# 1NC – K 2:05

#### God is dead but the hyperreal is alive and kicking. Our forms of information and communication are only signifiers – words are references to the real. Originally, the real thing created what references it, but Baudrillard indicates that in the age of mass media we no longer create signifiers to refer to reality, we create reality based on our signifiers. For example, Coca-cola is just another liquid but through our interpretation of it via ads and discourse we give it a brand and a certain legitimacy. Then, through a circular process, signs start to only signify other signs, not anything real, i.e. my interpretation of something will eventually be just based on your interpretation of it, which is based on someone else’s. Thus, the creation of meaning is no longer about real things but just an exchange of empty signifiers devoid of real meaning. This is the hyperreality and it neutralizes any truth in messages and medium. The hyperreal is fundamentally unstable because there is nothing behind it to support it -- it is supposed to implode from lack of power but it lives on meanings given to it by people who assume it has meaning. The explosive idealism of the 1AC prevents the coming implosion of hyperreality by giving meaning to the meaningless – only embracing the implosion can collapse the simulation.

Baudrillard 95 (Jean, “Simulacra and Simulation: The Implosion of Meaning in the Media”, pp. 80-83)

Information devours its own content. It devours communication and the social. And for two reasons. 1. Rather than creating communication, it exhausts itself in the act of staging communication. Rather than producing meaning, it exhausts itself in the staging of meaning. A gigantic process of simulation that is very familiar. The nondirective interview, speech, listeners who call in, participation at every level, blackmail through speech: "You are concerned, you are the event, etc." More and more information is invaded by this kind of phantom content, this homeopathic grafting, this awakening dream of communication. A circular arrangement through which one stages the desire of the audience, the antitheater of communication, which, as one knows, is never anything but the recycling in the negative of the traditional institution, the integrated circuit of the negative. Immense energies are deployed to hold this simulacrum at bay, to avoid the brutal desimulation that would confront us in the face of the obvious reality of a radical loss of meaning. It is useless to ask if it is the loss of communication that produces this escalation in the simulacrum, or whether it is the simulacrum that is there first for dissuasive ends, to short-circuit in advance any possibility of communication (precession of the model that calls an end to the real). Useless to ask which is the first term, there is none, it is a circular process - that of simulation, that of the hyperreal. The hyperreality of communication and of meaning. More real than the real, that is how the real is abolished. Thus not only communication but the social functions in a closed circuit, as a lure - to which the force of myth is attached. Belief, faith in information attach themselves to this tautological proof that the system gives of itself by doubling the signs of an unlocatable reality. But one can believe that this belief is as ambiguous as that which was attached to myths in ancient societies. One both believes and doesn't. One does not ask oneself, "I know very well, but still." A sort of inverse simulation in the masses, in each one of us, corresponds to this simulation of meaning and of communication in which this system encloses us. To this tautology of the system the masses respond with ambivalence, to deterrence they respond with disaffection, or with an always enigmatic belief. Myth exists, but one must guard against thinking that people believe in it: this is the trap of critical thinking that can only be exercised if it presupposes the naivete and stupidity of the masses. 2. Behind this exacerbated mise-en-scène of communication, the mass media, the pressure of information pursues an irresistible destructuration of the social. Thus information dissolves meaning and dissolves the social, in a sort of nebulous state dedicated not to a surplus of innovation, but, on the contrary, to total entropy.\*1 Thus the media are producers not of socialization, but of exactly the opposite, of the implosion of the social in the masses. And this is only the macroscopic extension of the implosion of meaning at the microscopic level of the sign. This implosion should be analyzed according to McLuhan's formula, the medium is the message, the consequences of which have yet to be exhausted. That means that all contents of meaning are absorbed in the only dominant form of the medium. Only the medium can make an event - whatever the contents, whether they are conformist or subversive. A serious problem for all counterinformation, pirate radios, antimedia, etc. But there is something even more serious, which McLuhan himself did not see. Because beyond this neutralization of all content, one could still expect to manipulate the medium in its form and to transform the real by using the impact of the medium as form. If all the content is wiped out, there is perhaps still a subversive, revolutionary use value of the medium as such. That is - and this is where McLuhan's formula leads, pushed to its limit - there is not only an implosion of the message in the medium, there is, in the same movement, the implosion of the medium itself in the real, the implosion of the medium and of the real in a sort of hyperreal nebula, in which even the definition and distinct action of the medium can no longer be determined. Even the "traditional" status of the media themselves, characteristic of modernity, is put in question. McLuhan's formula, the medium is the message, which is the key formula of the era of simulation (the medium is the message - the sender is the receiver - the circularity of all poles - the end of panoptic and perspectival space - such is the alpha and omega of our modernity), this very formula must be imagined at its limit where, after all the contents and messages have been volatilized in the medium, it is the medium itself that is volatilized as such. Fundamentally, it is still the message that lends credibility to the medium, that gives the medium its determined, distinct status as the intermediary of communication. Without a message, the medium also falls into the indefinite state characteristic of all our great systems of judgment and value. A single model, whose efficacy is immediate, simultaneously generates the message, the medium, and the "real." Finally, the medium is the message not only signifies the end of the message, but also the end of the medium. There are no more media in the literal sense of the word (I'm speaking particularly of electronic mass media) - that is, of a mediating power between one reality and another, between one state of the real and another. Neither in content, nor in form. Strictly, this is what implosion signifies. The absorption of one pole into another, the short-circuiting between poles of every differential system of meaning, the erasure of distinct terms and oppositions, including that of the medium and of the real - thus the impossibility of any mediation, of any dialectical intervention between the two or from one to the other. Circularity of all media effects. Hence the impossibility of meaning in the literal sense of a unilateral vector that goes from one pole to another. One must envisage this critical but original situation at its very limit: it is the only one left us. It is useless to dream of revolution through content, useless to dream of a revelation through form, because the medium and the real are now in a single nebula whose truth is indecipherable. The fact of this implosion of contents, of the absorption of meaning, of the evanescence of the medium itself, of the reabsorption of every dialectic of communication in a total circularity of the model, of the implosion of the social in the masses, may seem catastrophic and desperate. But this is only the case in light of the idealism that dominates our whole view of information. We all live by a passionate idealism of meaning and of communication, by an idealism of communication through meaning, and, from this perspective, it is truly the catastrophe of meaning that lies in wait for us.

#### This flow of desaturated values creates the hypermarket of information, or the code, which kills all movements because they have been coopted by the logics of consumption—everyone within it is subject to complete preconscious social control which hijacks any pedagogy benefits, and the system presents a façade of progress that guts true advances while allowing the oppressions of the system continue

Pawlett 10 [(William Pawlett, senior lecturer in media, communications and cultural studies at University of Wolverhampton) “The Baudrillard Dictionary” under “Code” Edinburgh University Press, 2010] AT

It is used in two related senses: firstly, to understand and critique consumer capitalism, suggesting that it is a system of control that functions by conferring illusory ‘freedoms’; and secondly, to deconstruct modern critical theories – particularly Marxism, feminism and psychoanalysis. Such theories, Baudrillard argues, cannot challenge the capitalist system because they are structured, at a fundamental level, by the code; their arguments are easily assimilated because they do not question the system’s ‘logics of value’ – the interlocking network of use values, economic exchange values and sign exchange values that constitute the code (CPS, 123). The code can be challenged, Baudrillard asserts, only by symbolic exchange, by the ‘counter-gift’ of anti-value (SED, 40). The notion of ‘the code’ is notably absent from Baudrillard’s later work; DNA ‘code’ is discussed at length (TE, 120) but the concept of the code seems to have been rejected because it remained within the orbit of modern critical theory. Nevertheless, many of the themes discussed through the concept of the code reappear in Baudrillard’s later arguments concerning ‘integral reality’. Baudrillard’s notion of the code suggests that we, as consumers, live within a far more complete form of social control than anything conceived under the rubric of ideological analysis. The code is a system of ‘manipulation’, ‘neutralisation’ and assimilation which ‘aims towards absolute social control’ (UD, 98). Though this is never achieved, the code constitutes ‘the fundamental, decisive form of social control – more so even than acquies- cence to ideological norms’ (CPS, 68). This is because the code operates, fundamentally, at a preconscious level. For Baudrillard, ‘the code itself is nothing other than a genetic, generative cell’ (SED, 58). The term code is used interchangeably with ‘the structural law of value’, that is as a feature of the third order of simulacra dominated by simulation (SED, 50). The code then is the grid or ‘generative core’ from which social signification is produced or simulated. The medium of the code is the abstracted sign; torn from symbolic relations, drained of all ambivalence and intensity, the sign becomes a ‘dead’ unit of information. The code can assimilate any meaning, idea, emotion or critical gesture by reproducing it as an abstract sign or code position within an ever-expanding field of options and pos- sibilities. All signs are, at the fundamental level of the medium, equivalent or commutable; abstract signs enable a ‘universal equivalence’ through the ‘de-sign-ating’ of everything as a term within the code. Marginal or￼simulatory differences are injected into the code, feeding consumption and sustaining the illusions of choice and diversity. It is a mistake to think of the notion of the code as exclusively semiotic. As simulation becomes prevalent, conceptual oppositions are simplified into binary code, zeros and ones are no longer meaningful oppositions but, for Baudrillard, merely tactical modulations. The code absorbs the first and second orders of simulacra (in which signs work referentially and dialectically) with a system of signs that refer only to preconceived simula- tion models. With the third order ‘the code’s signals . . . become illegible’, units or ‘bits’ of information replace signification (SED, 57). Indeed, the code is ‘the end of signification’; social control by ideology, characteristic of the second order, is supplemented by ‘social control by means of predic- tion, simulation, programmed anticipation and indeterminate mutation, all governed . . . by the code’ (SED, 60). For example, any radical potential of Marxist, feminist or ‘green’ politics is defused by the code; they are designated as coded ‘lifestyle’ positions, feeding consumption and so presenting no fundamental challenge to the system. The code maintains a system of social relations through the ‘obligatory registration of individuals on the scale of status’ (CPS, 68) and functions covertly ‘to better prime the aspiration toward the higher level’ (CPS, 60) enforcing the competitive individualism of the system of consumption. The code simulates choice, difference and liberation, pacifying the deep divisions in consumer society by allowing the privileged term of binary oppositions to switch tactically or ‘float’, for example by simulating equality between terms (male/female, black/white, adult/child), so containing critical opposition. The code is ‘indifferent’ and ‘aleatory’; it controls through tolerance, solicitation and incorporation.

