marxist analysis. With all the political and ideological consequences that this implies, the result has been that all illusions converged on use value, idealized by oppos­ition to exchange value, when it was in fact only the latter’s natur­alized form.

#### Fear of cyberattacks creates global resilience networks built around Orientalist behavior modification

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This is not the place for a detailed examination of the political economy of "postsocialist" nations (Lane 2014). In the USSR, the orgy of privatization and the chaos of shocktherapy marketization after 1991 have been followed under Putin by a new period of nationalization, in which oligarchic capitalists operate under supervision of, and overlap with, state elites in a context of market exchange (Worth 2005; Pirani 2010; Dzarasov 2014; Sakwa 2014). In the more complex case of the People's Republic of China, the party apparatus has maintained control of some "commanding heights" of the economy, even as other domains are handed over to private ownership, including both foreign and domestic investors. Some commentators see China's arrangements as tantamount to full subsumption with the world market (Li 2009; HartLandsberg 2013); others consider that a "left turn" from within the party apparatus could reestablish a socialist project (Amin 2013). At the moment, the latter possibility seems remote. In Russia, China, and other postsocialist countries, the wage organizes production, the responsibilities of the state for provision of public services have typically been diminished, and there are vast income gulfs between workers in and owners of the means of production. Corruption is often rife. Political elites are either identical with, entangled in, or dependent on capital ownership, and although these elites must in various ways manage, mobilize, and hegemonize public opinion, their fractions define the agenda of policy decisions, and perhaps especially foreign policy decisions. Thus **discussions of international relations in terms of the** intentions or desires of "China" or "Russia" - **as**, of course, of **the "United States," "Canada," "Ukraine," "Saudi Arabia," or any other capitalist nation - must be understood as** shorthand metonymic mystification of ruling-class power**.** Cyberwar has therefore emerged as a topic of global concern at a moment when the teleological certainties of Marxism seem broken or reduced to cruel caricature. This is not a coincidence. As we will argue, **the** emergence of cybernetics from the military-industrial complex **of the United States** at the end of the Second Word War **was an important part of that nation's ascent as a new imperial leader for the** capitalist **system. Computers and networks**, both in their military and economic applications, **played an important role in eventual U.S. victory** over the USSR **in the Cold** War. And their extension into **electronic commodities, industrial automation, supply-chain logistics, and financial trading** was a crucial part of the globalization in which a reinvigorated capitalism from 1989 on disseminated itself around the planet, under the shelter of the global hegemon's **cruise missiles, smart weapons, and satellite intelligence. This** armed pacification of a world market **has**, however, **not had the finality many expected. Rather, it has generated new wars**, of two major types, both misnamed and ill defined but each a consequence of capital's global triumph over its socialist opponents.The "war on terror" is, of course, the conventional and ideologically laden name for the protracted sequence of conflicts set in motion when mujahideen, armed and financed by the United States and its Saudi Arabian ally to fight the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, turned on its imperial patron with the destruction of the World Trade Center in 2001. These conflicts, centered on the Middle East but **radiating across the planet**, include the **invasion and occupation of Afghanistan**; world-distributed terrorist attacks; and **counterterrorist operations** across Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Mali, Libya, and many other theaters. If the "war on terror" is sometimes colloquially used to include the U.S. invasion of Iraq, this craven acceptance of the spurious rationalizations offered by the Bush administration could be only retroactively justified, as U.S. occupation generated first both Sunni and Shia insurgency and later, in its aftermath, the rise of ISIS. **This so-called war on terror interpenetrates other regional conflicts,** such as those in Kashmir between India and Pakistan, Russian actions in Chechnya, and Saudi Arabia's intensifying clashes with Iran in Yemen and elsewhere**, and also overlaps with Israel's constant operations against Palestinians, wars with neighbors, and determination to maintain** its regional **monopoly of nuclear weapons.** It is not our aim here to map the noxious vectors of the "war on terror," only to highlight how **its** mutating fronts **have been a bleeding edge for the development and use of cyberweaponry**, **in** counterinsurgency **operations, domestic** surveillance**, and** digital strikes

#### When confronted with the ethical injunction of the aff, respond with “I would prefer not to”—vote neg on presumption

Baudrillard 98 (Jean Baudrillard, “Present Considerations: The Uncertainty of All Value Systems” xx-xx-1998, GS)

