Jack Black 25. PhD, Associate Professor of Media and Sport at Sheffield Hallam University. “Revisiting the Sport Ethic: A Psychoanalytic Consideration of Sport’s Contradictions.” Sport Ethics and Philosophy. September 3, 2025. https://shura.shu.ac.uk/36093/

Furthermore, the significance of desire is that it incorporates the subject’s investment in a lack that is, in most instances, confounded by the subject’s lack of self-identity. Indeed, if the subject is constituted through lack, then, it is ‘This lack of self-identity [that] gives the subject distance from the conditions out of which it emerges’ (McGowan 2024, 3). As McGowan explains, ‘If I am not identical to myself, if I am at odds with myself, I cannot be completely determined by external forces’ (2024, 3). This lack of self-identity prescribes a margin between the subject and wider external forces, thus endowing desire a certain possibility and potential. In this regard, ‘it is precisely the subject’s persistent awareness of being less than fully realized that allows her to approach the world as a space of possibility’ (Ruti 2008, 489). Such possibility is not an unending point of unperturbed freedom, uninhibited by the constraints of the world. Rather, forged as it is in relation to the Other, and, thus, forever undetermined and unqualifiable, always assumed and never entirely confirmed (Fink 2025), desire remains both ‘disturbing and problematic’ (O’Callaghan 2024, 158). In fact, ‘desire functions as a paradoxical site of self-determination in the sense that it remains one of the few things about human life that stubbornly resists biopolitical conditioning’ (Ruti 2018, 157). Such resistance emanates from the fact that desire is a contradiction for the subject, indeed, ‘a contradictory being that wants to be other than it is’ (McGowan 2019, 77), for, as Lacan puts it, desire is ‘what we are as well as what we are not’ (Lacan 1997, 321).Though desire can never be fully satisfied, it is this persistent lack that gives rise to the excesses of desire.

Consider, for instance, the case of sex: as Žižek observes, ‘we almost never engage in sex to fulfill its natural goal (procreation) but for the enjoyment it provides—we became human exactly when sex leaves behind its “natural” goal of procreation and turns into an end in itself’ (2024, 63). In this way, desire is fundamentally distinct from need, which can be satisfied by its object. Instead, the object of desire is never fully attainable, precisely because enjoyment lies in its excessive pursuit (‘and end in itself’), rather than its fulfilment. It is, then, ‘the paradoxical, deviant, erratic, eccentric and even scandalous nature of desire that distinguishes itself from need’ (Lacan 2006b, 579). Ultimately, the subject is bound by a desire that is driven not by a rational, conscious judgement, but by an insatiability that goes beyond what can be demanded of, or requested by, the subject. In order to further explore how the effects of the sport ethic relate to desire, two key characteristics will need to be addressed: 1) the sacrifice of the ‘good’, and 2) the sacrifice of the useful.

As previously touched upon, the widely held belief that sport is inherently pure and good, and that participation in sport inevitably fosters moral character and personal development, goes beyond mere cultural assumption (Coakley 2015, 2017). For the sport ethic, it functions as a normative framework that shapes institutional agendas, public perceptions, and self-understanding. That is, while it underwrites popular narratives about sport’s capacity to improve character and promote social values, it simultaneously obscures the structural conditions and power relations embedded within sporting practices. Notably, McGee et al.’s (2025) reflections on athletes’ post-sport narratives demonstrates how even when athletes recount difficult or harmful experiences, the dominant cultural script positions sport as a vehicle for growth and virtue. The framing of adversity as character-building reflects the internalization of the sport ethic that depicts athletes as emerging from sport as all the ‘better’ for it. In this sense, the sport ethic operates not merely as a behavioral code, but as a moral telos, inasmuch as it remains a vision of the good that is tied to ideas of authenticity and self-worth.

Yet, this ‘good’ is not only pursued by athletes, but, at the same time, sacrificed, insofar as many of the goods commonly associated with sport, such as, physical and mental wellbeing, ethical conduct, and inclusivity, are actively transgressed in maintaining and adhering to the sport ethic (Žižek 2008b). As a consequence, what is sacrificed in the pursuit of the sport ethic is the very idea of sport as a space for health, mutual respect, and human flourishing. While fostering the normalisation of injury, the erosion of moral boundaries (e.g., through doping or cheating), and the exclusion of those unwilling or unable to conform to the sport ethic, alongside commercial logics and institutional demands that exploit athletes’ labour under the guise of commitment and professionalism, ultimately, what is surrendered is the ‘good’ of sport as well as its capacity to offer meaningful experiences beyond instrumental success.