#### Thus, calls for dialectic progress – like the affs faith in state actions – fails to address the shifting strategic landscape of power – autonomous production of meaning fails in this hyperreality where meaning and reformism has already been neutralized and coopted to slow the implosion of the system. The alternative is to reject the affirmative’s explosive politics in favor of a hyperconformist object-resistance – we conform to the system to a point of unintelligibility, reflecting its demands and exposing fractures in the system that accelerate implosion

Baudrillard 95 (Jean, “Simulacra and Simulation: The Implosion of Meaning in the Media”, pp. 84-86)

What is essential today is to evaluate this double challenge the challenge of the masses to meaning and their silence (which is not at all a passive resistance) - the challenge to meaning that comes from the media and its fascination. All the marginal, alternative efforts to revive meaning are secondary in relation to that challenge. Evidently, there is a paradox in this inextricable conjunction of the masses and the media: do the media neutralize meaning and produce unformed [informe] or informed [informée] masses, or is it the masses who victoriously resist the media by directing or absorbing all the messages that the media produce without responding to them? Sometime ago, in "Requiem for the Media," I analyzed and condemned the media as the institution of an irreversible model of communication without a response. But today? This absence of a response can no longer be understood at all as a strategy of power, but as a counterstrategy of the masses themselves when they encounter power. What then? Are the mass media on the side of power in the manipulation of the masses, or are they on the side of the masses in the liquidation of meaning, in the violence perpetrated on meaning, and in fascination? Is it the media that induce fascination in the masses, or is it the masses who direct the media into the spectacle? Mogadishu-Stammheim: the media make themselves into the vehicle of the moral condemnation of terrorism and of the exploitation of fear for political ends, but simultaneously, in the most complete ambiguity, they propagate the brutal charm of the terrorist act, they are themselves terrorists, insofar as they themselves march to the tune of seduction (cf. Umberto Eco on this eternal moral dilemma: how can one not speak of terrorism, how can one find a good use of the media - there is none). The media carry meaning and countermeaning, they manipulate in all directions at once, nothing can control this process, they are the vehicle for the simulation internal to the system and the simulation that destroys the system, according to an absolutely Mobian and circular logic - and it is exactly like this. There is no alternative to this, no logical resolution. Only a logical exacerbation and a catastrophic resolution. With one caution. We are face to face with this system in a double situation and insoluble double bind - exactly like children faced with the demands of the adult world. Children are simultaneously required to constitute themselves as autonomous subjects, responsible, free and conscious, and to constitute themselves as submissive, inert, obedient, conforming objects. The child resists on all levels, and to a contradictory demand he responds with a double strategy. To the demand of being an object, he opposes all the practices of disobedience, of revolt, of emancipation; in short, a total claim to subjecthood. To the demand of being a subject he opposes, just as obstinately and efficaciously, an object's resistance, that is to say, exactly the opposite: childishness, hyperconformism, total dependence, passivity, idiocy. Neither strategy has more objective value than the other. The subject-resistance is today unilaterally valorized and viewed as positive - just as in the political sphere only the practices of freedom, emancipation, expression, and the constitution of a political subject are seen as valuable and subversive. But this is to ignore the equal, and without a doubt superior, impact of all the object practices, of the renunciation of the subject position and of meaning - precisely the practices of the masses - that we bury under the derisory terms of alienation and passivity. The liberating practices respond to one of the aspects of the system, to the constant ultimatum we are given to constitute ourselves as pure objects, but they do not respond at all to the other demand, that of constituting ourselves as subjects, of liberating ourselves, expressing ourselves at whatever cost, of voting, producing, deciding, speaking, participating, playing the game - a form of blackmail and ultimatum just as serious as the other, even more serious today. To a system whose argument is oppression and repression, the strategic resistance is the liberating claim of subjecthood. But this strategy is more reflective of the earlier phase of the system, and even if we are still confronted with it, it is no longer the strategic terrain: the current argument of the system is to maximize speech, the maximum production of meaning. Thus the strategic resistance is that of the refusal of meaning and of the spoken word - or of the hyper conformist simulation of the very mechanisms of the system, which is a form of refusal and of nonreception. It is the strategy of the masses: it is equivalent to returning to the system its own logic by doubling it, to reflecting meaning, like a mirror, without absorbing it. This strategy (if one can still speak of strategy) prevails today, because it was ushered in by that phase of the system which prevails. To choose the wrong strategy is a serious matter. All the movements that only play on liberation, emancipation, on the resurrection of a subject of history, of the group, of the word based on "consciousness raising," indeed a "raising of the unconscious" of subjects and of the masses, do not see that they are going in the direction of the system, whose imperative today is precisely the overproduction and regeneration of meaning and of speech.

# Extra add ons

### Link – Giroux 0:45

#### The 1AC’s revolutionary attempt to revive the university fails because their method of meaning production is already dead – their mythical nostalgia for a sense of justice keeps the already corrupted system alive. Only the alternative, by embracing the rotting of these institutions, can dissolve the system

Baudrillard 95 (Jean, “Simulacra and Simulation: The Spiraling Cadaver”, pp. 143-146)

The university is in ruins: nonfunctional in the social arenas of the market and employment, lacking cultural substance or an end purpose of knowledge. Strictly speaking, there is no longer even any power: it is also in ruins. Whence the impossibility of the return of the fires of 1968: of the return of putting in question knowledge versus power itself - the explosive contradiction of knowledge and power (or the revelation of their collusion, which comes to the same thing) in the university, and, at the same time, through symbolic (rather than political) contagion in the whole institutional and social order. Why sociologists? marked this shift: the impasse of knowledge, the vertigo of nonknowledge (that is to say at once the absurdity and the impossibility of accumulating value in the order of knowledge) turns like an absolute weapon against power itself, in order to dismantle it according to the same vertiginous scenario of dispossession. This is the May 1968 effect. Today it cannot be achieved since power itself, after knowledge, has taken off, has become ungraspable - has dispossessed itself. In a now uncertain institution, without knowledge content, without a power structure (except for an archaic feudalism that turns a simulacrum of a machine whose destiny escapes it and whose survival is as artificial as that of barracks and theaters), offensive irruption is impossible. Only what precipitates rotting, by accentuating the parodic, simulacral side of dying games of knowledge and power, has meaning. A strike has exactly the opposite effect. It regenerates the ideal of a possible university: the fiction of an ascension on everyone's part to a culture that is unlocatable, and that no longer has meaning. This ideal is substituted for the operation of the university as its critical alternative, as its therapy. This fiction still dreams of a permanency and democracy of knowledge. Besides, everywhere today the Left plays this role: it is the justice of the Left that reinjects an idea of justice, the necessity of logic and social morals into a rotten apparatus that is coming undone, which is losing all conscience of its legitimacy and renounces functioning almost of its own volition. It is the Left that secrets and desperately reproduces power, because it wants power, and therefore the Left believes in it and revives it precisely where the system puts an end to it. The system puts an end one by one to all its axioms, to all its institutions, and realizes one by one all the objectives of the historical and revolutionary Left that sees itself constrained to revive the wheels of capital in order to lay seige to them one day: from private property to the small business, from the army to national grandeur, from puritan morality to petit bourgeois culture, justice at the university - everything that is disappearing, that the system itself, in its atrocity, certainly, but also in its irreversible impulse, has liquidated, must be conserved. Whence the paradoxical but necessary inversion of all the terms of political analysis. Power (or what takes its place) no longer believes in the university. It knows fundamentally that it is only a zone for the shelter and surveillance of a whole class of a certain age, it therefore has only to select - it will find its elite elsewhere, or by other means. Diplomas are worthless: why would it refuse to award them, in any case it is ready to award them to everybody; why this provocative politics, if not in order to crystallize energies on a fictive stake (selection, work, diplomas, etc.), on an already dead and rotting referential? By rotting, the university can still do a lot of damage (rotting is a symbolic mechanism not political but symbolic, therefore subversive for us). But for this to be the case it is necessary to start with this very rotting, and not to dream of resurrection. It is necessary to transform this rotting into a violent process, into violent death, through mockery and defiance, through a multiplied simulation that would offer the ritual of the death of the university as a model of decomposition to the whole of society, a contagious model of the disaffection of a whole social structure, where death would finally make its ravages, which the strike tries desperately to avert, in complicity with the system, but succeeds, on top of it all, only in transforming the university into a slow death, a delay that is not even the possible site of a subversion, of an offensive reversion. That is what the events of May 1968 produced. At a less advanced point in the process of the liquefaction of the university and of culture, the students, far from wishing to save the furniture (revive the lost object, in an ideal mode), retorted by confronting power with the challenge of the total, immediate death of the institution, the challenge of a deterritorialization even more intense than the one that came from the system, and by summoning power to respond to this total derailment of the institution of knowledge, to this total lack of a need to gather in a given place, this death desired in the end - not the crisis of the university, that is not a challenge, on the contrary, it is the game of the system, but the death of the university - to that challenge, power has not been able to respond, except by its own dissolution in return (only for a moment maybe, but we saw it).

### Link – Ethics 0:25

#### Hyperreality is pre-ethical: we trade commodities that serve to be the ethical form which only injects energy into the system

Kinder 12 (Jordan B.A., M.A. (Candidate), University of Northern British Columbia). The Spectres of Simulacra: Hyperreality, Consumption as Ideology, and the (Im)Possible Future of Radical Politics. 2012, [https://www.academia.edu/1595967/The\_Spectres\_of\_Simulacra\_Hyperreality\_Consumption\_as\_Ideology\_and\_the\_Im\_Possible\_Future\_of\_Radical\_Politics)](https://www.academia.edu/1595967/The_Spectres_of_Simulacra_Hyperreality_Consumption_as_Ideology_and_the_Im_Possible_Future_of_Radical_Politics%29) CW