It’s also the parody of political emancipation. Is capitalism for you the cold monster Simone Weil referred to when speaking of the State? Baudrillard: It’s a monster which is standing social liberation on its head. It’s capital now that’s emancipating itself from the workers! It’s parents who are liberating them­selves from their children! End of the Oedipus complex, end of the class struggle, in whose shade everything worked so well. All the flows are being reversed. The talk was all of freedom, of emancipation, of transforming as much fatality as possi­ble into liberty. Today, it’s evident that the great wave of liberation is simply the best way of giving the slaves back a bogus power arid freedom. Forced interaction: the masses now intervene directly in the event through the ratings and all the other immediate feedback devices: they’ve become interactive! And in opinion polls we’re all involved statistically: forced complicity. In any case, we’ve been interactive for a long time, like it or not, through all the automatic response systems we’re enslaved to. And the interactivity we’re being offered will never – by a long chalk – be the equal of the interactivity we already suffer: the col­lective interpassivity which the other form merely prolongs with information and communications technologies. This is why it’s impossible, in the interactive sphere, to raise the problem of free­dom and responsibility. People are almost amazed that they have children (are children ever amazed that they have parents?). They’re amazed at being responsible for them, as at many other things. They’re amazed at having to take charge of their own lives. They haven’t the heart for it any more; they’ve no convictions. In pre­sent conditions, they’re even amazed at having a body. There’s no longer any real basis for all that. It no longer imposes itself on the imagination or on consciousness as a value, nor even on the unconscious, as a fantasy. In this context, any responsi­bility or appeal to responsibility is surrealistic. They might just as well be amazed at having to seek work – as they might at being relay stations for lots of meaningless networks, the involuntary actors in a general interactive comedy – the targets for demands and questions for which they are merely the automatic answering machines. Petit: Are they amazed, at least, that they live in silent collusion with the powers that be? Baudrillard: Not even that, since they’re in collusion with a power which, strictly speak­ing, no longer even exists, which is even worse. Which is simultaneously invested and disinvested by everyone, like a revolving stage or a zero-sum variable geom­etry. Everyone plays along in the comedy of power (as in many others besides: the comedy of the social or of culture). But I retain the hope that there’s a double game going on here, both individual and collective. One ought to be able to pre­vent this situation from perpetuating itself, to disconnect it, break down the consensual sequence. But one can hardly have any illusions, either about the awareness generated or about revolt following. In a history in progress, you cre­ate an event if you anticipate, if you create more rapid conditions of development, and hence an explosive differential. In an involutive curve like ours, by attempting to speed up or correct the system you contribute to the involution. We’re trapped. We’re part of the automatic writing of the system. But there are uncon­scious forms of social upheaval and creeping revolt against this forced participation we’ve been speaking of. For example, there has gradually emerged recently into popular consciousness (unconsciousness) the (old, ’68) idea that consumption is a con. Petit: The consumer has supplanted the citizen, then. Hence, as you noted in your book of 1970,[2](https://baudrillardstudies.ubishops.ca/present-considerations-the-uncertainty-of-all-value-systems/#2) the intense guilt which attaches to this new style of hedonis­tic behaviour. Baudrillard: Even in the reptilian brain of the grass-roots consumer, it’s become clear, when faced with power’s economic ultimatum – consume, consume, or the machine will grind to a halt – that consumers have become hostages, guinea pigs. After the general mobilization of the worker, then the soldier, then the citizen in universal suffrage (vote any Way you like, but vote!), we now have the mobilization of the consumer. And, with it, new latent forms of resistance when those from whom one wishes to extort need, expenditure as a social obligation – having extorted speech, votes, sex and happiness from them – realize what, “embolic” power they have in relation to the system: quite simply to consume less – not out of conscientious objection, or even from political resolve, but as a self-defence reflex. Here’ again, an agonizing revision of the watchwords of modernity is in prospect – the watchwords of growth and welfare. It’s a revisionism, this refusal to consume, a social treason in the eyes of the dominant free-market liberalism. A new class struggle is beginning” (if the herd doesn’t want to graze, how is one to make one’s butter?) Petit: There is perhaps a new political economy to bring about. Reversibility can also take the form of the re-founding of the economic sphere. I’m thinking of the contaminated blood affair, mad cows, asbestos… Baudrillard: Is this still political economy? I think the two terms, the economic and the political, have mingled their determinations and, so to speak, imploded into one another. We’re in the postscript of a history or a political economy in which we’re dealing with the waste products of two centuries of capital and production, includ­ing human waste. For thirty years or more we’ve been engaged in the management of waste, in a politics and an economy of dejection – which clearly involves a cer­tain abjection – in an interminable enterprise of recycling, cleansing and laundering, and this, once again, includes human material. And not only in its social dimension, but in the reprocessing of the genetic capital of the species. The whole system of modernity has embarked upon repentance and assumed a victim’s perspective, as though we were dealing with a historical catastrophe of the human race that already existed, had already occurred, and the recycling of that catastro­phe. We’re all impersonal victims of this virtual catastrophe, this backfiring of capital and history, from which we re-emerge as its symptoms and its multiple waste products. Hence the agonizing revision of modernity in which we’re engaged, excluded from ourselves by the unconditional liberation of all our desires. In this sense, we’re in a fundamentally revisionist society. The whole century is currently in mourning for, and repenting, all the libera­tions it has desired and accommodated, all the bounds it has burst – everything it was enslaved to and is now orphaned by. All the gains of modernity and liberation in recession – sex, tobacco, alcohol, speed, abortions: activities which are now clan­destine, doomed to prohibition and apartheid, refused a residence permit or cloistered in reserves. A general revisionist movement and a tide now flowing the other way – for future generations, this will all doubtless form part of what they never knew (happiness or hell!) For us, at least, those things still had the time to exist. But with the precession of the prohibition, they will disappear from circula­tion without even having appeared. Similarly, with all the ideals of modernity, the ideals of the Enlightenment, of happiness, well-being and freedom, their technical realization amounts to a violent desublimation. All that was liberated is currently being liquidated. Petit: Can’t one, then, liberate oneself from liberation? Baudrillard: The paradox of liberation is that the people liberated are never the ones you think: children, slaves, women or colonial peoples. It’s always the others liberating themselves from them, getting rid of them in the name of a principle of freedom and emancipation. Hence the dramatic concern of children to ensure that parents don’t stop being parents, or at least that they do so as late as possible. Hence the collective concern to beg the State not to stop being the State, to force it to take on its role, whereas it’s constantly trying to relinquish that role – and with good reason. The State is constantly “liberating” the citizens, urging them to look after themselves – something they generally don’t want to do at all. In this sense, we’re all potential Bartlebys: “I would prefer not to” Be free! Be responsible! Take responsibility for yourself! – “I would prefer not to”. Preferring not to, rather than willing something (Philippe Lançon, Libération). Preferring not to any more. Not to run any more, or compete, or consume, and not, at any price, to be free. This is all part of the pattern of a repentance of modernity, of a subtle indifference which senses the dangers of a responsibility and an emancipation which are too good to be true. Hence the currently triumphant sentimental, familial, political and moral revisionism, which can take on the more violent aspect of a “reac­tionary” hatred of oneself or others, the product of the disillusionment that follows liberatory violence. This opposite tide, this “regressive” resublimation, is the con­temporary form – and, so to speak, the consequence – of the repressive desublimation analysed by Marcuse. Decidedly, freedom isn’t simple, and liberation even less so.

