# Cards---Round 6---DRR

## T-In the U.S.

### The Counter-Interp in Question…

#### “United States” can be any federal entity.

Cornell Legal Information Institute, No Date (“United States”, https://www.law.cornell.edu/definitions/uscode.php?width=840&height=800&iframe=true&def\_id=28-USC-2032517217-15940179&term\_occur=2&term\_src=)

(15) “United States” means— (A) a Federal corporation; (B) an agency, department, commission, board, or other entity of the United States; or (C) an instrumentality of the United States.

### Interp---1NR

#### ‘For’ indicates object.

Merriam-Webster. “for.” https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/for.

*for*

1a

—used as a function word to indicate purpose

a grant for studying medicine

b

—used as a function word to indicate an intended goal

left for home

acted for the best

c

—used as a function word to indicate the object or recipient of a perception, desire, or activity

now for a good rest

run for your life

an eye for a bargain

#### US = 50 states.

USGS 23. Government agency. "What constitutes the United States? What are the official definitions?" United States Geological Survey. 6/12/2023. usgs.gov/faqs/what-constitutes-united-states-what-are-official-definitions#:~:text=United%20States%3A%20The%2050%20States,and%20the%20District%20of%20Columbia.

On May 14, 1959, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names issued the following definitions, which defined the Continental United States as "the 49 States on the North American Continent and the District of Columbia..." The BGN reaffirmed these definitions on May 13, 1999.

United States: The 50 States and the District of Columbia.

Continental United States: The 49 States (including Alaska, excluding Hawaii) located on the continent of North America, and the District of Columbia.

Conterminous United States: The 48 States and the District of Columbia; that is, the United States prior to January 3, 1959 (Alaska Statehood), wholly filling an unbroken block of territory and excluding Alaska and Hawaii. Although the official reference applies the term "conterminous," many use the word "contiguous," which is almost synonymous and better known.

## Lacan K

### 1NC

#### Lacan K.

#### The cultural fantasy of collective bargaining reinforces unattainable desire, creating a vicious cycle of exploitation.

Muzammel Shah 24. Assistant Professor (HRM) at School of Management (AUSOM), Air University. “The desire for employability and self-exploitation: concretizing Lacan's psychoanalysis on employability.” *Evidence-Based HRM*. February 19, 2024. https://www.emerald.com/ebhrm/article-abstract/12/1/130/1229044/The-desire-for-employability-and-self-exploitation?redirectedFrom=fulltext

Based on the Lacan perspective (as cited in Bloom, 2013), it is argued that employability ends up in self-exploitation. The Lacan frame informed the conceptual model of the study. Lacan argued that we desire something that is missing in our lives. For completeness in our lives, we desire things such as power, prestige, wealth, status, knowledge, etc. Employees in contemporary organizations constantly desire employability and then positions of higher authority, status and prestige. This is followed by a desire for learning, growth, development and self-mastery. Bloom (2013) discussed that employability is a cultural fantasy that shapes the identity around the desire to benefit from an employable self and self-mastery. Fantasy happens via illusory strivings for a perfect and model/ideal future in which current troubles will not happen. Voronov and Vince (2012) argued that fantasies have a strong influence on a person’s actions and preferences in organizations. The cultural ideals of the marketplace and managers shape individual identities. Employees constantly engage in learning and developmental activities to improve and nourish their careers. Specifically, this paper argues that in this process, employees strive to remain relevant to their organization, engage in employability activities and end up being self-exploited. Ironically, despite the abundance of literature in the domain of employability, the different streams of research on employability have explored the various aspects of employability (Greco et al., 2019; Kassotaki, 2019; Maurer, 2002; McDonald and Hite, 2005; Van Dam et al., 2006; Van der Pol, 2011; Wilms et al., 2019), but the dark side has been ignored or overlooked. Thus, the picture of employability presented in the literature to date is incomplete.