It is in this sense ‘that the good can also serve as the vehicle for enjoyment’ (McGowan 2025, 167). McGowan clarifies: ‘The good doesn’t lead directly to enjoyment. Instead, it gives us something to sacrifice so that we might enjoy. The good is in effect a tool for structuring our enjoyment. We erect the good as an obstacle that we can subsequently sacrifice to enjoy’ (2025, 167). As a result, while the sport ethic appears to elevate the athlete toward an ideal of excellence via an assumption of the ‘good’, its sacrifice sustains the very loss (or lack) that keeps enjoyment in motion. By demanding a sacrifice of the good in order to generate enjoyment through transgression and excess (Žižek 2008b), the pain of playing through injury, the loneliness of obsessive training, and the narrow pursuit of victory above all else, are, in effect, not failures of the sport ethic but the very conditions through which our enjoyment in sport is sustained.

This suggests that enjoyment in sport emerges not from fairness or resolution, but from the very sacrifices, contradictions, and forms of suffering it stages and repeats, often unconsciously, for both athlete and spectator alike. Moreover, this reveals a contradiction at the heart of the sport ethic: that the sacrifices it demands are made not in the service of something strictly useful, but, instead, for sport itself—an activity whose value is sustained precisely through its inutility.

### AT: Ferriera---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.

#### 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.

#### a. Neurobiology.

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Recent neurobiological findings indicate that consciousness and unconsciousness evolve in parallel from the beginning of life (Roth & Strüber, Citation2014). Unconsciousness may be divided into the “primary unconscious,” which includes the functions of all subcortical brain regions and the non-associative cortical functions, and the “secondary unconscious,” that refers to the cumulative emotional processes of the infant and the small child before maturation of the associative cortex. The secondary unconscious also includes unconscious “procedural memory,” the early learning of skills that, after the initial conscious experience, become automatic and persist in unconscious behaviors. This early learning, however, also includes learning of ways to relate self to the environment, determining the earliest and potentially very influential structures of self and representations of significant others that, while originally conscious, because of the early lack of maturation of the capacity for long-term memory (that only develops, during the second and third year of life, with the maturation of the associative cortex and the hippocampus) are erased from conscious memory or may never have been recorded declaratively (Solms, Citation2015).

I believe that these earliest learning processes affect behavior in the form of unconscious procedural memory, but without reaching the long term dynamic unconscious, nor ever being available to consciousness because they leave no trace other than that immediately activated and learned behavior. In addition, during the entire childhood development, consciously learned activities, integration between sensorial and motor processes, may remain as procedural memory, and sink into unconsciousness: for example, learning how to ride a bicycle or how to play the piano.

At the point when the development of long-term memory becomes available, around the end of the second and in the course of the third year of life, with the maturation of the hippocampus as “affective memory storage facility,” and the development of the associative cortex, conscious experiences may now become dynamically unconscious, and constitute the dynamic unconscious proper. Thus, the dynamic unconscious is linked to the capacity for long-term declarative memory, because according to my view, by definition the content of the dynamic unconscious was originally conscious, and has become repressed or dissociated in the course of development. Broadly speaking, then, the unconscious includes both procedural, unconscious memory, and explicit, episodic, declarative memory. However, only the latter is the basis of the dynamic unconscious proper. To repeat, all subcortical brain regions and non-associative cortical brain regions constitute the primary unconscious. The affective processes and emotional experiences of infant and small child before the maturation of the associative cortex and hippocampus leave significant behavioral traces, but no memory, and only later, repressed and dissociated experiences determine the dynamic unconscious.

It is important to point out that, as mentioned earlier, all sensorial stimuli are originally unconscious, and only selectively enter into consciousness after a very fast and complex selective unconscious cortical and subcortical process that determines the input into the associative cortical area, that is, consciousness (LeDoux, Citation2019). All sensorial stimuli are widely distributed to various brain regions and systematically explored (in three hundred milliseconds) for their newness, significance, positive or negative affective value, with input from the sensorial thalamic system, and affect-activating limbic structures such as the ventral tegmental area, the nucleus accumbens, and activating amygdala. The hippocampus and dorsal striatum are also involved in the decision-making process regarding which stimuli are to become conscious. All sensorial perceptions selected to become conscious are channeled through the thalamus that acts as a “port of entry and exit” into cortical consciousness (Roth, Citation2001). Consciousness is originally determined at the inferior limbic level, particularly the periaqueductal gray, the reticular formation, the locus ceruleus, and the raphe nuclei. It is activated by the basic affective systems such as the sensorial reaction to pain and, most importantly, by homeostatic requirements of temperature, blood circulation, hunger, and thirst (Roth & Strüber, Citation2014). In the first year of life, consciousness emerges by the activation of any and all of the major affect systems involving the interpersonal world that I outlined above.