## Case

### 42.6k

#### 1. First ev they read about inequality is a buzzfeed article about squidgame – the card does not say that the public is ready to fight capitalism, rather that the public is ready to watch international shows: this can be turned as part of a broader argument about the way they get information: they need Netflix to tell them that capitalism is bad. The impact is the depersonalization of violence: they view themselves as above the violence of inequality, not realizing that going to a high school that costs more than the average American house hold makes in a year is part of the way people settle their moral equilibriam: reading this affirmative settles Harvard-West lake’s moral equilibriam which allows them to continue the system of violent extraction that they support

#### AT Lingis

#### a) Ev just says a gap can lead to a marginalization of democracy but doesn’t describe a terminal

#### b) No impact to climate change was substantiated so a 1ar would be new – just says the rich may struggle to reverse but doesn’t prove anything

#### AT Greenhouse

#### a) this is just in the context of trade workers/unions, not all workers writ large – also no real terminal impact

#### AT Pope

#### a) is about social disunity not necessarily people earning less than one another but being disunited that would still exist in the aff because ppl like jeff bezos will still be much wealtheir than the avg person

#### b) Cribb cites alt causes such as political economic and religious divides which they cant resolve

#### AT Richter

#### a) doesn’t substantiate that economic decline really implicates war

#### b) the K turns this – structural violence perpetuates economic inequality

#### some more turns here

#### Unions don’t solve inequality – they’re too weak and tons of alt causes

Epstein 20 [Richard A. Epstein Peter and Kirsten Bedford Senior Fellow @ the Hoover Institution. "The Decline Of Unions Is Good News." https://www.hoover.org/research/decline-unions-good-news]

So what then could justify this inefficient provision? One common argument is that unions help reduce the level of income inequality by offering union members a high living wage, as seen in the golden age of the 1950s. But that argument misfires on several fronts. Those high union wages could not survive in the face of foreign competition or new nonunionized firms. The only way a union can provide gains for its members is to extract some fraction of the profits that firms enjoy when they hold monopoly positions.