Given the body of scholarly work in this field, it is appropriate to reflect on this debate, its themes and perspectives. It is a novel perspective on employability research because not enough research has explicitly investigated or explored the potential implications of employability related self-exploitation. The study has theoretical implications. This discussion will help us better understand the phenomenon of employability. It will give employability scholars a new road map. Furthermore, the research will help inform practice and improve policy and decisionmaking. Accordingly, this study was carried out to develop and test a theoretically comprehensive model that included learning, commitment, employability and self-exploitation.

The study employed the psychoanalytic approach to employability. Fantasies, according to Lacan (Bloom, 2013), play an important role in shaping people’s self-hood. People form an elusive vision of their romanticized self: a more appealing version of the socially endowed self that motivates individuals to strive for a perfect and model future in which current problems do not occur. The romanticized self is linked to culturally fabricated fantasies. People are constantly working on and attempting to master their socially provided selves. One such example is employability. Employees in work environments construct illusory self definitions. Their occupation choice ensures that current performance will meet the requirements of an ideal future, free of life’s existing hiccups.

According to Lacan and Alan (1981) framework, broad system-level (economic and social) factors shape micro factors. Individuals as units of a system are influenced by cultural and market ideals. The Lacanian viewpoint is applied to individual employability-related behavior in an organization. According to Bloom (2013), individuals strive to continuously improve their employability. They overcome their personal and financial estrangement by increasing their self-exploitation. Individual thinking and employability-related decisions are influenced by structural factors such as labor market conditions, etc. However, structural or systemic factors are outside the scope of this study.

The paper focuses specifically on individual employability-related behavior. The psychoanalytic lens provides a distinct approach to understanding employability. Scholars (such as Arthur and Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 2002) have debated that employability is the essence of proclaimed empowerment, which includes not only obtaining employment but also ‘controlling their employment fate’. In reality, it is far from empowering workers and instead increases their reliance on capitalist ideologies and managerial control (Cremin, 2010). According to Costea et al. (2007), organizations exploit individuals’ desire for employability. They foster a culture in which management’s agency and power are re-established through the formation of a committed and autonomous labor force/employees.

The norms of reciprocity (Blau, 2017; Cook et al., 2013; Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; emphasize that one party’s investment is returned by another party’s investment. When applied to the employee-employer relationship, the employer’s investment creates an obligation in the employee to return the investment. That sense of obligation to reciprocate leads to commitment and individual participation in employability activities. Furthermore, the illusive view of commitment that reflects employees striving to model an ideal future is continuance commitment followed by the drive to remain employable. It instils in people: that they have an obligation to repay the employer’s investment. And that leaving an organization means having few or no options.

The central concept of Lacan’s psychoanalysis is fantasy (Driver, 2017). Individuals become affectively committed to aspects of society that provide endurance and protection from the emotional pain associated with everyday failures. Fantasies have a significant impact on an individual’s preferences and activities, as well as on organizations, political life and pro-social work (Clancy and Vince, 2019; Glynos, 2003; Voronov and Vince, 2012). Lacanian framing demonstrates that micro-level effects are linked to larger societal and institutional discourses, making it appropriate to shed light on the relationship between learning, commitment, employability and self-exploitation.

The prior literature does not portray self-exploitation as a detrimental aspect of employability. In reality, though, it is the unfavorable result of a misguided notion of autonomy and self-determination. Self-identity mastery allows managers or bosses to dictate or control career choices and take advantage of their employees. People who engage in self exploitation out of a false sense of self-determination and self-mastery are alienated or estranged from their true selves. By examining employability as a cultural fantasy that leads to exploitation, this study contributes to the body of literature on employability and advances developed knowledge on the topic. The study examines workers in the context of their working environments, which display their decisions regarding the employable self. The proposed conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1.

#### The impact is fascism.

Alexander Stagnell 25. Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Rhetoric at the Free University of Brussels. “Tragedy, Then Farce: Slavoj Žižek’s Theory of Populism.” *Crisis & Critique* 12(1). p. 324-341.