The examples of plant-based plastic bottled water and carbon credits are not the only contemporary examples of the ways in which postmodern capitalism veils its ideological motivations by simulating politico-ethico frameworks that challenge capitalism and consumption. Indeed, these two examples point towards a larger trend in which commodities themselves embody a collapsed, hyperreal mélange of the politically necessary distinction between capitalism, which seeks profit, and ideologies such as environmentalism, which challenges the very essence of capitalism. By collapsing both together in a superficial manner, contemporary postmodern capitalism creates hyperreal commodities such as carbon credits to perpetuate an illusion of ethics while functioning in a hyper-ideological manner.[1] Postmodern capitalism is, in this sense, hyper-ideological because it purports and promotes such paradoxical conceptions as anti-consumption through consumption. These two aspects of postmodern capitalism mutate into the undeniably hyperreal phenomena known as ethical capital and ethical consumption. This mutation implants an extra-capitalistic (i.e. outside of capitalist dogma) version of ethics which masks the socio-ideological mechanisms that are at work in contemporary postmodern capitalism and consumption. “There is no degree zero, no objective reference, no point of neutrality, but always and again, stakes.” Jean Baudrillard, Seduction In a recorded event for Lacanian Ink at The Jack Tilton Gallery in New York City, Slavoj Žižek states that “it is easy to make fun of Fukuyama’s of the end of history, but the majority today is Fukuyamayin … liberal democratic capitalism is accepted as the finally found formula of the best possible society” (Žižek – Ecology). Žižek’s lecture carries on by identifying the ways in which (neoliberal) capitalism’s pervasiveness continues to be veiled through media, popular opinion, and economic practice. Fukuyama’s political position is made quite explicit when he states in The End of History and the Last Man that the subject of his book is the following question: “[w]hether, at the end of the twentieth century, it makes sense for us once again to speak of a coherent and directional History of mankind that will eventually lead the greater part of humanity to liberal democracy[;]” Fukuyama’s answer is, of course, yes (xii-xiii). Fukuyama suggests that liberal democracy, which produces the socio-economic climate in which the postmodern capitalism described above, is developed. Certainly, Fukuyama is not alone in these sentiments, as Slavoj Žižek discusses French neoliberal economist Guy Sorman who is, according to Žižek, “an exemplay ideologist of contemporary capitalism” (Tragedy 14). Indeed, Sorman himself suggests that economists are not ideologically motivated when he states that “[e]conomists are moved by data, not their opinions” (“Defending the Free Market”). Where does Baudrillard fit here? I argue here that—coupled with my elaborations above regarding the ways in which capitalist ideologies are obscured through hyperreal manifestations of advertising and commodities—these notions of neoliberalism as somehow transcendent of ideology are simply an exercise in hyperreality as contemporary postmodern capitalism continues to simulate ethical behaviour in a paradoxical manner. This appropriation of ethical behaviour functions to obfuscate ethical (and in turn political) action, creating a “new” type of ethical action that nullifies the previous forms of ethical, socio-political action, leaving neoliberal capitalism unscathed. Elaborating on Baudrillard’s views on consumer society, Gary Genosko states that: He argued that the place of consumption in the new consumer society is everyday life. Social life is mediated and radically alienated by a controlled logic of merchandise in which consumption has nothing to do with principles of reality and the satisfaction of needs. (xii) It seems suitable then, to point toward the manners in which consumption is framed within postmodern capitalism. Indeed, as extensively discussed above, consumption is being framed as a socio-political act; it is through consumption that a “better” (environmentally, morally, etc.) is possible. Framing consumption as a socio-political act involves an amalgamation of hyperreal advertising. A recent “grassroots” campaign built from Canadian conservative political activist Ezra Levant’s book Ethical Oil seeks to utilize the discourse of ethics to promote the consumption of Canadian oil. The term “grassroots” is used loosely because it is easy to see how such an “independent” group may be involved with Canadian Tar Sands corporations.[2] The argument behind the campaign is that “Countries [including Canada] that produce Ethical Oil protect the rights of women, workers, indigenous peoples and other minorities including gays and lesbians” whereas “Conflict Oil regimes, by contrast, oppress their citizens and operate in secret with no accountability to voters, the press or independent judiciaries” (About Ethical Oil). By framing the Canadian oil industry in such a manner, the campaign functions to marginalize environmental concerns by reviving a jingoistic “us” versus “them” nationalist rhetoric. Indeed, considering a number of the posts on the website—all by a single author—attempt to de-legitimize well-established international environmental rights groups through a number of measures. In terms of environmental ethics, the oil industry is arguably one of the least ethical industries; what occurs here, then, is a Baudrillardian simulation of ethics that functions to collapse the distinction between ethics as a socio-political concept and capitalist consumption, thereby creating a form of hyperreal ethics wherein action (activism) toward the promotion of the rights of women, indigenous, gays, lesbians, and so on is conflated with consuming (Canadian) oil. The example of Ethical Oil here is quite apt with regard to Fukuyama’s thesis regarding neoliberalism. Ethical Oil promotes a notion that both consumption and capitalism functions not only outside of the realm of ideology, but as a system in which a consumer can promote ethical behaviour. Capitalism here is promoted as some sort of supra-ideological system, as a tabula rasa in which both ethically “good” The irony in the case of Ethical Oil, then, is that the (nationalistic) ethical values it suggests are promoted by Canada—and in turn the Canadian Tar sands—are not widely accepted as accurate, especially in the case of indigenous Canadians who have a history of opposing oil-related developments in Canada. Indeed, this is where the hyperreal ethics emerges—Ethical Oil continually steps away from any sort of Baudrillardian “real” by shrouding its aims in a simulated “grassroots” movement that simultaneously simulates legitimate grassroots, non-governmental organizations. Ethical Oil, however, is an example of neoliberalism in practice par excellance as it attempts to affirm Fukuyama’s arguments of capitalism’s (within a liberal democracy) ability to “house the homeless, guarantee opportunity for minorities and women, improve competitiveness, and create new jobs” (46) as he essentially argues that there is no system outside of capitalism that can be imagined. Again, like the Ethical Oil campaign, there is a viewpoint that capitalism functions extra-ideologically and that anything is possible within it, despite the fact that campaigns such as Ethical Oil are clearly simulating ethics in an attempt to promote support of the oil industry in Canada as well as its consumption with absolutely no regard for the ecological implications of oil extraction. From a Baudrillardian perspective, this suggests that capitalism has truly become hyperreal as it enters a sphere in which it is no longer associated with ideology. This is precisely the collapse that Baudrillard speaks of there being “only signs, without referents, empty, senseless, absurd and elliptical” (74); however, while contemporary postmodern capitalism, which seeks to “mobilize” consumers while simultaneously confining them within the mechanisms of capitalism, is in this sense “empty,” it does have real socio-political ramifications.

### Link – Fiat

#### Fiat is a link:

#### A. The 1AC is playing pretend-politics – this farce of a political process ignores the fact that politics in the “real world” is already dead

#### B. Fiat is a simulation of a policy – this representation of policymaking comes to stand in for policymaking in the “real world,” just as every other sign comes to replace reality.

#### It also primes us towards violence and destroys personal agency

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One of the deadliest practices we engage in is that of identifying ourselves with a collective entity. Whether it be the state, a nationality, our race or gender, or any other abstraction, we introduce division – hence, conflict – into our lives as we separate ourselves from those who identify with other groupings. If one observes the state of our world today, this is the pattern that underlies our deadly and destructive social behavior. This mindset was no better articulated than when George W. Bush declared “you’re either with us, or against us.” Through years of careful conditioning, we learn to think of ourselves in terms of agencies and/or abstractions external to our independent being. Or, to express the point more clearly, we have learned to internalize these external forces; to conform our thinking and behavior to the purposes and interests of such entities. We adorn ourselves with flags, mouth shibboleths, and decorate our cars with bumper-stickers, in order to communicate to others our sense of “who we are.” In such ways does our being become indistinguishable from our chosen collective. In this way are institutions born. We discover a particular form of organization through which we are able to cooperate with others for our mutual benefit. Over time, the advantages derived from this system have a sufficient consistency to lead us to the conclusion that our well-being is dependent upon it. Those who manage the organization find it in their self-interests to propagate this belief so that we will become dependent upon its permanency. Like a sculptor working with clay, institutions take over the direction of our minds, twisting, squeezing, and pounding upon them until we have embraced a mindset conducive to their interests. Once this has been accomplished, we find it easy to subvert our will and sense of purpose to the collective. The organization ceases being a mere tool of mutual convenience, and becomes an end in itself. Our lives become “institutionalized,” and we regard it as fanciful to imagine ourselves living in any other way than as constituent parts of a machine that transcends our individual sense. Once we identify ourselves with the state, that collective entity does more than represent who we are; it is who we are. To the politicized mind, the idea that “we are the government” has real meaning, not in the sense of being able to control such an agency, but in the psychological sense. The successes and failures of the state become the subject’s successes and failures; insults or other attacks upon their abstract sense of being – such as the burning of “their” flag – become assaults upon their very personhood. Shortcomings on the part of the state become our failures of character. This is why so many Americans who have belatedly come to criticize the war against Iraq are inclined to treat it as only a “mistake” or the product of “mismanagement,” not as a moral wrong. Our egos can more easily admit to the making of a mistake than to moral transgressions. Such an attitude also helps to explain why, as Milton Mayer wrote in his revealing post-World War II book, They Thought They Were Free, most Germans were unable to admit that the Nazi regime had been tyrannical. It is this dynamic that makes it easy for political officials to generate wars, a process that reinforces the sense of identity and attachment people have for “their” state. It also helps to explain why most Americans – though tiring of the war against Iraq – refuse to condemn government leaders for the lies, forgeries, and deceit employed to get the war started: to acknowledge the dishonesty of the system through which they identify themselves is to admit to the dishonest base of their being. The truthfulness of the state’s rationale for war is irrelevant to most of its subjects. It is sufficient that they believe the abstraction with which their lives are intertwined will be benefited in some way by war. Against whom and upon what claim does not matter – except as a factor in assessing the likelihood of success. That most Americans have pipped nary a squeak of protest over Bush administration plans to attack Iran – with nuclear weapons if deemed useful to its ends – reflects the point I am making. Bush could undertake a full-fledged war against Lapland, and most Americans would trot out their flags and bumper-stickers of approval. The “rightness” or “wrongness” of any form of collective behavior becomes interpreted by the standard of whose actions are being considered. During World War II, for example, Japanese kamikaze pilots were regarded as crazed fanatics for crashing their planes into American battleships. At the same time, American war movies (see, e.g., Flying Tigers) extolled the heroism of American pilots who did the same thing. One sees this same double-standard in responding to “conspiracy theories.” “Do you think a conspiracy was behind the 9/11 attacks?” It certainly seems so to me, unless one is prepared to treat the disappearance of the World Trade Center buildings as the consequence of a couple pilots having bad navigational experiences! The question that should be asked is: whose conspiracy was it? To those whose identities coincide with the state, such a question is easily answered: others conspire, we do not. It is not the symbiotic relationship between war and the expansion of state power, nor the realization of corporate benefits that could not be obtained in a free market, that mobilize the machinery of war. Without most of us standing behind “our” system, and cheering on “our” troops, and defending “our” leaders, none of this would be possible. What would be your likely response if your neighbor prevailed upon you to join him in a violent attack upon a local convenience store, on the grounds that it hired “illegal aliens?” Your sense of identity would not be implicated in his efforts, and you would likely dismiss him as a lunatic. Only when our ego-identities become wrapped up with some institutional abstraction – such as the state – can we be persuaded to invest our lives and the lives of our children in the collective madness of state action. We do not have such attitudes toward organizations with which we have more transitory relationships. If we find an accounting error in our bank statement, we would not find satisfaction in the proposition “the First National Bank, right or wrong.” Neither would we be inclined to wear a T-shirt that read “Disneyland: love it or leave it.” One of the many adverse consequences of identifying with and attaching ourselves to collective abstractions is our loss of control over not only the meaning and direction in our lives, but of the manner in which we can be efficacious in our efforts to pursue the purposes that have become central to us. We become dependent upon the performance of “our” group; “our” reputation rises or falls on the basis of what institutional leaders do or fail to do. If “our” nation-state loses respect in the world – such as by the use of torture or killing innocent people - we consider ourselves no longer respectable, and scurry to find plausible excuses to redeem our egos. When these expectations are not met, we go in search of new leaders or organizational reforms we believe will restore our sense of purpose and pride that we have allowed abstract entities to personify for us. As the costs and failures of the state become increasingly evident, there is a growing tendency to blame this system. But to do so is to continue playing the same game into which we have allowed ourselves to become conditioned. One of the practices employed by the state to get us to mobilize our “dark side” energies in opposition to the endless recycling of enemies it has chosen for us, is that of psychological projection. Whether we care to acknowledge it or not – and most of us do not – each of us has an unconscious capacity for attitudes or conduct that our conscious minds reject. We fear that, sufficiently provoked, we might engage in violence – even deadly – against others; or that inducements might cause us to become dishonest. We might harbor racist or other bigoted sentiments, or consider ourselves lazy or irresponsible. Though we are unlikely to act upon such inner fears, their presence within us can generate discomforting self-directed feelings of guilt, anger, or unworthiness that we would like to eliminate. The most common way in which humanity has tried to bring about such an exorcism is by subconsciously projecting these traits onto others (i.e., “scapegoats”) and punishing them for what are really our own shortcomings. The state has trained us to behave this way, in order that we may be counted upon to invest our lives, resources, and other energies in pursuit of the enemy du jour. It is somewhat ironic, therefore, that most of us resort to the same practice in our criticism of political systems. After years of mouthing the high-school civics class mantra about the necessity for government – and the bigger the government the better – we begin to experience the unexpected consequences of politicization. Tax burdens continue to escalate; or the state takes our home to make way for a proposed shopping center; or ever-more details of our lives are micromanaged by ever-burgeoning state bureaucracies. Having grown weary of the costs – including the loss of control over our lives – we blame the state for what has befallen us. We condemn the Bush administration for the parade of lies that precipitated the war against Iraq, rather than indicting ourselves for ever believing anything the state tells us. We fault the politicians for the skyrocketing costs of governmental programs, conveniently ignoring our insistence upon this or that benefit whose costs we would prefer having others pay. The statists have helped us accept a world view that conflates our incompetence to manage our own lives with their omniscience to manage the lives of billions of people – along with the planet upon which we live! – and we are now experiencing the costs generated by our own gullibility. We have acted like country bumpkins at the state fair with the egg money who, having been fleeced by a bunch of carnival sharpies, look everywhere for someone to blame other than ourselves. We have been euchred out of our very lives because of our eagerness to believe that benefits can be enjoyed without incurring costs; that the freedom to control one’s life can be separated from the responsibilities for one’s actions; and that two plus two does not have to add up to four if a sizeable public opinion can be amassed against the proposition. By identifying ourselves with any abstraction (such as the state) we give up the integrated life, the sense of wholeness that can be found only within each of us. While the state has manipulated, cajoled, and threatened us to identify ourselves with it, the responsibility for our acceding to its pressures lies within each of us. The statists have – as was their vicious purpose – simply taken over the territory we have abandoned. Our politico-centric pain and suffering has been brought about by our having allowed external forces to move in and occupy the vacuum we created at the center of our being. The only way out of our dilemma involves a retracing of the route that brought us to where we are. We require nothing so much right now as the development of a sense of “who we are” that transcends our institutionalized identities, and returns us – without division and conflict – to a centered, self-directed integrity in our lives.