When tariff barriers are lowered and domestic markets are deregulated, as with the airlines and telecommunications industries, the size of union gains go down. Thus the sharp decline in union membership from 35 percent in both 1945 and 1954 to about 15 percent in 1985 led to no substantial increase in the fraction of wealth earned by the top 10 percent of the economy during that period. However, the income share of the top ten percent rose to about 40 percent over the next 15 years as union membership fell to below 10 percent by 2000.

But don’t be fooled—that 5 percent change in union membership cannot drive widespread inequality for the entire population, which is also affected by a rise in the knowledge economy as well as a general aging of the population. The far more powerful distributive effects are likely to be those from nonunion workers whose job prospects within a given firm have been compromised by higher wages to union workers.

### Shutdowns

**The incessant productivity of hegemony is a drive toward its own destruction. American hegemonic power has surpassed the domain of being referentially related to any material reality and can now only identify with the image of its own destruction.**

**Pope 7**. Professor of Language at York University, Pope, “Baudrillard’s Simulacrum: Of War, Terror, and Obituaries,” October 2007, International Journal of Baudrillard Studies: Volume 4, Number 3

Many of the obituaries printed some variance of the following quote: “It is almost they who did it, but we who wanted it… Without this deep complicity, the event would not have had such repercussions”.17 Baudrillard **indexes all the disaster movies that have as part of their narratives an attack on the US, and often the World Trade Center itself.** Elsewhere Baudrillard notes that “**if the cohesion of our societies was in the past maintained by the ‘imaginary’ of progress, it is maintained today by the ‘imaginary’ of catastrophe**”.18 Slavoj Zizek alludes to Baudrillard’s argument in noting the “libidinal investment” we had in the attack: “That is the rationale of the often-mentioned association of the attacks with Hollywood disaster movies: **the unthinkable which happened was the object of fantasy**, so that, in a way, **America got what it fantasized about,** and that was the biggest surprise”.19 It is the “biggest surprise” because we do not expect to actually receive, directly, what we fantasize about, and when we are confronted with the core of our fantasy we can only experience it as traumatic. Simply put, our fantasy of terrorism was supposed to remain just that. (The “we” I am repeatedly using is that of a strange sort of “collectivity”: the atomized masses, of which we are all part of some of the time, and none of us all the time. The use of this shifter is intended to affect the shock of recognition, to the extent that is possible given the sort of collectivity indexed.) Though the obituaries implicitly suggested otherwise, Baudrillard was not saying that **on September 11**, 2001, the US got what it deserved, merely that **we cannot simply pretend as though we did not ourselves fantasize the “destruction of a power hegemonic to that degree**”.20 We can certainly try to rewrite the past – that is the very dynamism, after all, of hyperreality – but we can just as well resist this tendency in indexing our having fantasized “9/11” before it actually happened: In this scene, from Die Hard: With a Vengeance (Die Hard III), the Wall Street subway station has just been bombed. Covered in dust, panic-stricken executives run about in images that can now but recall those from lower Manhattan on September 11, 2001. Other executives take a spectatorial position to what is occurring beneath them: Centred in the action of the bomb blast the film cuts to an office that overlooks the scene with its nameless executives – who never become protagonists in the diegesis – and back to the action. A few seconds later we rejoin these executives, whom are now even eating popcorn in taking in this scene from behind the office window. One asks how many fire trucks can be counted, to which another says “you guys, you guys”, suggesting that their questioning is getting in the way of proper spectatorship. Die Hard not only partakes of the fantasy of terrorism, it does so in a reflexive manner. These executives, behind their window, clearly stand in for us, behind the screen. In front of these images we, like these executives, feign a blasé attitude (“it’s nothing we haven’t seen before”), while attentively absorbing them – along with popcorn. Part of the humour of Die Hard: with a Vengeance is the way it exaggerates the nonchalance New Yorkers have to threats of terrorism, but this indifference – and so the reflexivity of this film – was only made possible through the interminable media discourse about terrorism. Behind our blasé attitude, this film suggests, lies enjoyment (and, perhaps, the reason for seeing this film). **When someone** like Baudrillard **confronts us with our own enjoyment, we feign shock and horror**. It is almost a law: **those that come closest to articulating** – and so potentially dissolving – **the kernel of our enjoyment are the most vilified**. Baudrillard, however, simply makes more explicit that around which Hollywood has built countless narratives. Later in the film the arch-terrorist, impersonating a city engineer, comes to survey the damage, and remarks: “Holy toledo! Somebody had fun”. Indexing his own enjoyment, he is also, as the previous scene with the executives makes clear, indexing our own. (The police officer with whom he converses himself references the first attack on the World Trade Center: “You were probably at the World Trade’s. You know what that mess was”.) **Though the US administration might not ponder to any degree the enjoyment of terrorism, they do appreciate Hollywood’s story-telling abilities, routinely consulting them on likely terrorist targets and practices**. But what they are ultimately consulting, of course, is our enjoyment as intuited by various Hollywood functionaries. Despite the extremely few deaths attributed to terrorism, at times in the 1980s, Joseba Zulaika notes, “over 80 per cent of Americans regarded terrorism as an “extreme” danger. In April of 1986, a national survey showed that terrorism was “the number one concern” for Americans”.21 Feeding this fire and/or being fed from it, from 1989 to 1992, four years in which not a single person died from terrorism in the US, 1322 new book titles with the subject “terrorism” emerged.22 One could say, as Zulaika does, that **in producing the discourse of terrorism Americans effectively called it into being**. One would want to know why, however, the discourse was in the first place produced. If one is inclined to answer that it was produced because it was a very effective way to keep audiences captive long enough to sell them to advertisers, one would still want to know why it exerted such power of fascination for these audiences. I would suggest that Baudrillard allows for such an understanding in his discernment of the challenge opened by America, and the American production of this discourse is perhaps a kind of realization of the challenge it had placed to the rest of the world. **America fantasized its own destruction, because it had set up the challenge, the “dare” (as so many American kids say and play every Saturday night). It was only waiting to see who would answer** – and, in its millenarian spirit, when. It is probably not a stretch to say that **the US, and the rest of the Western world, shares a kind of global popular culture – shaped first by the challenge, then by the mass media** (though the challenge is to some extent only articulated through the mass media) – with the terrorists of September 11, 2001. Baudrillard does not suggest, however, that having shared such fantasies entails that we should now feel guilty. In Cool Memories V he writes that simply because we shared a kind of collective unconscious with the terrorists, “it is ridiculous to condemn the ‘collusion’ of the Unconscious with any political act whatever, and hence to submit it to a moral judgement”. To suggest otherwise, he continues, is to “dream of a politically correct Unconscious”.23 Baudrillard once wrote that America “is the only remaining primitive society”24, which drew some attention at the time, and likewise had some obituaries crying foul. For the most part these critics were not aware that such a designation is, for Baudrillard, generally a form of flattery, if it does indeed become here more problematical. Primitive societies are for Baudrillard of the order of symbolic exchange and reversibility, of the pact and the challenge rather than the contract. To some extent he sees this in America: **If you approach this society with the nuances of moral, aesthetic, or critical judgement, you will miss its originality, which comes precisely from its defying judgement and pulling off a prodigious confusion of effects. To side-step that confusion and excess is simply to evade the challenge it throws down to you**… as with dream elements, **you must accept the way they follow one another, even if it seems unintelligible**… The distinctions that are made elsewhere have little meaning here.25 In a way **America has no concern for values enshrined and elaborated upon in European cultures, instead operating in a kind of primitive, ritualistic society, epitomized through driving culture and the rules of the road**. At the same time, however, **the pornographic obscenity of American culture ensures the elision of any secret, any play beyond the materialized object. America is a culture of paradox**: on the one hand, **its affirmative thinking renders it as far from the reversible play of seduction and the challenge as possible, while**, on the other, **its “defying judgement” indexes a society enjoying its lack of referentiality. American culture seems most obviously concerned with securing reality (and hegemony), while on the other it basks in the implosion of (its) power**. This is perhaps a definition for utopia, and Baudrillard accordingly takes up America’s primitive challenge, attempting to render its meaninglessness not through moral, aesthetic, or critical judgement, but through accepting and working through its perennial claim of achieved utopia. Its endless concern to “vindicate itself”26 as such a utopia opens up a senseless challenge – that mistakes itself for reality – to which Baudrillard responds through his “radical thought”. In short, Baudrillard takes up America’s challenge through a form of intellectual terrorism, one which should be rigorously differentiated, of course, from the suicidal act. For Baudrillard, indeed, **the terrorist act was and is not the only possible response to globalization**. Against commodity value, that which treats everything as series of equivalences, Baudrillard turned to anthropology’s discernment of cultures where “things are never exchanged directly one for another”.27 “It was a question”, he wrote, “of attempting to strip the object – but not just the object – of its status as commodity, to restore to it an immediacy, a brute reality which would not have a price put on it”.28 At this point one would no longer be in the realm of the contract, but that of the pact, a “dual, collusive relation”, wherein “the terms are reversible”.29 He suggests that “[i]t is perhaps utopian to claim to pass beyond value, but it is an operative utopia, an attempt to conceive a more radical functioning of things”,30 and one, we might note, that did not necessarily partake of acts of terrorism. He suggests that **we have perhaps “always” been “in a dual morality”: “There might be said to be a moral sphere, that of commodity exchange, and an immoral sphere, that of play or gaming, where all that counts is the event of the game itself and the advent of shared rules**”,31 as in seduction and gambling. **We might live in a fully simulated world, of copies without originals, but nonetheless** Baudrillard writes: “**symbolic exchange has always been at the radical base of things, and… it is on that level that things are decided**… Perhaps we are still in an immense potlatch”.32 Baudrillard claims he is not nostalgic for it, which is perhaps believable to the extent that we are, still, in such potlatch, however much we try to dis-acknowledge it. He does write that we cannot acknowledge it since “without the rituals, without the myths, we no longer have the means to do so”.33 Terrorism attempts to revive such means, but so does, Baudrillard elsewhere suggests, the odd seduction, the life-or-death gamble, and the work of theory. There is, in short, room for hope. III. THE TERROR OF MEANING, THE TERROR OF MEANINGLESSNESS In the wake of September 11, 2001, audiences heard that the motive for the terrorist acts was religious fundamentalism, a “perverted” branch of Islam that calls for jihad against any and all infidels. It is assumed “they” have a deep hatred of American and ‘Western’ “freedoms”. On one hand we are terrified by the sedimentation