Eventually, human consciousness involves the awareness of self, of one’s body, one’s placement of self and body in space and time, the experience of one’s identity and its autobiographical continuity, the function of one’s actions and mental acts and, gradually, the differentiation of reality and imagination. These are background features of the self that converge in consciousness and depend on the integration of information from multiple brain regions, including, particularly, the posterior cingulate cortex, the posterior parietal cortex, and the dorsal lateral prefrontal cortex, that constitutes the “working memory” of actual consciousness. Working memory includes, in addition to all of the above-mentioned aspects of awareness, one’s present awareness of the environment of one’s body, one’s present awareness of needs, affects, and emotions, and one’s focused attention on specific aspects of one’s relationship with the environment, as well as the general functions of thinking, imagining and remembering. In short, consciousness includes fundamentally the consciousness of self, its expectations, desires, and fears, and its assessment of the psychosocial environment, that is the nature of and relationship with others and the mutual influence of self and others in their interaction.

In parallel with the building up of the structure of the self, the structure of significant others is built up based on cognitive awareness, the development of other limbic structures that originate the capacity for empathy, theory of mind, and the direct affective and cognitive interaction with others (Förstl, Citation2012). I have already referred to the corresponding functions of the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex and would add here the important role of the insula and the parietal–temporal junction.

Thus I believe that the unconscious is even more important in determining human experience and behavior than Freud assumed, including the procedural memory unconscious that derives from sensorial and motor experiences and the long-term procedural memory derived from automated learning. The declarative memory unconscious, that is, the unconscious that contains both explicit memory episodes and semantic memory, permits the development of the dynamic unconscious which, I now suggest, may be divided developmentally into three major timespans.

#### b. fMRI data.

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Advances in technologies such as functional magnetic resonance imaging permit scientists to directly measure brain activity. This ability has led to a revival and reconceptualization of key psychoanalytic concepts, based on the idea of inner forces outside our awareness that influence our behavior. According to psychodynamic theory, unconscious dynamic processes defensively remove anxiety-provoking thoughts and impulses from consciousness in response to our conflicting attitudes. The processes that keep unwanted thoughts from entering consciousness are known as defense mechanisms and include repression, suppression and dissociation. Suppression is the voluntary form of repression proposed by Sigmund Freud in 1892. It is the conscious process of pushing unwanted, anxiety-provoking thoughts, memories, emotions, fantasies and desires out of awareness. Suppression is more amenable to controlled experiments than is repression, the unconscious process of excluding painful memories, thoughts and impulses from consciousness. If you are grieving over the death of a loved one or the breakup of a relationship, you may consciously decide to suppress thinking about the situation to get on with your life. Or, in another example, you may have an impulse to tell your boss what you really think about him and his abysmal behavior, but you suppress this thought because you need the job. In both cases, the desire is conscious but is thwarted by the exercise of willpower resulting from a rational decision to avoid the action. The impulse or drive may display itself in other ways, however: you may develop a nervous cough around your boss even though you are not sick. Or a suppressed sexual desire may resurface in a careless phrase or slip of the tongue. In general, “forgotten” thoughts, memories and urges can influence behaviors, conscious thoughts and feelings and can express themselves as symptoms or even as mental illness. Although some claim that suppression is a psychoanalytical myth with no scientific support, fMRI data suggest otherwise. Psychologist Michael C. Anderson, now at St. Andrews University in Scotland, and his colleagues carried out what they call a “think/no-think” experiment to explore the brain basis of memory suppression. Two dozen volunteers had to memorize 48 word pairs (for example, ordeal-roach or steam-train). Subsequently, while lying in a scanner, subjects were shown the first cue word and had to either recall the second, associated word (called the respond condition) or prevent it from entering consciousness (suppress condition). Actively suppressing the matched word while lying in the scanner had the effect of reducing recall of the word afterward (as compared with the respond condition); this result is not just simple forgetting that occurs with the passage of time. The imaging data that Anderson and his colleagues collected showed that the volunteers suppressed the words by recruiting parts of the brain involved in “executive control,” namely, areas in the prefrontal cortex, to disengage processing in sectors of the brain important for memory formation and retrieval, in particular the hippocampus. This finding is noteworthy because earlier experiments showed that the amplitude of activity in the hippocampus is proportional to memory recall—the stronger the activity, the higher the likelihood of remembering. A second intriguing observation is that the brain is more active when avoiding recalling a memory than during recall itself. People suppress unwanted memories by exerting willful effort that can be tracked in the nervous system in ways only dreamed of by Freud—who was, after all, a neuroscientist by training.