### Link – Equality

#### Equality isn’t revolutionary; it only feeds the symbolic order

Pawlette 7 [(William Pawlett,senior lecturer in media, communications and cultural studies at University of Wolverhampton) “The 'Break' with Marxism”] AT

Baudrillard pushes further. Life and death are separated by a 'bar' or 'line of social demarcation'; the bar actually constitutes understandings of both life and death, of the properties on both sides of the bar. Life and death are still conjoined, contiguous: the bar of their separation also joins them. The barred symbolic exchange (of life and death) is present in the very process of its barring. Death as symbolic exchange with life is barred, but separated out from symbolic meaningfulness death is devoid of meaning, an 'unprogammable' horror, an 'unthinkable anomaly'. Yet life too, separated from death, loses its meaningfulness, reduced to 'the indifferent fatality or survival' (1993a: 126). In other words the separation of life and death does not result in a profit accruing to life. Although life is shielded from death it must end in death; moreover, a death now devoid of symbolic meaning. Life, then, is reduced to survival, not living but literally ‘living-on', not (yet) dead. No matter how we deny or hide death it touches life. Similarly, it is possible to define sanity only by separating it from insanity, so the meaning of sanity depends upon the existence of insanity. The 'excluded', negative or demonised term exerts a certain power over the positive term. So, according to Baudrillard, the spectre of death haunts life, just as the spectre of madness haunts sanity, disorder threatens order and Evil stalks the Good. The excluded or 'pathological' term casts a shadow over 'normality' because, in the terminology Baudrillard borrows from Lacan, it become its Imaginary, its phantasy. Capital and economic power are, for Baudrillard, ultimately only the 'fantastic secularisation' of the power to separate living and dead. Humanism, democracy and even revolution alter nothing fundamental because they do operate at the level of symbolic exchange - that is, they do not challenge the bar of binary oppositions. Indeed, by aiming for equality they actually nourish the systemic or structural nature of binary oppositions, Baudrillard suggests. Political movements based on improving matters for the repressed term, in terms set by the dominant term, cannot, for Baudrillard, ever be revolutionary: on the contrary, 'the revolution can only consist in the abolition of the separation of death, and not in equality of survival' (1993a: 129).

### Link – Util

#### Calls to take action and alleviate suffering from within debate vampirically drain the life out of the so-called “victims,” commodifying their pain for the ballot

Baudrillard 96 (Jean Baudrillard The Perfect Crime, 1996, pg 133 – 137, CP)

Our reality: that is the problem. We have only one, and it has to be saved. `We have to do something. We can't do nothing.' But doing something solely because you can't not do something has never constituted a principle of action or freedom. Just a form of absolution from one's own impotence and compassion for one's own fate. The people of Sarajevo do not have to face this question. Where they are, there is an absolute need to do what they do, to do what has to be done. Without illusion as to ends and without compassion towards themselves. That is what being real means, being in the real. And this is not at all the `objective' reality of their misfortune, that reality which `ought not to exist' and for which we feel pity, but the reality which exists as it is -- the reality of an action and a destiny. This is why they are alive, and we are the ones who are dead. This is why, in our own eyes, we have first and foremost to save the reality of the war and impose that -- compassionate -- reality on those who are suffering from it but who, at the very heart of war and distress, do not really believe in it. To judge by their own statements, the Bosnians do not really believe in the distress which surrounds them. In -- 134 -the end, they find the whole unreal situation senseless, unintelligible. It is a hell, but an almost hyperreal hell, made the more hyperreal by media and humanitarian harassment, since that makes the attitude of the whole world towards them all the more incomprehensible. Thus, they live in a kind of spectrality of war -- and it is a good thing they do, or they could never bear it. But we know better than they do what reality is, because we have chosen them to embody it. Or simply because it is what we -- and the whole of the West -- most lack. We have to go and retrieve a reality for ourselves where the bleeding is. All these ‘corridors’ we open up to send them our supplies and our `culture' are, in reality, corridors of distress through which we import their force and the energy of their misfortune. Unequal exchange once again. Whereas they find a kind of additional strength in the thorough stripping-away of the illusions of reality and of our political principles -- the strength to survive what has no meaning -- we go to convince them of the `reality' of their suffering -- by culturalizing it, of course, by theatricalizing it so that it can serve as a point of reference in the theatre of Western values, one of which is solidarity. This all exemplifies a situation which has now become general, in which inoffensive and impotent intellectuals exchange their woes for those of the wretched, each supporting the other in a kind of perverse contract -- exactly as the political class and civil society exchange their respective woes today, the one serving up its corruption and scandals, the other its artificial convulsions and inertia. Thus we saw Bourdieu and the Abbé Pierre offering themselves up in televisual sacrifice, exchanging between them the pathos-laden language and sociological metalanguage of wretchedness. And so, also, our whole society is embarking on the path of commiseration in the literal sense, under cover of ecumenical pathos. It is almost as though, in a moment of intense repentance among intellectuals and politicians, related to the panic-stricken state of history and the twilight of values, we had to replenish the stocks of values, the referential reserves, by appealing to that lowest -- 135 -common denominator that is human misery, as though we had to restock the hunting grounds with artificial game. A victim society. I suppose all it is doing is expressing its own disappointment and remorse at the impossibility of perpetrating violence upon itself. The New Intellectual Order everywhere follows the paths opened up by the New World Order. The misfortune, wretchedness and suffering of others have everywhere become the raw material and the primal scene. Victimhood, accompanied by Human Rights as its sole funerary ideology. Those who do not exploit it directly and in their own name do so by proxy. There is no lack of middlemen, who take their financial or symbolic cut in the process. Deficit and misfortune, like the international debt, are traded and sold on in the speculative market -- in this case the politico-intellectual market, which is quite the equal of the late, unlamented military-industrial complex. Now, all commiseration is part of the logic of misfortune [malheur]. To refer to misfortune, if only to combat it, is to give it a base for its objective reproduction in perpetuity. When fighting anything whatever, we have to start out -- fully aware of what we are doing -- from evil, never from misfortune.

#### The aff promotes a vision of life that is mere survival – this produces a form of life that is a living death – it’s try or die for the alternative to restore value to life

Fluri 11 [(Jennifer, Geography Department and Women’s and Gender Studies Program, Dartmouth College) “Capitalizing on Bare Life: Sovereignty, Exception, and Gender Politics” Antipode Vol. 00 No. 0 2011] AT

In the introduction to Homo Sacer, Agamben defines ancient Greek terms for life: “zoe ̈ which expressed the simple fact of living common to all living beings (animals, men, or gods), and bios, which indicated the form or way of living proper to an individual or a group” (Agamben 1995:1). He sets up these distinctions to critique the condition of modern “western” politics. “Western politics has not succeeded in constructing the link between zoe ̈ and bios, between voice and language, that would have healed the fracture. Bare life remains included in politics in the form of the exception” (Agamben 1995:11). Agamben also identifies sacred life, homo sacer, which is made into “the object of aid and protection” (1995:133). He continues to link humanitarian organizations “in perfect symmetry with state power, need. A humanitarianism separated from politics cannot fail to reproduce the isolation of scared life at the basis of sovereignty, and the camp” (1995:134). Humanitarian organizations and development projects are integrated into the folds of sovereign power based on donor dictates and the ideologies of individuals on the “front lines” of humanitarian action. Also the assumption that life targeted for humanitarianism is by definition homo sacer and bare life assumes a hierarchal arrangement between zoe ̈ (bare life) and the subjective claims and politicized perspective for defining bios or proper life worth living. Placing (or displacing) life onto the margins of bios (proper life) by firmly binding it into a framework of human rights at the site of zoe ̈ (as common or bare life) subjectively defines and demarcates bare life as the site of living death, as well as potentiality or transference. Minca’s calls on geographers to think of places (rather than spaces) in order to avoid translating lived bodies into “the corpus of the nation” and the isolation of bare life (Minca 2007:90). Bare life (as defined in conflict or emergency aid/development zones) is life on the precipice of potentiality—as a living corpse “in need” of rebirth to bios through outside intervention. Layers of politics (and economically structured assumptions) substantiate the reduction from “proper” to bare life, and the creation of victims into sites of “humanitarian” biopolitics. As argued by Redfield: “the bios that understands itself as a civilizing force has difficulty imagining a zoe ̈ that it could not civilize or one whose alteration might change the very conditions of dignity” (2005:345). Bare life can then be discursively articulated as a site of potentiality through transcendental or metaphysical re-birth (such as attempted by religious groups) or by way of economic transference from bare life (zoe ̈—essential life) to bios (life with meaning—a “proper” life). The transference from zoe ̈ to bios re-evaluates life by way of its devaluation through an outsider’s lens. Life defined as on the edge of survival—essential and basic—resides in this zone of indistinction, where “universal” conceptualizations of rights are called upon to carry out a rescue by means of economic development as the mode of this transference.

### Impact – Violence Laundry List

#### Third, A consumption-driven system causes every impact

Smith 10 [(Richard G. Smith, Associate Professor of Geography at Swansea university) “The Baudrillard Dictionary” under “Code” Edinburgh University Press, 2010] AT

According to Baudrillard, a ‘perverse’ logic (SC, 97) drives consumer societies. A logic that fuels, not just the use and abuse of drugs, but also the growth of other phenomena: terrorism, violence, depression, fascism and so forth. These phenomena are all, says Baudrillard, the product or outcome of ‘an excess of organization, regulation and rationalization within a system’ (SC, 97). In other words, those societies which are defined and ‘saturated’ by their system of consumption tend to suffer from an excess of systemic rationalisation (logic and rationality, surveillance and control), which perversely leads to the emergence – for no apparent reason – of ‘internal pathologies’, ‘strange dysfunctions’, ‘unforeseeable, incurable accidents’, ‘anomalies’ (SC, 97), which disrupt the system’s capacity for totality, perfection and reality invention. It is the logic of an excessive system to fuel the growth of anomalies, which along with AIDS and cancer are pathologies in that they have not come from elsewhere, from ‘outside’ or from afar, but are rather a product of the ‘over-protection’ of the body – be it social or individual. The system’s overcapacity to protect, normalise and integrate is evidenced everywhere: natural immunity is replaced by systems of artificial immunity – ‘hygienic, chemical, medical, social and psychological pros- thetics’ (SC, 98) – in the name of science and progress.