of meaning accrued through the long-serving Orientalist lens on the cultures of Islam: there is simply too much meaning, and we, along with today’s mass media, are incapable of performing digestion. Baudrillard writes that here “all distinctive marks will become anathema, suspect of masking or even, quite simply, signifying something, and hence potentially terroristic”.34 But perhaps, on the other hand, we (and the media) are ultimately terrified from the realization that there is no meaning to the suicide act itself, that it is but the simple, and stupid, assertion of singularity in the de-sphericized world of global consumption. In this sense I partially disagree with more traditional Leftist accounts of the “complexity” of the conditions that led to September 11. While I would not deny that one can (and in fact should) draw all sorts of historical and political links amongst the actors, none of these links provides any effective meaning to the suicide mission itself. Hollywood’s rendering of flight United 93, in the film of the same name, is perhaps correct in depicting the terrorists as constantly reciting prayers to Allah, but even as such it seems to confirm Zizek’s point that the terrorists only resolved the more fundamental deadlock of their belief in the suicidal act proper.35 Like most believers, religious or otherwise, they were not unquestionably assured as to the intricacies of their faith, but on the contrary acted in “fundamentalist” ways in order to resolve lingering doubt. News analyses and documentaries seem to take a certain relish, for instance, in reporting that suicide bombers believe they are but a bomb blast away from seventy-two virgins, but it is rather highly probable that Muslim fundamentalists do not unfailingly believe this – with the suicide mission itself undertaken as a way of shoring up and confirming this aspect of their belief, among others. From one angle “Islamic fundamentalism” is fundamentally meaningless, as, indeed, are all “leaps of faith”; it is only after the “leap” that the believer can, a posteriori, begin rationalizing his/her belief. The terrorist act, moreover, is a second leap that doubles the meaningless of the original leap of faith. From another angle, that of its situation in its economic and political context, “Islamic fundamentalism” is perhaps deeply meaningful, pointing towards a myriad of injustices in a world-system predicated on the exploitation of the environment and whole nations of people. Meaning here is also terrifying. But the context of Islamic fundamentalism is not discussed in the media. What is “reported” is a strain of religion which believes in the virgins, hates democracy, and wants women to wear veils, and that is willing to sacrifice the self – the foundation of liberal humanist Western societies – to accomplish its goals. In short, **the media is forever circling around the fundamental meaninglessness of the suicide act proper, while eliding the genuine injustices that move millions of people to take up oppositional stances to “Western” capitalist hegemony.** To accusations that he was somehow legitimating terrorism Baudrillard responded, in a Der Spiegel interview republished in this journal: I do not praise murderous attacks — that would be idiotic. Terrorism is not a contemporary form of revolution against oppression and capitalism. No ideology, no struggle for an objective, not even Islamic fundamentalism, can explain it. …I have glorified nothing, accused nobody, justified nothing. One should not confuse the messenger with his message. I have endeavored to analyze the process through which the unbounded expansion of globalization creates the conditions for its own destruction.36 **The attacks were a challenge, to America**, to be sure, **but also to the attempt at meaning**. It is, as the Right righteously insists, foolish to suggest that the attacks were some sort of response to global injustice, as if some sort of meaningful economy was already existent in which the attacks were easily inscribed. But it is also wrong, and for the same reasons, to – again Righteously – suggest that the attacks were directed against our “freedoms” and “way of life”. The suicidal acts were meaningless on two fronts: one, in the simulacra of mass media punditry and 24/7 “real time” coverage; two, in the desperate assertion (and revenge) of singularity in and against the de-sphericized processes of “globalization”. Since globalization is inseparable from the media, the second dimension of meaninglessness cuts to the heart of the first. And that was the point. Admitting that some things may have no meaning is difficult for the intellectual, of course. I am reminded of the moment in Dick Hebdige’s Subculture: The Meaning of Style, when he is trying to come to terms with the “meaning” of the punk appropriation of the swastika. What, after all, could that mean? He comes to the conclusion that there is, in fact, no meaning to be had: The signifier (swastika) had been willfully detached from the concept (Nazism) it conventionally signified, and although it had been re-positioned (as ‘Berlin’) within an alternative subcultural context, its primary value and appeal derived precisely from its lack of meaning: from its potential for deceit. It was exploited as an empty effect… The key to punk style remains elusive. Instead of arriving at the point where we can begin to make sense of the style, we have reached the very place where meaning itself evaporates.37 This seemingly most meaningful symbol – in the words of Stuart Hall, “that sign which, above all other signs, ought to be fixed”38 – turns out to repel meaning. (Punks were more often than not anti-racists.) One would think that this conclusion would give Hebdige some semiotic pause, enough even to reconsider changing the title of his book. Instead, at this very point, he begins exploring the theoretical developments of the Tel Quel brand of semiotics that emphasize the polysemic nature of any given term. At the moment he marks the fundamental nothingness and stupidity of the punk use of the swastika, he immediately goes on to emphasize its excessive and potentially “infinite range of meanings”.39 **He is right, of course, to reject the standard semiotic method of finding a determined or symptomatic meaning behind overt signifiers, but I am uneasy about immediately moving on to emphasize the “productivity” of language.40 Such incessant productivity is, after all, the condition of post-industrial postmodern capitalism**, and it is not at all clear that the