The Domestication of Objet a

In the contemporary political landscape, Marx’s old formula ‘first as tragedy, then as farce’ seems particularly adapt when applied to the trajectory of populism. The hopeful energy of the early 2010s, marked by for instance the Occupy Movement, the Arab Spring, and the electoral breakthroughs of movements like Syriza and Podemos, soon gave way to tragedy: the rise of right-wing populists like Donald Trump and the repeated failures of left-populist political movements to translate their popularity into durable structural changes. Today, the farcical dimension of populism is not only embodied by the theatrical antics of Trump and other right-wing populist leaders across the globe, but also by in increasingly populist radical center. This centrist establishment, once aligned with progressive causes as a way to combat a more radical left, has begun disavow ‘wokeness’ and the concern for representation and inclusion of minorities, instead positioning itself as a voice for the poor and the working-class against the alleged overreach of ‘woke PMC’s’ and ‘symbolic capitalists’.43

This centrist attempt at populism offers an image of a society in need of balancing the relations between classes, a manner of depicting class relations which Žižek associates with fascism and populism. What is assumed within such perspectives is the restoration, or at least the formation, of a harmonious society capable of, at the minimum, limiting the effect of social antagonisms. However, “[f]or a Marxist,” as Zizek writes, “the relationship between classes is by definition that of a discord and imbalance, so that the only way to abolish class antagonism is to abolish classes as such.”44 Yet, is it not precisely the same issue that plagues Laclau’s populist theory? Consider his own example of the populist logic in action:

Let me give an example of how isolated demands emerge, and how they start their process of articulation. This example, although it is imaginary, corresponds pretty well to a situation widely experienced in Third World countries. Think of a large mass of agrarian migrants who settle in the shantytowns on the outskirts of a developing industrial city. Problems of housing arise, and the group of people affected by them request some kind of solution from the local authorities. Here we have a demand which initially is perhaps only a request. If the demand is satisfied, that is the end of the matter; but if it is not, people can start to perceive that their neighbours have other, equally unsatisfied demands – problems with water, health, schooling, and so on. If the situation remains unchanged for some time, there is an accumulation of unfulfilled demands and an increasing inability of the institutional system to absorb them in a differential way (each in isolation from the others), and an equivalential relation is established between them.45

What this example reveals is that the emergence of a populist subject, the people, is contingent not upon any immanent structural antagonism, but on the failure of the state to meet isolated demands. The political identity that emerges is, at root, a response to administrative inadequacy, not to the irreconcilable logic of class struggle. In this view, populism becomes a reactive movement aimed at restoring balance, an appeal to the authorities to rectify a dysfunctional distribution of resources or attention. A call for populism is, in other words, a call for a rebalancing of the current configuration of society. This is in turn brings us to Žižek’s critique of liberal democracy as the ultimate horizon for Laclauian populism. Apropos the relation between antagonism and democracy in Laclau, Žižek writes:

Democracy it may seem, thus not only can include antagonism; it is the only political form that solicits and presupposes it, that institutionalizes it. What other political systems perceive as a threat (the lack of a “natural” pretender to power), democracy elevates into a “normal” positive condition of its functioning. The place of power is empty, there is no natural claimant for it, polemos or struggle is irreducible, and every positive government must be fought out, gained through polemos. 46

Against the threat of post-political depoliticization, a return to populism as “the democratic element in contemporary representative systems” appears tempting. However, as this struggle between the existing hegemony and its populist counterpart is inscribed within an existing framework, as a call from the people to the big Other to fulfill its demands, democracy must be assumed as “a basic structural feature”47 of every populist situation. The issue, once again, lies in theory not in practice. So, when Žižek claims that “[t]he conclusion to be drawn is that populism (the way we supplemented Laclau’s definition of it) is not the only mode of existence of the excess of antagonism over the institutional-democratic frame of regulated agonistic struggle”48, we need to think the excess of populism, the reason that it is sometimes good enough in practice, from a different theoretical perspective. The aim must be to avoid what Zizek describes as Laclau’s mistake of inscribing into democracy an antagonistic struggle as the middle ground between two extremes, “on the one side, the celebration of heroic struggle-confrontation that suspends democracy and its rules [….] [and] on the other side, the evacuation of true struggle out of the democratic space so that all that remains is anemic rule regulated competition […].”49 Such a perspective only constitutes a domestication of the immanent antagonism.