### Impact – Identity Violence

#### The code’s effacement of alterity guarantees hatred and violent lashout

Pawlette 8 [(William, senior lecturer in media, communications and cultural studies at University of Wolverhampton) “HATE/CODE” Kritikos Volume 5, September-October 2008] AT

Hatred is undoubtedly something which outlives any definable object, and feeds on the disappearance of that object (Baudrillard 1995/1996: 145). What then is the relationship between the Code and violence and hatred? The Code, it seems, both pacifies and produces hate: indeed it produces hatred through pacification. The Code integrates as it differentiates, it culturates and multi-culturates. Baudrillard acknowledged that consumer capitalism had, partially, achieved a pacifying or ameliorative effect on ‘structural’ hatred such as the racism of biology or skin colour. However, the system, through its compulsory registration of all within the Code, generates, according to Baudrillard, new hatreds and new violence that cannot be ‘treated’ by socialisation, education and information. On racism specifically Baudrillard argues: Logically it [racism] ought to have declined with progress and the spread of Enlightenment. But the more we learn how unfounded the genetic theory of race is, the more racism intensifies. This is because we are dealing with an artificial construction of the Other, on the basis of an erosion of the singularity of cultures (Baudrillard 2002a: 55). If the dialectical violence of difference (self v. other) is ameliorated, the post-dialectical violence of indifference seems to grow in intensity. The violence of in-difference or “the hate” is a viral form and like a hospital ‘superbug’ it cannot be treated by the standard measures and cures because the over-use of those very measures produced it (Baudrillard 1996: 142-147; 2005: 141-155). The Code’s vast edifice of signs diversifies and assimilates producing ‘positive’ representations at the same time as the divide, both economic and cultural, between rich and poor deepens and ramifies. The richer get richer and the poor get humiliated. For Baudrillard the edifice of signs actually “deters”, prevents or displaces the possibility of genuine social progress by delivering “simulated” social progress: signs of inclusion, signs of empowerment. Further the masses (everyone, “nous, vous, tout le monde”) reject, ultimately, the system of signs; we become increasingly indifferent to it, disengaged from its prescriptions. The hate cannot be treated by the use of signs because the over-use of signs produced it. The hate, as Baudrillard figures it, cannot be broken down and understood through the binary or dialectical categories of self and other, black and white, inside and outside, us and them. The hate does not emanate from a recognisable position: a self, ideology or culture, nor does it emerge from the self, ideology or culture of the other. The verb ‘to hate’, like the self or ego has become autonomous: uprooted it flows and seeps crossing any boundary, any limit (Baudrillard 2005c: 141). The hate flows, is networked, travels at the speed of information; it has not one object or target but all and any. Because it is not, primarily, hatred of something or someone, it is not reflective or critical nor does it propose alternatives. Having no definite object, goal or purpose, no programme or ideology, the Hate is a particularly intractable and corrosive form of hatred. According to Baudrillard it devours the social relation: “it is certainly the end of the social” (Baudrillard 1996: 146). Baudrillard’s major example is terrorism which he discussed many times during his career. Terrorism, he asserts, does not oppose a state or ideology, still less proposes alternatives: terrorism refuses meaning, it aims at the social Code itself, it is “senseless and indeterminate, like the system it combats” (1983: 51). I have discussed terrorism elsewhere (Pawlett 2007: 133-149) and would like to offer alternative examples here. If we take the violent protests by some Muslim groups provoked by the Danish newspaper, Jyllands-Posten, publishing cartoons of the prophet Mohammed – what precisely was the object of the protester’s hate? It was not a particular newspaper, it was not the Danish state or people, it was, perhaps, not even ‘The West’ as such, it was the dominance of a system of representation that recognises no outside, no sacred, no ‘beyond’; that reduces all meanings, beliefs and sensations to sign fodder.[8] To offer other empirical cases, recent examples of the ‘serial killer’ in the UK include Levi Bellfield who hated and murdered the sign-type ‘blondes’ and Steve Wright who murdered the sign-type ‘prostitute’. Yet, moving away from such extreme behaviour into the quotidian, the middle classes hate and fear the sign-types ‘hoodie’ or the baseball-capped ‘chav’. The BNP hate the sign-type ‘Muslim’ though, increasingly ‘tolerate’ the Hindu or Sikh. But tolerance is always useless, always strategic and is generally indistinguishable from indifference. What Baudrillard’s position suggests is that we do not hate the Other – the radically Other, we merely hate the other – as transcribed and signified through the Code. The Code reduces the radically Other to the “dangerously similar”: dangerously similar because they differ only in sign content or position (Baudrillard 1993: 124-138). In our superficial or unwitting acceptance of the Code we hate (and ‘we’ do all hate) the other as sign, as merely a signified ‘reality’. We encounter an other who is no more than the ‘reality’ of their signification; at best we are indifferent to the other and tolerate them. Indeed we cannot but be indifferent to the other because it is through indifference that, socially, we tolerate. But Baudrillard’s position is not one of despair, nor, clearly, is it an elitist rejection of the masses and their behaviour. As mass we also defy the system, our acceptance is only ever partial and superficial. Transcription always fails, or else we fail the demands of transcription: in failing we defy and re-open the space of ambivalence (Baudrillard 1981: 205-10). In sum, the Code feeds “the hate” by replacing the potential for symbolic relations between people – the ambivalence of reciprocal exchange – with an insertion or transcription into the terms of the Code. Thus transcribed an individual person is merely a conglomeration of signs which fabricate their ‘reality’ – and if this is what we are reduced to, why wouldn’t we hate each other? Acting-out Here I want to examine a specific feature of Baudrillard’s approach to the issue of agency and violence. It has been claimed that Baudrillard has no theory of agency and that this constitutes a fundamental weakness in his work (Kellner 1989: 216). Baudrillard position was that the illusion of agency was an effect of the Code, and a powerful one. Yet even as we are transcribed into the terms of the Code we remain singularities in radical ambivalence – hence Baudrillard did not reduce embodied experience to an effect of language. Within the Code there is no meaningful agency or resistance in the conventional sense, but there are, Baudrillard insisted, other forms of agency. One which his later work developed was “acting-out”. Within the Code we are not merely ‘internalised’ as the work of Nietzsche, Weber and others suggests. For Baudrillard we are now in a new phase where the inner-directed self must compare, contrast and differentiate themselves in relation to others in term of coded positions on a hierarchical scale. The Code generates, according to Baudrillard, a state of “annoyed indifference”. Yet indifference may suddenly, inexplicably, accelerate into a violent “acting-out” – that is into ‘real’ acts of violence. Baudrillard’s use of the Freudian term “acting-out” (Agieren) requires some clarification. In fact Baudrillard used a number of terms which bear the stamp of Freud and Lacan throughout his career: real, symbolic and imaginary, seduction, abreaction, transference and counter-transference, though curiously these have not attracted the attention of most critics and commentators. In contrast, Mike Gane has suggested that Baudrillard’s ideas concerning symbolic exchange can be understood as his ‘version’ of the Freudian Unconscious. For Freud the notion of ‘acting-out’ concerns repressed memories of past events which return by expressing themselves in actions that the actor ‘responsible’ cannot understand and which appear irrational or ‘out of character’ (Freud 1920/1991). For Lacan acting-out occurs when the capitalised or ‘big’ Other (which I will define simply as the Code at this stage, but see below on ‘radical alterity’) refuses to listen to the subject or rules out in advance any recognition of the subject’s desires or hopes.[9] In acting-out the humiliated subject unconsciously or unwittingly expresses a message to society: you will listen, you will take notice. However neither the ‘agent’ of this acting-out, nor society at large, comprehend this failed act of communication. Baudrillard adapts the Lacanian sense of the term and it becomes vital to his later work on hatred, violence and terrorism. Acting-out, for Baudrillard, may well be incomprehensible to the people involved and to society’s official discourses of criminology and criminal justice, but it is far from meaningless. We are all humiliated by the Code, by transcription and transparency, by competition and anxiety but some are humiliated far more than others. We cannot oppose anything so nebulous, evanescent, so abstract as the Code but acts of violence, defiance and hatred become as nebulous, as formless, as ubiquitous as the Code. Hatred and violence are destructured, become less and less comprehensible through the well-worn categories of self and other. Indeed hatred “outlives any definable object and feeds on the disappearance of that object” (1996: 145). The “absent other of hatred” can be literally anybody at anytime. We might hate someone for their religion or ‘culture’, or for their music collection or hairstyle, we might even kill someone for the way they looked at us. To cite other recent cases in the UK: a ‘Chav’ kills a ‘Goth’ because the Goth was “different”. Yet, the difference involved is merely a semiotic difference from the Chav.[10] Not a relation of radical difference or alterity but, as Baudrillard terms it a “dangerous similarity”: Chavs wear white, Goths wear black. Both are popular cultural youth styles, both exist for the other as differential sign display, each positions the other as the other positions them. But, according to Baudrillard, the Goth is not the Chav’s object of hate. The hate is sudden, eruptive “acting-out”; it evaporates as suddenly as it flared.[11] We can find support for Baudrillard’s ideas in academic criminology. Kenneth Polk (1994) presents a number of fascinating case studies of “male confrontational homicide” and emphasises both the similarity, in terms of age, class and income (as well as gender) of victims and aggressors, and the sudden evaporation of hostility after the event. Typically young males arrested for fatal attacks on their peers do express remorse, as well as disbelief, and, according to Polk, a curious sense of being unable to define or locate any reason for hostility. After the event comments such as “he seemed a decent bloke” are apparently common, the protagonists recalling no dislike and unable to offer any rationalisation to the police (Polk 1994: 111). For Baudrillard acting-out as failed communication, where communication is impossible, is not, fundamentally, a cry of the dispossessed or impoverished. It is rather a response of the relatively affluent, of those on the ‘right’ side of the global divide, it is a communication that says ‘Be other’, it is “a desperate form of the production of the other” (2005c: 147). But this is still the lower case other, the other of the Code, not the Other of radical alterity. We do not hate the Other, the Other in their unfathomable singularity, we suffer from an object-less hate, a vague sense of unfulfillment and ennui that in acting-out we project at anyone who can function, however momentarily, as our other, our enemy. In such a situation it is an ‘other’ not the Other that is hated; indeed any ‘other’ will do.

### Impact – Necronomy/Extinction

#### The impact is necronomy—an economy of death that destroys value to life and condemns us all to extinction

Bifo 11 [(Franco Berardi, Italian Marxist theorist and activist in the autonomist tradition, whose work mainly focuses on the role of the media and information technology within post-industrial capitalism) “After the Future” 09/20/11]