punk appropriation of the swastika can be within this so easily subsumed: it may have more to do with a sort of expression of the very demise of any horizon of meaning than of the “pomo” productivity of language. **The endless performativity of “communicative capitalism**”41 – as in branding – **does**, of course, **hollow out meaning, but in the very process of doing so it believes itself full of it**. In wearing the swastika, by contrast, punks were not engaged in anything like branding. Hebdige concludes Subculture by noting how we, as academics, are condemned to “speak excessively about reality”,42 but this only seems to indicate that the productivity of language rests more with the academic than the object in question. It is the same with terrorism. Academics, politicians, and media pundits produce an endless whirligig – a performative productivity – of discourse about it, but the terrorist act, like the punk use of the swastika, is fundamentally meaningless. Rather than partake in this productivity (which is only ultimately in the service of Capital, not least in the production of books to be plugged on talk shows), or, at the least, **rather than justify one’s** (perhaps inevitable) **contributions to** such **productivity, one should rather mark the place where meaning implodes as causative force. This is not meant to advocate resignation**. Concerned academics should, again, continue to draw links between what occurred on September 11, 2001 and its global politico-economic context; there is truthful meaning there (unlike that of the Orientalist discourse). But this truth is ineffectual if it is not supplemented with an apprehension of the meaninglessness of the terrorist act proper; a rigorous separation must be maintained. IV. ABU GHRAIB: UPPING THE ANTE Baudrillard recently wrote of Jorge Luis Borges conjecture that **Hitler was on a suicidal mission, that, in wanting to be defeated, he “collaborated blindly with the inevitable armies that [would] annihilate him”. It is the same today, for “global, comfortable, imperial civilization**”: “[i]n the central solitude of those very people who profit by it, it is unlivable. And all are secretly won over to the forces that will destroy it”.43 In “Pornography of War”, written in response to the revelation and media dissemination of the photographs of prisoner abuse and torture **at Abu Ghraib**, Iraq, Baudrillard suggested that while the terrorist attacks of September 11 inflicted a humiliation on the US from the outside, here **we were confronted with the US exacting such humiliation on itself: “These scenes are the illustration of a power that, having reached its extreme point, no longer knows what to do with itself, of a power now aimless and purposeless since it has no plausible enemy and acts with total impunity**”.44 “**All it can do now”, he continues, “is inflict gratuitous humiliation… And it can only humiliate itself in the process, demean and deny itself in a kind of perverse relentlessness**”.45 I would not deny it. But what if, extrapolating and building on his own arguments from “The Spirit of Terrorism”, torturing the “Iraqi Other” – delusionally linked, for most Americans, with Al Qaeda – was a response, in the realm of the pact and symbolic exchange, to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001? If so, this is not simply a matter of the US “electrocuting itself”,46 but also the Other, in a kind of potlatch of humiliation opened up by America itself and responded to in the spectacle that was and is “9/11”. These photos are meant to be seen, and unlike other examples of torture, are signed: “I did this”, says Lyndee England with her stupid grin, “I’m making them pay”. Sent to their colleagues and friends these photos suggest a personalization of the challenge, and one gets the sense – in a wired world – that they were taken with the knowledge that others beyond the originally intended recipients would see them. In this way they England is also saying: “I did this to you (– how will you respond?)” The torturers give themselves the task of “making it personal”, in a sense desperately trying to give body and tangible form to the whole history of European and American humiliation of the Middle East, just as did the terrorists of September 11, 2001. I would contend Baudrillard even says this himself: And what is it, in fact, that we want to make these men confess? What secret are we trying to force out of them? We quite simply want them to tell us how it is – and in the name of what – that they are unafraid of death.47 What made them do what they did on “9/11”? What makes their Palestinian `brethren’ do the same? (Never mind, of course, that the poor Iraqi threatened with electrocution had nothing to do with it, since for racist American prison guards they are all “linked”).48 Zizek suggests that rather than being another expression for voyeurism, **the “scopic drive” is originally the drive to make oneself part of a scene offered up to the gaze of the Other**.49 **We do not begin as observers passively recording a reality in front of us, but are first and foremost embedded within a tableau observed by the gaze**. Paradoxically, then, **one in some manner produces the gaze through the scopic drive, in the activity of exposing oneself**. American torturers realized this in including themselves within their “abject tableaux”, as Baudrillard put it.50 **In the phenomenon of having one’s existence recorded by webcams, TV confessionals, and/or reality TV shows, the true horror is of not being observed. It is almost as if people only feel as though they exist in being so recorded, in producing and being offered up to the gaze; one almost hysterically grounds one’s existence in such iterative recordings**.51 In the case of the Abu Ghraib photographs, American torturers confirm their existence in the same moment that they humiliate those tortured. In having their photos taken alongside their victims these Americans produce the Other, here ever more rendered as the technological apparatus through which these images flow. Is this not the truth of YouTube confessionals, Flickr accounts, and weblogs? **Increasingly anxious that anyone is listening or watching, that there is any sort of collectivity in which one is embedded, one uploads a veritable flow of diarrheic images and words to not only ensure that someone is watching, but that** – as a result – **the Other, Society, is there.** The pictures from Abu Ghraib partake of this logic, while engaging in the realm of challenge and the collusive relation