#### Vote neg for authentic self-affirmation. That rewires the ecological system of debate.

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All systems are being experienced concurrently (Ancis & Davidson, 2013). The self constantly seeks empathic attunement through the roles, activities, and settings that an ecological system provides or withholds (Blau & Wagman, 2022; Heft, 2001; Strozier et al., 2022). Similar to how the self object functions in the dyad, selfobjects function in the environment to maintain an individual’s cohesive sense of self (Kohut, 1971). When the environment is conducive to self-affirmation, the ideals that pattern it are fluid and liberating (Brandchaft et al., 2010; Kassouf, 2023). The environment is able to be idealized via feelings of belonging and comfort. The self feels “at home” in engaged systems that afford the individual to develop freely with current capacities. In turn, the environment optimally reacts to the individual in ways that promote exploration, self-determination, and community involvement. The self is supported by the environment and creates ideal conditions for the self to grow without threat or fear of fragmentation (Kohut, 1977). Likewise, the environment is not fearful of its own disintegration or fragmentation throughout its interactions with the developing individual (Kohut & Strozier, 1985).

Conversely, failure to affirm ontological selfhood through empathic transference thrusts the individual into what Fanon calls “a zone of nonbeing” (Fanon, 1952, p. xii) or what Kohut would describe as fragmentation (Kohut, 1971). When rigid ideals are used to determine a macrosystem, which then pattern all systems beneath it, selfobject failure via the environment is likely to follow. Instead of selfhood being sustained, the environment operates with a collective narcissistic rage to affirm its own rigid grandiose ideals that can never be attained (Foucault, 2013; Kohut, 1977; Preciado, 2025). All systems are a unique area within the selfobject milieu that can empathically fail an individual even if other systems within the broader ecosystem are empathically attuned to them.

As the self acts, the environment reacts and vice versa. This is sensible in psychodynamic understanding and much more so in an intersubjective systems framework, specifically regarding the leading edge and trailing edge. The self is constantly having to navigate the hopes and dreads that are entangled within an environment (Zimmerman, 2019). The hope of one system may be the dread of another. Depending on power relations, these can be developmentally emboldening or catastrophic to the self-structure.

Take for example the Black Panther Party movement that took place in the late 1960s to the early 1970s. For many in the movement or those associated with it, the authentic self was optimally responded to by the environment thanks to the microsystems the BPP created. However, these microsystems tailored to the hope of black liberation and self-determination conflicted with the dread of fragmentation possessed by the exosystem and greater macrosystem of white hegemony that ruled United States culture, controlled federal resources, and launched numerous propaganda campaigns to control the discursive norms surrounding black liberation (Bloom & Martin, 2016).3 When revolutionary culture engaged counter-revolutionary hegemony, psychological consequences on the BPP members across the organization followed due to the malice of the systems that encased the BPP.

The action and reaction between the self and the environment are almost always misaligned, often resulting in narcissistic injury, sometimes leading to trauma. Across the world in every region, someone is empathically failed by the systems they are encased within. Yet, with an intersubjective self-psychology logic of the leading edge, as this destruction is taking place it does not alter that the individual is still striving to belong and function in a given ecosystem (Paul et al., 2019). The tension between the environment repressing the nuclear self and the self’s striving to belong in the environment causes dynamic shifts of self-concept on a daily basis. These shifts extend the empathic attunement of a therapist beyond the bounds of the clinical dyad and connect the contextually entangled selves of both therapist and patient.

Clinically speaking, Brandchaft et al. (2010) initially argued that the self was entangled solely in the context of the patient and therapist dyad. Paralleling the enmeshment of children with a caretaker, the self is paralyzed by recurring rigid structures produced by intersubjective factors. However, extended beyond the dyad, patterns appear across other ecological systems entangling the self. These patterns occur across numerous systems, represented by activities, roles, affect, and self-concepts that entangle the “authentic and purest self” central to self-organization (Brandchaft et al., 2010, p. 107). Both the patient and therapist’s selves are dynamically engaged across various systems that are then brought into the therapeutic setting.