More than ever, economic rationality is at odds with social rationality. Economic science is not part of the solution to the crisis: it is the source of the problem. On July 18th 2009 the headline of The Economist read: “What went¶ wrong with economics?” The text is an attempt to downplay the crisis of the Economics profession, and of economic knowledge. For neoliberal economist the central dogma of growth, profit and competition cannot be questioned, because it is identified with the perfect mathematical rationality of the market. And belief in the intrinsic rationality of the market is crucial in the economic theology of neoliberalism. But the reduction of social life to the rational exchange of economic values is an obsession that has nothing to do with science. It’s a political strategy aimed¶ to identify humans as calculating machines, aimed to shape behavior and perception in such a way that money becomes the only motivation of social action. But it is not accurate as a description of social dynamics, and the¶ conflicts, pathologies, and irrationality of human relationships. Rather, it is an attempt at creating the anthropological brand of homo calculans that Foucault (2008) has described in his seminar of 1979/80, published with the title The Birth of Biopolitics. This attempt to identify human beings with calculating devices has produced cultural devastation, and has finally been showed to have been based upon flawed assumptions. Human beings do calculate, but their calculation is not perfectly rational, because the value of goods is not determined by objective¶ reasons, and because decisions are influenced by what Keynes named animal¶ spirits. “We will never really understand important economic events unless we¶ confront the fact that their causes are largely mental in nature,” say Akerlof¶ and Shiller (2009: 1) in their book Animal Spirits, echoing Keynes’s¶ assumption that the rationality of the market is not perfect in itself. Akerlof¶ and Shiller are avowing the crisis of neoliberal thought, but their critique is¶ not radical enough, and does not touch the legitimacy of the economic¶ episteme.¶ Animal Spirits is the title of an other book, by Matteo Pasquinelli (2008).¶ Pasquinelli’s book deals with bodies and digits, and parasites, and goes much¶ deeper in its understanding of the roots of the crisis than its eponymous¶ publication: “Cognitive capitalism emerges in the form of a parasite: it¶ subjects social knowledge and inhibits its emancipatory potential” (Pasquinelli¶ 2008: 93). “Beyond the computer screen, precarious workers and freelancers¶ experience how Free Labor and competition are increasingly devouring their¶ everyday life” (Pasquinelli 2008: 15).¶ Pasquinelli goes to the core of the problem: the virtualization of social¶ production has acted as the proliferation of a parasite, destroying the¶ prerequisites of living relationships, absorbing and neutralizing the living¶ energies of cognitive workers. The economic recession is not only the effect of¶ financial craziness, but also the effect of the de-vitalization of the social field. This is why the collapse of the economic system is also the collapse of economic epistemology that has guided the direction of politics in the last two¶ centuries.¶ Economics cannot understand the depth of the crisis, because below the crisis of financial exchange there is the crisis of symbolic exchange. I mean the psychotic boom of panic, depression, and suicide, the general decline of desire and social empathy. The question that rises from the collapse is so radical that¶ the answer cannot be found in the economic conceptual framework. ¶ Furthermore, one must ask if economics really is a science? If the word¶ “science” means the creation of concepts for the understanding and¶ description of an object, economics is not a science. Its object does not exist.¶ The economic object (scarcity, salaried labor, and profit) is not an object that¶ exists before and outside the performative action of the economic episteme.¶ Production, consumption, and daily life become part of the economic discourse when labor is detached and opposed to human activity, when it falls under the domination of capitalist rule. The economic object does not pre-exist conceptual activity, and economic description is in fact a normative action. In this sense Economics is a technique, a process of semiotization of the world, and also a mythology, a¶ narration. Economics is a suggestion and a categorical imperative: ¶ Money makes things happen. It is the source of action in the world and¶ perhaps the only power we invest in. Life seems to depend on it. Everything¶ within us would like to say that it does not, that this cannot be. But the¶ Almighty Dollar has taken command. The more it is denied the more it shows¶ itself as Almighty. Perhaps in every other respect, in every other value,¶ bankruptcy has been declared, giving money the power of some sacred deity,¶ demanding to be recognized. Economics no longer persuades money to¶ behave. Numbers cannot make the beast lie down and be quiet or sit up and do¶ tricks. At best, economics is a neurosis of money, a symptom contrived to hold¶ the beast in abeyance…. Thus economics shares the language of psychopathology – inflation, depression, lows and highs, slumps and peaks, investments and losses. (Sordello 1983) From the age of the enclosures in England the economic process has been a¶ process of production of scarcity (scarcification). The enclosures were intended to scarcify the land, and the basic means of survival, so that people who so far had been able to cultivate food for their family were forced to become proletarians, then salaried industrial workers. Capitalism is based on the artificial creation of need, and economic science is essentially a technique of scarcification of time, life and food. Inside the condition of scarcity human beings are subjected to exploitation and to the domain of profit-oriented¶ activity. After scarcifying the land (enclosures) capitalism has scarcified time itself, forcing people who don’t have property other than their own life and body, to lend their life-time to capital. Now the capitalist obsession for growth¶ is making scarce both water and air.¶ Economic science is not the science of prediction: it is the technique of¶ producing, implementing, and pushing scarcity and need. This is why Marx¶ did not speak of economy, but of political economy. The technique of¶ economic scarcification is based on a mythology, a narration that identifies¶ richness as property and acquisition, and subjugates the possibility of living to¶ the lending of time and to the transformation of human activity into salaried¶ work. ¶ In recent decades, technological change has slowly eroded the very¶ foundations of economic science. Shifting from the sphere of production of¶ material objects to the semiocapitalist production of immaterial goods, the¶ Economic concepts are losing their foundation and legitimacy. The basic¶ categories of Economics are becoming totally artificial. ¶ The theoretical justification of private property, as you read in the writings of¶ John Locke, is based on the need of exclusive consumption. An apple must be¶ privatized, if you want to avoid the danger that someone else eats your apple.¶ But what happens when goods are immaterial, infinitely replicable without¶ cost? Thanks to digitalization and immaterialization of the production process, the economic nomos of private property loses its ground, its raison d’etre, and it can be imposed only by force. Furthermore, the very foundation of salary, the relationship between time needed for production and value of the product, is vanishing. The immaterialization and cognitivization of production makes it almost impossible to quantify the average time needed to produce value. Time and value become incommensurable, and violence becomes the only law able to determine price and salary.¶ The neoliberal school, which has opened the way to the worldwide deregulation of social production, has fostered the mythology of rational¶ expectations in economic exchange, and has touted the idea of a selfregulation of the market, first of all the labor-market. But self-regulation is a lie. In order to increase exploitation, and to destroy social welfare, global capitalism has used political institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization, not to mention the military enforcement of the political decisions of these institutions. Far from being self-regulated, the market is militarily regulated. The mythology of free individuals loyally competing on the base of perfect knowledge of the market is a lie, too. Real human beings are not perfect rational calculating machines. And the myth of rational expectations has¶ finally crashed after the explosion of the real estate mortgage bubble. The¶ theory of rational expectation is crucial in neoliberal thought: the economic¶ agents are supposed to be free to choose in a perfectly rational way the best¶ deal in selling and buying. The fraud perpetrated by the investment agencies¶ has destroyed the lives of millions of Americans, and has exposed the¶ theoretical swindle. Economic exchange cannot be described as a rational game, because irrational¶ factors play a crucial role in social life in general. Trickery, misleading¶ information, and psychic manipulation are not exceptions, but the professional¶ tools of advertisers, financial agents, and economic consultants. ¶ The idea that social relationships can be described in mathematical terms has the force of myth, but it is not science, and it has nothing to do with natural¶ law. Notwithstanding the failure of the theory, neoliberal politics are still in¶ control of the global machine, because the criminal class that has seized power has no intention of stepping down, and because the social brain is unable to recompose and find the way of self-organization. I read in the New York Times¶ on September 6th 2009:¶ After the mortgage business imploded last year, Wall Street investment banks began searching for another big idea to make money. They think they may¶ have found one. The bankers plan to buy “life settlements,” life insurance¶ policies that ill and elderly people sell for cash, depending on the life¶ expectancy of the insured person. Then they plan to “securitize” these policies,¶ in Wall Street jargon, by packaging hundreds of thousands together into bonds.¶ They will then resell those bonds to investors, like big pension funds, who will¶ receive the payouts when people with the insurance die. The earlier the¶ policyholder dies, the bigger the return, though if people live longer than¶ expected investors could get poor returns or even lose money.¶ Imagine that I buy an insurance policy on my life (something I would¶ absolutely not do). My insurer of course will wish me a long life, so I’ll pay¶ the fee for a long time, while he should pay lots of money to my family if I¶ 113die. But some enlightened finance guru has the brilliant idea of insuring the¶ insurer. He buys the risk, and he invests on the hope that I die soon. You don’t need the imagination of Philip K. Dick to guess the follow up of the story: financial agents will be motivated to kill me overnight. The talk of recovery is based on necronomy, the economy of death. It’s not new, as capitalism has always profited from wars, slaughters and genocides. But now the equation becomes unequivocal. Death is the promise, death is the investment and the hope. Death is the best future that capitalism may secure.

### Satellite – No Causality

#### Causality is an illusion

Pawlett 10 [(William Pawlett, senior lecturer in media, communications and cultural studies at University of Wolverhampton) “The Baudrillard Dictionary” under “Code” Edinburgh University Press, 2010] AT

Destiny is intimately linked to some of the most difficult ideas in Baudrillard’s vocabulary, in particular seduction, the object and fatal strategies. Baudrillard is not interested in the notion of individual destiny (you will meet a handsome stranger, and so on), but the destiny of the object, its cycles of appearance, disappearance and reappearance. Indeed, for Baudrillard, ‘[destiny] comes to us from the other. Each is the destiny of the other. There is no individual destiny’ (IEx, 84). There are a number of exchanges, experiences or spaces where what we might ordinarily call the ‘subject’, person or individual, becomes, according to Baudrillard, an object. This notion of becoming- object is crucial to Baudrillard’s understanding of destiny. For Baudrillard destiny is rarely sensed in the ‘indifferent spaces’ of modern life (FS) where people (as ‘subjects’) are confined by instrumental rationality, purpose and time constraints. Yet where action is governed by a set of ‘entirely arbitrary rules’, rather than by norms or laws, in spaces such as those of ceremony and ritual, games and traditional dance, destiny, Baudrillard contends, is given free reign. Ceremonial or ritual space is enchanted not indifferent: time/space relations are altered, ceremonies unfold in their own time, ‘the ceremony contains the presentiment of its development and its end . . . [Time] must have the time to disappear’￼(FS, 207). Further, the rules of the game or ritual leave no place for legal, moral or psychological considerations; indeed, all that holds together ‘the subject’ is suspended, returning only when the game or ritual is over. Baudrillard’s oft-repeated example of the play of destiny is based on the old Iraqi folk tale known as ‘Death in Samarkand’. A soldier, on his way to market, sees the black-cloaked figure of Death apparently beckoning him. Terrified he flees and begs his king to lend him his fastest horse so that he may escape to the distant city of Samarkand. The following day the king asks Death why he frightened his soldier. Death replies ‘I didn’t mean to frighten him. It was just that I was surprised to see this soldier here, when we had a rendezvous tomorrow in Samarkand’ (S, 72). The soldier is destined, inevitably, to meet Death, who is himself ‘an innocent player in the game’ (S, 73). There is a direct line of development from Baudrillard’s positions con- cerning ritual initiation, his arguments on seduction and his thinking on destiny: ‘the initiatory fact of seducing and being seduced . . . consists in giving you a destiny, and not only an existence’ (FS, 165–6). Destiny then comes into play as a dual or ‘double life’ that unfolds beyond biological existence. That which reappears or returns signals a double life of destiny; ‘each individual life unfolds on two levels, in two dimensions – history and destiny – which coincide only exceptionally’ (IEx, 79). Baudrillard seems to derive this thinking from Nietzsche’s notion of the Eternal Return (IEx), though this influence is allusive not formative. Freed from biology, from historical change, from social norms and moral laws that define the ‘subject’, the double life is one of becoming object, becoming other, meta- morphosing not by choice but by the hands of fate. The opposition between chance (randomness) and determination (causal connection), Baudrillard argues, is a modern construction built on the denial of sacred and ceremonial social forms; he insists ‘the truth is that there is no chance’ (FS, 182), ‘Nothing is dead, nothing is inert, nothing is disconnected, uncorrelated or aleatory. Everything, on the contrary, is fatally, admirably connected – not at all according to rational relations [. . .], but according to an incessant cycle of metamorphoses, according to the seductive rapports of form and appearance’ (FS, 185). Games of chance such as gambling involve, for Baudrillard, a passion ‘to upset the causal system and the objective way things proceed and re-engage their fatal linkage’ (FS, 189). But how can events be ‘fated’? Writing on the death of Princess Diana, Baudrillard states ‘if we assess all that would have had not to have happened for the event not to take place, then quite clearly it could not but occur . . . no Dodi and no Ritz, nor all the wealth of the Arab princes and the historical rivalry with the British. The British Empire itself would have had to have been wiped from history’ (IEx, 136). And we prize such fated events, such spaces of destiny; for Baudrillard ‘each of us secretly prefers an arbitrary and cruel order, one that leaves us no choice, to the horrors of a liberal one where . . . we are forced to recognise that we don’t know what we want’ (FS, 206). Our fundamental passion, he asserts, is to be drawn out of the (hyper-)reality of rational- ity and causality and to be placed within a ‘pure unfolding’ of destiny. Further, with causal, temporal and subjectivist illusions suspended, there is, for Baudrillard, renewed potential for symbolic relations with the other: ‘if I am inseparable from the other, from all the others I almost became, then all destinies are linked . . . being is a linked succession of forms, and to speak of one’s own will makes no sense’ (IEx, 84). ‘There is in this symbolic circulation, in this sharing of destinies, the essence of a subtler freedom than the individual liberty to make up one’s mind’ (IEx, 85). According to Baudrillard, the processes of writing poetry and (radical) theory, like ritual, impose a set of rules of the game that must be followed and so can suspend the illusory opposition between a causal determined universe and one of freedom and choice. Words, signs, and things seduce each other with the subject reduced to their conduit, forging connections through ‘chain reaction’; this is the ‘order of destiny’. In both language (wit, slips of the tongue, poetry, theory) and in material, ‘socio-political’ registers destiny appears ‘where events attain their effects without passing through causes’ (FS, 192), moving in a predestined linkage. In ‘chance’ meetings and encounters and in ‘socio-political’ events things sometimes seem to happen in a flash, ‘in advance of the unfolding of their causes’ so that ‘reasons come after’ (FS, 198). We are seduced by the rapid flashes of appearance and disappearance, sometimes following them without thinking. Rationality, by contrast, seeks to invent causes to dispel this play of appearance and disappearance, to make them more ‘solid’. However ‘no event can put an end to the succession of events, and no action can definitively determine what follows’ (IEx, 87). Ultimately, Baudrillard suggests that both the world of destiny and the world of reason and causality are ‘equally groundless’ (FS, 206), but while the former seduces and links us to the Other, the latter bores and frustrates.