### Solvency

#### The affirmative cannot solve for their own impacts: they say that government shutdowns are bad, so workers should be able to strike, which prevents them. The issue is that workers striking shuts down the government because people stop working ie if workers ever exercise their right to strike it causes all of their impacts.

#### 1) They do not have a piece of evidence saying that the RTS is key to solve income inequality. Even if their ev is right that income inequality writ large is bad they dont resovle a large enough portion. Read their uniqueness evidence it cites education and healthcare.

#### 2) Their argument about income inequality is about the global differences between states wealth and average incomes. Even if there is an increase in income in some sectors, that doesnt mean the disparities b/w the countries get resolved.

#### 3) Their link evidence says they increase incomes by 2-5% which is woefully inefficient to solve, their are massive differences between these countries i.e their uniqueness evidence cites other countries having a 16x difference, that minor increase is insufficient to solve

#### Ill LBL solvency ev –

#### burns

#### Not about the right to strike in all cases

#### Makes a perception argument and says that unions can do their work “through the threat of union- ization “

#### Richman card doesnt actually make a spillover claim in the evidence or the part they've highlighted

#### Nolan ev - not reading a CP so irrelevant

### Framing

#### The standard is to prefer form arguments first – if we win a claim that the affirmative shouldn’t have been brought into debate at all that comes before any of their impact scenarios because it directs the logic behind them

#### AND there’s a Strategic Cover Disad to their model– the use of fiat to overcome links means people are able to outweigh thinks like being racist with their extinction impacts – that means even if they are right that things spill out of debate and they can make a difference you still vote negative because they create neo-conservatives like Kyle Rove, Ted Cruz or Neal Katyeal – even if you don’t believe that they will make bad people, at the very least they won’t have the opportunity to test them which is a terminal solvency deficit to their model

#### None of their death is bad standards are an answer to our arguments about the nature of their extinction impacts

#### Governments consistently don’t use utilitarianism or realism – only our theory of power explains why the US was in Vietnam despite knowing it was a losing war and the public being against it