Therapy does not take place solely in an intersubjective context but also in an intersectional one (Nathan et al., 2013). The self is constantly having to mitigate communication based on what’s acceptable within that environment by paying attention to roles, activities, discursive norms, and relations that encase the self-structure (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For hegemonic culture groups, this takes minimal effort whereas for individuals on the margins of society, mobilizing the nuclear structure is laborious due to the rigidity of the systems that entangle the self-structure (Brandchaft et al., 2010; Layton, 2020; Rebadulla et al., 2024).

Unique to each individual will be the degree to which the environment has empathically sustained or failed the selfobject relationship and thus each system will need to be disentangled from one another in order to understand where these empathic failures lie. These failures can be from national identities, state institutions, community conflict, religious beliefs, socioeconomic systems, all in addition to the caregiver dyad that has commonly been the focus of self-psychology.

The authentic self resembles the nuclear self-concept; but is interdependent and connected to entangled systems. Kohut originally envisioned a “virtual self” structured by caregiver projection that is then introjected and structured by the child (Seligman, 2005). Similarly, the authentic self is bidirectionally projected and affirmed environmentally. Authenticity is determined by the congruence of internal affect systems and external ecological systems. How they engage with one another in context determines how authenticity will present itself. Kohut (1971) and Neisser (1994) labeled this dynamic engagement as “multiple selves”; however, this doesn’t resolve how the auxiliary selves and the central nuclear self were connected. The selves that are projected are not necessarily “false” selves but are the myriad projections of the authentic self in response to the environment.

### Psycho Real---2NC

#### This is confirmed.

Ariane Bazan 24. Professor of Clinical Psychology at the Université libre de Bruxelles. “The Unconscious is Structured as a Language: Evidence from the Lab in Support of Clinical Practice.” Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy. November 6, 2024. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10879-024-09651-9

Both processes are also linguistic modalities of acting and thinking. Indeed, concerning the details, upon which primary process’ associations are made, Freud also includes phonological characteristics such as “associations based on homonyms and verbal similarities” (Freud, 1900/1958, p. 530) and “assonance, verbal ambiguity, and temporal coincidence, without inner relationship of meaning; in other words, (…) all those associations which we allow ourselves to exploit in wit and playing upon words” (Freud, 1900/1958, p. 596). For example, Freud (1900/1958, p. 560) qualifies the homophony dysenteria/diphteria in one of his dreams (« Irma’s injection ») as a « paraphasic assonance ». Phonological ambiguity is also a favourite masking mode of the return-of-the-repressed. For example, in the case description of the Ratman (Freud, 1909/2001), the patient presents himself with a debilitating obsession concerning a torture by ways of a rat. It seems through Freud’s analysis that this symptom did not find its origin in a traumatic event, implying a rat, but in highly emotional childhood situations implying his nanny (Frau Hofrat in German) and the marriage of his parents (heiraten). Lacan (1955) identifies in his precise reading of Freud’s texts the importance of the mental effectiveness of the ‘word presentation’ which, in line with the structural linguistics of de Saussure (1915), Lacan (1957/1966, p. 120) calls the signifier distinct from the signified, the semantic meaning of the word. The Lacanian signifier is indeed the phonological word form: “Now the structure of the signifier is, as it is commonly said of language itself, that it should be articulated. This means that (…) these elements, one of the decisive discoveries of linguistics, are phonemes.” (our Italics). Lacan (1966, p. 868) attributes to this signifier a mental efficiency in its own right, summarized by ‘the unconscious structured like a language’ and in a previous theoretical work we proposed an interdisciplinary neuropsychoanalytic framework for this hypothesis (Bazan, 2007). In a Lacanian psychoanalytic approach, much attention is therefore given to the precise wordings of the patient, especially when phoneme groups insist through different meanings or if they are in any way ‘indexed’ by the patient, e.g., through pauses or parapraxes. The Lacanian analyst Gauthier-Lafaye (2017, p. 80) gives us a telling example. He hears an unusual pause in a sentence of a patient: “Ma mère n’était pas parvenue…” (“My mother did not succeed in…”), where the patient pauses in the middle of the word “par-venue” (“succeed”). This slight pause isolates for a suspended moment the embedded phrase “papa revenu” (“daddy has come back”). The analyst simply repeats “pas par’venue,” opening up a new world of meanings. It appeared that the patient’s father left the family without explanation. It had always seemed the minimal duty of the then young girl to be loyal to her mother and to her outrage. Thereby, she could never express her own longings for her father to come back, save for this moment in her analysis 40 years later. Signifier indications can help uncovering new etiological strands, so far consciously unsuspected by the patient. Psychoanalysis in general, and the Lacanian linguistic approach in particular, are often qualified as non-scientific or, at the least, as non-falsifiable. In this paper we present several empirical methods to measure primary and secondary process mentation, as well as to measure the mental effectiveness of the signifier, independently from psychoanalytic methods. We present a series of findings, including new findings for the WordList-research, in order to show that psychoanalytic hypotheses can be tested in falsifiable ways. This is important for psychoanalytic - including Freudolacanian - psychoanalytic practice, as it provides for rational, testable support of some of its important functioning principles. It also gives a rational grounding to the psychotherapeutic use of the signifier, a use which is most regularly scolded as non-scientific.