### Alt – Radical Alterity

#### The alternative is to recognize radical alterity – refusing to ascribe a fixed identity to the Other means the system cannot assimilate the Other

Pawlette 8 [(William, senior lecturer in media, communications and cultural studies at University of Wolverhampton) “HATE/CODE” Kritikos Volume 5, September-October 2008] AT

Baudrillard’s position was not one of despair; it is not without hope. The Code is not total; it merely aims at totality. Though we may act as though we believe in the system, ultimately we do not. Baudrillard wrote “I am not a pessimist … singularity (or radical otherness) is indestructible” (2005). There is always a “principle of secret disaffection” (1996: 142) against the system, disaffection is felt by all, despite their relative position in the hierarchy of the Code. The absorption, integration and channelling of all negative elements by the Code inevitably gives rise to “violent, virulent, destabilising abreactions” (ibid.). In this, as in much else, Baudrillard’s position did not change, remaining consistent from the writing of The Consumer Society in the late 1960s right through to The Intelligence of Evil (2005a) and late essays such as The Pyres of Autumn (2005). We hate the other as sign, as signifying regime which allows us, momentarily, to act-out our frustrations through them. As we hate the other as sign, we must, as Baudrillard demanded, “burn signs” (1981: 163). If we acknowledge that the Code humiliates us all, some far more than others, and that humiliated people will, occasionally and not in any predictable way, act-out to communicate disaffection and defiance we must not play the game of signs, we must not play with the humiliation of the other through signs. Because of the violence of the Code as system of assimilation and absorption, violent ‘acting-out’ is always, for Baudrillard, a counter-offensive or counter-gift. This process does not take place at the conscious, rational, goal-directed level of the Liberal subject: it is an “abreaction”, a rising to the surface of a ‘repressed’, ingrained violence – our positioning by the Code. We are all humiliated by the Code; we are all rubbished and “ripped apart” by it. How do we defy the Code? We might begin with counter-violence: a counter-gift or “subtraction” directed against our-‘self’ as constituted by the Code. Not self-hatred or ressentiment but defiance of the Code’s violent construction of our ‘identity’ as signified and defined through the “ludique” game of signs. We allow the other to become Other, singular, non-identical. We do not place or define ourselves or others. We do not reduce the other to a ‘reality’ – neither what we imagine to be a positive, endorsing, empowering ‘reality’ or to a negative, stereotyped ‘reality’. To reduce the other to a ‘reality’ in order to confer them rights and representation is, for the conferrer, a form of control and limitation over the conferee. Yet this form of control is never stable or complete, the recipient of rights or entitlements may not believe in them as the system does. To be in the Code is to be able to defy the Code, and, according to Baudrillard, behind our superficial acceptance of the system we do, in any case, practice a poetics of “distance”. A “distance” not from the Other, but from ourselves: a distance that recovers proximity to the Other (Baudrillard 2001: 45-50, 70-73). We might look for the singularity of the Other, and for oneself as Other, as radical alterity, as ambivalence and “secret” that cannot be incorporated by the system because it cannot be read, understood or positioned. To experience self and other as CODE is the vital precondition to individualise, commodify and hate. Without a self the other cannot be the same and without self or other there is little scope for hate. Do not fight over signs: fight the sign system.

#### That means order-driven solutions like the aff’s policy approach can’t solve – they paradoxically increase disorder in the system which causes their own impacts

#### The alternative is to symbolically challenge the system by rejecting the gift of work and wage. The system’s power requires the unilateral giving of these gifts, which the alternative reverses

Pawlette 7 [(William Pawlett,senior lecturer in media, communications and cultural studies at University of Wolverhampton) “The 'Break' with Marxism”] AT

For Baudrillard, the system is so 'indifferent' it is scarcely meaningful to call it capitalist. Asked in 1997 what capitalism had become, Baudrillard replied, I really don't know ... a sort of dilution of the universal... purely operational... an automatic transcription of the world into the global' (1998b: 11). How might we oppose such a diffuse, indifferent yet 'automatic' system? The only possibility is to re-engage the symbolic level. The system operates through symbolic violence. The only genuinely defiant strategy, Baudrillard asserts, is the symbolic reversal or 'counter-gift' (contre-don). According to Baudrillard the events of May 1968 'shook the system down to the depths of its symbolic organisation'. The system responded to the symbolic challenge, the refusal of work and education, with another symbolic challenge by giving 'official status to oppositional discourse' (1993a: 34). The power of the system is based on the monopoly of gift giving, 'the exclusivity of the gift without counter-gift' (1993a: 36). The system gives the gifts of self and identity through advertising and consumption; it gives the gift of work and wage through the economy; it gives the gift of knowledge through the education system and the gift of information and interactivity through media and communication (1981: 164-84). These gifts are unilateral, they forbid response, they must and can only be accepted: they are, for Baudrillard, 'poisonous' gifts. The power of the system is completely dependent on 'the impossibility of responding or retorting' (1993a: 37). The system might be shattered, or at least momentarily suspended, by a counter-gift of the rejection of the gift and a reversal of power relations through a symbolic challenge that forces the system to respond, to raise the stakes further. We might reject, or refuse to accept, the 'gifts' of self, career, status and information.

#### 2 implications:

#### a. Alt solves the case – it destroys the capitalist system which is the root of the aff impacts

#### The perm is impossible – the alt requires rejecting the gift of wages the aff gives

### Alt – Suicide

#### The alternative requires exhaustion – choosing activist modes of resistance privileges the neoliberal ethos of productivity, which makes the system more powerful – a deliberate refusal to produce reorients suicide towards social creativity and builds a new form of civilization

Bifo 11 – Whit Whitmore’s pen name (Franco “Bifo” Berardi, After the Future pg 106-108)

Nothing, not even the system, can avoid the symbolic obligation, and it is in this trap that the only chance of a catastrophe for capital remains. The system turns on itself, as a scorpion does when encircled by the challenge of death. For it is summoned to answer, if it is not to lose face, to what can only be death. The system must itself commit suicide in response to the multiplied challenge of death and suicide. So hostages are taken. On the symbolic or sacrificial plane, from which every moral consideration of the innocence of the victims is ruled out the hostage is the substitute, the alter-ego of the terrorist, the hostage’s death for the terrorist. Hostage and terrorist may thereafter become confused in the same sacrificial act. (Baudrillard 1993a: 37) In these impressive pages Baudrillard outlines the end of the modern dialectics of revolution against power, of the labor movement against capitalist domination, and predicts the advent of a new form of action which will be marked by the sacrificial gift of death (and self-annihilation). After the destruction of the World Trade Center in the most important terrorist act ever, Baudrillard wrote a short text titled The Spirit of Terrorism where he goes back to his own predictions and recognizes the emergence of a catastrophic age. When the code becomes the enemy the only strategy can be catastrophic: all the counterphobic ravings about exorcizing evil: it is because it is there, everywhere, like an obscure object of desire. Without this deep-seated complicity, the event would not have had the resonance it has, and in their symbolic strategy the terrorists doubtless know that they can count on this unavowable complicity. (Baudrillard 2003: 6) This goes much further than hatred for the dominant global power by the disinherited and the exploited, those who fell on the wrong side of global order. This malignant desire is in the very heart of those who share this order’s benefits. An allergy to all definitive order, to all definitive power is happily universal, and the two towers of the World Trade Center embodied perfectly, in their very double-ness (literally twin-ness), this definitive order: No need, then, for a death drive or a destructive instinct, or even for perverse, unintended effects. Very logically – inexorably – the increase in the power heightens the will to destroy it. And it was party to its own destruction. When the two towers collapsed, you had the impression that they were responding to the suicide of the suicide-planes with their own suicides. It has been said that “Even God cannot declare war on Himself.” Well, He can. The West, in position of God (divine omnipotence and absolute moral legitimacy), has become suicidal, and declared war on itself. (Baudrillard 2003: 6-7) In Baudrillard’s catastrophic vision I see a new way of thinking subjectivity: a reversal of the energetic subjectivation that animates the revolutionary theories of the 20th century, and the opening of an implosive theory of subversion, based on depression and exhaustion. In the activist view exhaustion is seen as the inability of the social body to escape the vicious destiny that capitalism has prepared: deactivation of the social energies that once upon a time animated democracy and political struggle. But exhaustion could also become the beginning of a slow movement towards a “wu wei” civilization, based on the withdrawal, and frugal expectations of life and consumption. Radicalism could abandon the mode of activism, and adopt the mode of passivity. A radical passivity would definitely threaten the ethos of relentless productivity that neoliberal politics has imposed. The mother of all the bubbles, the work bubble, would finally deflate. We have been working too much during the last three or four centuries, and outrageously too much during the last thirty years. The current depression could be the beginning of a massive abandonment of competition, consumerist drive, and of dependence on work. Actually, if we think of the geopolitical struggle of the first decade – the struggle between Western domination and jihadist Islam – we recognize that the most powerful weapon has been suicide. 9/11 is the most impressive act of this suicidal war, but thousands of people have killed themselves in order to destroy American military hegemony. And they won, forcing the western world into the bunker of paranoid security, and defeating the hyper-technological armies of the West both in Iraq, and in Afghanistan. The suicidal implosion has not been confined to the Islamists. Suicide has became a form of political action everywhere. Against neoliberal politics, Indian farmers have killed themselves. Against exploitation hundreds of workers and employees have killed themselves in the French factories of Peugeot, and in the offices of France Telecom. In Italy, when the 2009 recession destroyed one million jobs, many workers, haunted by the fear of unemployment, climbed on the roofs of the factories, threatening to kill themselves. Is it possible to divert this implosive trend from the direction of death, murder, and suicide, towards a new kind of autonomy, social creativity and of life? I think that it is possible only if we start from exhaustion, if we emphasize the creative side of withdrawal. The exchange between life and money could be deserted, and exhaustion could give way to a huge wave of withdrawal from the sphere of economic exchange. A new refrain could emerge in that moment, and wipe out the law of economic growth. The self-organization of the general intellect could abandon the law of accumulation and growth, and start a new concatenation, where collective intelligence is only subjected to the common good.