### AT: Ferreira---2NC

#### Neg.

Ferreira, 21

[Clarice de Medeiros Chaves, Psychologist, Vice President of the Brazilian Association of Evidence-Based Psychology (ABPBE): “Is psychoanalysis a pseudoscience? Reevaluating the doctrine using a multicriteria list,” published by Associação Brasileira de Psiquiatria (Brazilian Psychiatry Organization) in 2021. https://philarchive.org/archive/FERIPA-6]//AD

Besides his psychoanalysis criticisms, Popper's science view in general was also objected to. This article has no intention to reach an exhaustion of possible counterarguments. However, considering some examples given by Newton-Smith [5 p. 44-76]: Popper rejected that inductive reasoning (non-deductive predictions or generalizations whose validity does not depend on their logical form) should be used in science, defending that it should operate with deductive reasoning only (of which the validity or invalidity depend exclusively on its logical form), and therefore, confirming a theory would be impossible. It is only possible to know that, if the theory is falsified, then it is false. However, even if a theory is falsified, if there is no better option to explain certain phenomena that could replace it, and considering that the first possesses reasonable assertions, it would probably not be wise to discard it just because it was falsified. Despite that, his conception of science inadvertently requires induction to justify itself, what shows a failure in his proposal. These and other difficulties in the adoption of falsifiability as a demarcation criterion turn it insufficient, and this creates a demand for a different one.

### Fromm 66---2NC

#### The perm severs their understanding of the subject.

Erich Fromm 66. Marxism, Psychoanalysis and Reality. https://www.marxists.org/archive/fromm/works/1966/psychoanalysis.htm

Here, the most significant difference between Marx and Freud becomes apparent. For Freud, man is, as mentioned, an isolated being that needs other human beings only to satisfy certain physiological needs. That means, Freud’s concept of man is that of a bourgeois involved in the commodities market. Marx designed a very different concept of man as a complete being who needs the world and whose passions lie in man’s potential energy to achieve man’s goals.

I believe, that psychoanalysis, when modified in the described sense, can be quite useful for the explanation of different phenomena, for which Marxist philosophy has so far not fully developed an analysis. These are the forms of freely evolving human energy for the purposes and needs of a certain social structure. I consider the social character as an essential element of the social situation and at the same time as a bond between economic structure of a society and its concepts. The human energy is a productive force like all natural forces. It is, however, an energy which does not act as a pure natural force, but always in a certain social form and structure which I call — in a dynamic sense — social character.

I further believe, that one can psychoanalytically explain — and that in great detail — how the process to determine social consciousness unfolds, how social categories determine man’s consciousness, how the social filter works, and why certain elements reach the conscious and others are banned from it. This implies, that there is not only a social consciousness, but also a social subconsciousness, which covers everything that is contrary to the structure of a given society. Society is not simply satisfied when man does not do what he is not supposed to do, but society also demands that he will neither think what he is not supposed to think; because the thought is the key to the action.

### Dean 6---2NC

#### And grants georgetown unreasonable moral certainty.

**Dean 6**, professor in the Political Science department at Hobart and William Smith Colleges (Jodi, “Žižek’s Politics” Routledge, 2006, xviii-xix) rose (bracketed for gendered language)

Žižek emphasizes that Lacan conceptualized this excessive place, this place without guarantees, in his formula for “the dis- course of the analyst” (which I set out in Chapter Two). In psycho- analysis, the analyst just sits there, asking questions from time to time. She is some kind of object or cipher onto which the analysand transfers love, desire, aggression, and knowledge. The analysand, in other words, proceeds through analysis by positing the analyst as someone who knows exactly what is wrong with him and exactly what he should do to get rid of [their] his symptom and get better. But, really, the analyst does not know. Moreover, the analyst steadfastly refuses to provide the analysand with any answers whatsoever. **No ideals, no moral certainty, no goals**, no choices. **Nothing**. This is what makes the analyst so traumatic, Žižek explains, the fact that she refuses to establish a law or set a limit, that she does not function as some kind of new master.7 Analysis is over when the analysand accepts that the analyst does not know, that there is not any secret meaning or explanation, and then takes responsibility for getting on with his life. The challenge for the analysand, then, is freedom, autonomously determining his own limits, directly assuming his own enjoyment. So, again, the position of the analyst is in this excessive place as an object through which the analysand works through the analytical process.

Why is the analyst necessary in the first place? If she is not going to tell the analysand what to do, how he should be living, then why does he not save his money, skip the whole process, and figure out things for himself? There are two basic answers. First, the analysand is not self-transparent. He is a stranger to himself, a decentered agent “struggling with a foreign kernel.” 8 What is more likely than self-understanding, is self-misunderstanding, that is, one’s fundamental misperception of one’s own condition. Becom- ing aware of this misperception, grappling with it, is the work of analysis. Accordingly, second, the analyst is that external agent or position that gives a new form to our activity. Saying things out loud, presenting them to another, and confronting them in front of this external position concretizes and arranges our thoughts and activities in a different way, a way that is more difficult to escape or avoid. The analyst then provides a form through which we acquire a perspective on and a relation to our selves.

Paul’s Christian collectives and Lenin’s revolutionary Party are, for Žižek, similarly formal arrangements, forms “for a new type of knowledge linked to a collective political subject.” 9 Each provides an external perspective on our activities, a way to con- cretize and organize our spontaneous experiences. More strongly put, a political Party is necessary precisely because politics is not given; it does not arise naturally or organically out of the multiplic- ity of immanent flows and affects but has to be produced, arranged, and constructed out of these flows in light of something larger.

In my view, when Žižek draws on popular culture and inserts himself into this culture, he is taking the position of an object of enjoyment, an excessive object that cannot easily be recuperated or assimilated. This excessive position is that of the analyst as well as that of the Party. Reading Žižek as occupying the position of the analyst tells us that it is wrong to expect Žižek to tell us what to do, to provide an ultimate solution or direction through which to solve all the world’s problems. The analyst does not provide the analysand with ideals and goals; instead, he occupies the place of an object in relation to which we work these out for ourselves. In adopting the position of the analyst, Žižek is also practicing what he refers to as “Bartleby politics,” a politics rooted in a kind of refusal wherein the subject turns itself into a disruptive (of our peace of mind!) violently passive object who says, “I would prefer not to.”10 Thus, to my mind, becoming preoccupied with Žižek’s style is like becoming preoccupied with what one’s analyst is wearing. Why such a preoccupation? How is this preoccupation enabling us to avoid confronting the truth of our desire, our own investments in enjoyment? How is complaining that Žižek (or the analyst) will not tell us what to do a way that we avoid trying to figure this out for ourselves?11