### Race Add-On

#### Identity politics merely plays with signs within capitalism, reaffirming consumerism – difference is just another position within the code

Pawlette 8 [(William, senior lecturer in media, communications and cultural studies at University of Wolverhampton) “HATE/CODE” Kritikos Volume 5, September-October 2008] AT

But if Marxist theory fails to engage with and challenge the system of signs, so too, for Baudrillard, do many Structuralist, Poststructuralist and Postmodernist theorists of desire, difference and liberation. To defy the system it is never sufficient to ‘play with signs’, that is to play with plural, ‘different’ or multiple identity positions. Here we encounter Baudrillard’s total rejection of what would later be called ‘identity politics’ and also a central misunderstanding of his position on signs.[4] For Baudrillard to play with signs – signs of consumption and status, signs of gender, sexuality or ethnicity is simply to operate within the Code. It is an unconscious or unwitting complicity with the Code’s logic of the multiplication of status positions, it is to assist it in the production of ‘diversity’ and ‘choice’. It is deeply ironic that many of Baudrillard’s critics have claimed, or assumed, that Baudrillard himself merely ‘played with signs’ and that through his notion of seduction he advocated a playing with signs. Yet Baudrillard is clear, in order to oppose the system “[e]ven signs must burn” (1981: 163). Crucially his controversial work Seduction (1979/1990) does not advocate a playing with signs. In it Baudrillard draws an important distinction between the “ludique” meaning playing the game of signs, playing with signification (to enhance one’s status position or to assert one’s identity through its ‘difference’), and “enjeux” meaning to put signs at stake, to challenging them or annul them through symbolic exchange (1990: 157-178).[5] For Baudrillard signs play with us, despite us, against us, limiting and defining us. Any radical defiance must be a defiance of signs and their coding within the sign system. Unfortunately the distinction between ‘playing with signs’ – playing with their decoding and recoding, and defying the sign system has not penetrated the mainstream of Media and Cultural Studies. Eco’s influential notion of “semiotic guerrilla warfare” (Eco 1967/1995) and Hall’s even more influential notion of “resistant decoding” place their faith in the sovereign, rational consumer to negotiate mediated meanings. For them the consumer citizen confronts media content as the subject confronts the object. Hall does not consider that much media content is ‘encoded’ in an ‘oppositional’ form which renders the moment of ‘oppositional decoding’ one of conformity (see Hall et al 1973/2002: 128-138). Examples would include much ‘youth’ advertising, Channel Four (UK) documentaries on poverty, third-world debt and racism and specialist programming slots for ‘minorities’ such as Sharia TV. In other words the terms for ‘resistant’ readings are pre-set as positions within the Code where resistance is already reduced to sign regime. From VO5 ‘punk’ hair to leftist and feminist identity politics – try them if you like, no-one cares one way or the other. Critique is rendered meaningless by coded assimilation because the system sells us the signs of opposition as willingly as it sells us the signs of conformity. Can we even tell them apart? In which category would we place Sex and the City, for example?[6] The realm of symbolic exchange or seduction does not come about when individuals ‘play with signs’ but when (signs of) individuality, identity, will and agency are annulled through an encounter with the radically Other. Radical otherness, or radical alterity, for Baudrillard, refers to the Other beyond representation, beyond all coding. Not only beyond consumer status position but also beyond performative, ‘oppositional’ or “ludique” de/re-codings. The Code as system of “total constraint” then does not merely produce similarity and identity but also difference, diversity and hybridity. It does not seek to promote passivity or apathy among consumers but quite the contrary: to thrive and expand the system requires active, discriminating, engaged consumers, jostling for position, competing for advancement. The Code exists “to better prime the aspiration towards the higher level” (1981: 60). The Code delivers diversity and choice at the level of sign content (the goods that we choose to eat, the products and services that we choose to wear, watch, download) and requires in return … nothing much at all: merely that we understand ourselves as consumers. Consumption is not, of course, a homogenising process but a diversifying one. The aim of the system is to make ‘the consumer’ the universal form of humanity but within this form an almost infinite variety of differential contents or positions are possible. Since ‘humanity’, for Baudrillard, as for Nietzsche, is already constituted as a universal form by the Enlightenment (1993: 50) this task is close to completion, though the final completion, the “perfect crime” against Otherness will never, according to Baudrillard, come to pass (Baudrillard 1996).[7] To summarise: the Code has a pacifying effect on society by promoting a largely agreeable universal – the free consumer, spoilt for choice, and it provides clearly sign-posted routes for advancement as well as constant reminders as to what could happen if we don’t play the game (of signs).

### Cap Add-On

#### Consumer capitalism simulates liberation to enforce social control – politics does nothing to challenge the symbolic underpinnings of the system

Pawlett 10 [(William Pawlett, senior lecturer in media, communications and cultural studies at University of Wolverhampton) “The Baudrillard Dictionary” under “Code” Edinburgh University Press, 2010] AT

The concept of the code (le code, la grille) is an important term in Baudrillard’s early work. It is used in two related senses: firstly, to understand and critique consumer capitalism, suggesting that it is a system of control that functions by conferring illusory ‘freedoms’; and secondly, to deconstruct modern critical theories – particularly Marxism, feminism and psychoanalysis. Such theories, Baudrillard argues, cannot challenge the capitalist system because they are structured, at a fundamental level, by the code; their arguments are easily assimilated because they do not question the system’s ‘logics of value’ – the interlocking network of use values, economic exchange values and sign exchange values that constitute the code (CPS, 123). The code can be challenged, Baudrillard asserts, only by symbolic exchange, by the ‘counter-gift’ of anti-value (SED, 40). The notion of ‘the code’ is notably absent from Baudrillard’s later work; DNA ‘code’ is discussed at length (TE, 120) but the concept of the code seems to have been rejected because it remained within the orbit of modern critical theory. Nevertheless, many of the themes discussed through the concept of the code reappear in Baudrillard’s later arguments concerning ‘integral reality’. Baudrillard’s notion of the code suggests that we, as consumers, live within a far more complete form of social control than anything conceived under the rubric of ideological analysis. The code is a system of ‘manipulation’, ‘neutralisation’ and assimilation which ‘aims towards absolute social control’ (UD, 98). Though this is never achieved, the code constitutes ‘the fundamental, decisive form of social control – more so even than acquies- cence to ideological norms’ (CPS, 68). This is because the code operates, fundamentally, at a preconscious level. For Baudrillard, ‘the code itself is nothing other than a genetic, generative cell’ (SED, 58). The term code is used interchangeably with ‘the structural law of value’, that is as a feature of the third order of simulacra dominated by simulation (SED, 50). The code then is the grid or ‘generative core’ from which social signification is produced or simulated. The medium of the code is the abstracted sign; torn from symbolic relations, drained of all ambivalence and intensity, the sign becomes a ‘dead’ unit of information. The code can assimilate any meaning, idea, emotion or critical gesture by reproducing it as an abstract sign or code position within an ever-expanding field of options and pos- sibilities. All signs are, at the fundamental level of the medium, equivalent or commutable; abstract signs enable a ‘universal equivalence’ through the ‘de-sign-ating’ of everything as a term within the code. Marginal or￼simulatory differences are injected into the code, feeding consumption and sustaining the illusions of choice and diversity. It is a mistake to think of the notion of the code as exclusively semiotic. As simulation becomes prevalent, conceptual oppositions are simplified into binary code, zeros and ones are no longer meaningful oppositions but, for Baudrillard, merely tactical modulations. The code absorbs the first and second orders of simulacra (in which signs work referentially and dialectically) with a system of signs that refer only to preconceived simula- tion models. With the third order ‘the code’s signals . . . become illegible’, units or ‘bits’ of information replace signification (SED, 57). Indeed, the code is ‘the end of signification’; social control by ideology, characteristic of the second order, is supplemented by ‘social control by means of predic- tion, simulation, programmed anticipation and indeterminate mutation, all governed . . . by the code’ (SED, 60). For example, any radical potential of Marxist, feminist or ‘green’ politics is defused by the code; they are designated as coded ‘lifestyle’ positions, feeding consumption and so presenting no fundamental challenge to the system. The code maintains a system of social relations through the ‘obligatory registration of individuals on the scale of status’ (CPS, 68) and functions covertly ‘to better prime the aspiration toward the higher level’ (CPS, 60) enforcing the competitive individualism of the system of consumption. The code simulates choice, difference and liberation, pacifying the deep divisions in consumer society by allowing the privileged term of binary oppositions to switch tactically or ‘float’, for example by simulating equality between terms (male/female, black/white, adult/child), so containing critical opposition. The code is ‘indifferent’ and ‘aleatory’; it controls through tolerance, solicitation and incorporation. The code encompasses far more than consumption; it includes the construction of knowledge and information through the conversion of thought into coded information flows. With the advent of DNA and genetic sciences, the code, according to Baudrillard, absorbs life itself, eliminating it as symbolic form and reproducing it as code (SED). The notion of DNA, Baudrillard suggests, was made possible by modernity as it is a social system dedicated to control. By providing a virtual map or code of life the concept of DNA reduces life to a copy or clone, destroy- ing its ‘destiny’ and enabling the elimination of certain ‘undesirable’ traits such as ‘criminality’ before a person is born (LP, 29). For Baudrillard the code, in all its forms, must be defied: [Y]ou can’t fight the code with political economy, nor with ‘revolution’ . . . can we fight DNA? . . . perhaps death and death alone, the reversibility of death, belongs to a higher order than the code. Only symbolic disorder can bring about an interruption in the code. (SED, 3–4) For Baudrillard only suicidal death, hurled against the system as ‘counter- gift’ and so countering the simulatory gifts of liberation conferred by the consumer society, can defy the code. This argument is further explored in Baudrillard’s work on the 9/11 attacks (ST). The term code largely disappears from Baudrillard’s writings after Symbolic Exchange and Death (1993a [1976]). Is the code still operational in the ‘fourth order’, the ‘fractal stage’ of ‘haphazard proliferation’ (TE)? Baudrillard is clear that the previous phases continue to function alongside the fourth order, indeed they function even better. The concept of the code might be dead but it functions more effectively than ever, expand- ing, becoming virtual, producing ‘integral reality’: the complete and final replacement for the world as symbolic form.

# 2NR

### Overview/Extensions

### A2 Theory

### A2 perm

### A2 cede the political

### A2 hyperreal good

### A2 suffering real – king

### A2 Positive Action Good

### A2 Paralysis

### A2 Terrorism

### A2 no Warrants

### A2 perf con

### A2 Sexist

### A2 Ac solves cap

### A2 kritik is in the hyperreal

### A2 Bad method

### A2 science

### A2 Kellner

### A2 king – Baudis writings hot trash

### A2 Dawkins – its gibberish

### A2 Robinsons – not totalizing impact d

### A2 Rorty – Ubiquity of power bad

### A2 Rorty

### A2 state good

### A2 Dhamee – prejudiced

### A2 Donahue

### A2 wolin – nihilist

### A2 Know it’s fake – zizek example

### A2 Balsas

### A2 Nihilist Butterfield

### A2 reps meaningless – baudi turn

### A2 Schoonmaker

### A2 Katz

### A2 not Applicable

### A2 fem turn

### A2 destroys agency

### A2 accelerationism

### A2 Devinatz – progressiveagenda

### A2 Shalom

### A2 Social Democracy

### A2 Bryant – meth plur

### A2 Pomo bad