#### 3. Warrants are true.

#### a. Drive.

Johnson and Mosri, 16

[Brian, Psychiatry @ SUNY; and Daniela Flores, Psychology, Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, and Neuropsychoanalysis @ Universidad Intercontinental (Mexico City): “The Neuropsychoanalytic Approach: Using Neuroscience as the Basic Science of Psychoanalysis,” *Hypothesis and Theory* 7 (October 2016). http://dx.doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01459]//AD

A set of motivational systems is housed in the brain so that animals move through the environment to procure food, water, sex, and relationships (Johnson, 2008). Freud’s concept of libido encompassed cathexis, activity, and self-preservation (Freud, 1933, pp. 95–97). Some neuroscientists (for example Pfaff et al., 2007) have proposed that Freud’s libido can be related to generalized brain arousal systems. However, many contemporary psychoanalytic theories reject the concept of drive (Eagle, 2011, p. 252). Neuropsychoanalysis has embraced Panksepp’s formulation of seven basic instinctual systems and has used his proposal to discuss the concepts of instinct, drive, and affect.

Panksepp mapped these behavioral systems by systematically stimulating brain areas electrically or chemically, and then observing the resulting animal behaviors (Panksepp and Biven, 2012, p. 25). He has turned the usual caution of animal researchers against “anthropomorphism” on its head, suggesting that all animals have evolved neural systems for survival and for success in navigating peer social environments, and that they are felt. He is known for the discovery, by empathically observing rat behavior and then by use of a transducer for high-pitched sounds, of rat laughter (Panksepp, 2007).

The seven basic emotion systems that Panksepp has described are shared by all mammalian brains. Emotional systems are subcortical. They are the SEEKING, LUST, CARE, PLAY, PANIC, RAGE, and FEAR systems. Panksepp uses capital letters to identify a concrete neural circuit, as opposed to the abstract use of these same words.

The SEEKING system is superordinate, and has been considered by some neuropsychoanalysts (for example Yu, 2001b) an analog of Freud’s libido. Drive may be considered the psychological manifestation of SEEKING, an urge to do work in order to obtain a desired goal. Panksepp’s aphorism is that SEEKING is “a goad without a goal.” SEEKING energizes organisms to explore their environment. It produces for the animal an exciting, optimistic and engaging affect. It reaches out to the other six basic systems to turn them on when needed or the other way around; other instinctual systems tell SEEKING what to search for (Panksepp and Biven, 2012); giving the goad a goal.

SEEKING can search for basic items to satisfy needs in the environment, such as food, water, sex, relationships, and if addicted, drugs (Johnson, 2008). Some of these items may not involve pleasure because SEEKING as all other basic emotion systems learns and is conditioned by life experiences. If one grows up in a context of basic trust (Erikson, 1950) from empathic and caring parents, relationships may be sought in adulthood with a SEEKING system that has been tuned by learning to look for affective quality in relationships with others. But if parents were abusive or neglecting, food, love, and an occasional unexpected smack may make the bond with that parent more intense. Pathological relationships may be sought because the SEEKING system has been organized by learning to look for unexpected attacks related to the lack of basic trust. We urgently pursue our goals whether pleasant or not. The SEEKING system should not be equated with a reward or pleasure system. SEEKING is not the only rewarding feeling in the nervous system and it is not quite rewarding in itself; its activation results in anticipated excitement. If no satisfaction comes, it shuts down. The feeling is related to frustration.

SEEKING’s main neurotransmitter is dopamine. Pleasure is a separate system, with mu opioids as the most important contributor (Robinson and Berridge, 1993; Panksepp, 1998). What we want, and what we like, belong to two different brain systems. The pleasure system will only be activated when an object that satisfies a need is found. SEEKING looks for the object needed. The pleasure system enjoys the interaction with the satisfying object. Dopamine drives motivation while mu opioids give the feeling of pleasure.

Other instinctual systems are activated according to setting. Animals move to the side of the cage where electrical stimulation turns on these good feelings (Panksepp and Biven, 2012). They move away when the bad feelings are turned on. We all feel “good” when we are in the PLAY, CARE, LUST mode. We all feel “bad” when we are in the FEAR, RAGE, PANIC mode PLAY, CARE, and LUST are positive, socially engaging systems and are thus important to understand two-person psychology or even the analytic third concept proposed by Ogden (1994). PLAY is built into all mammals so that we rehearse social roles and conflicts without risking consequences. PLAY for children requires a rough and tumble interaction format that elicits an affect of social joy. Wright and Panksepp (2012) advises that psychotherapy be carried out in the PLAY mode. Observing patients who are not capable of PLAY in psychotherapy gives important information regarding (psychoanalytically) genetic experience and current interpersonal difficulties. Good and fun experiences with peers are pleasurable and will be repeated reinforcing the experience of being in company as an important agenda to promote survival. LUST is the system that makes mammals look for sexual partners, not only looking for pleasure, but also for the survival of the species. CARE is a system activated whenever someone perceives another being in need of help. It is the basis of maternal love and it may have a lot to do with the psychotherapeutic feeling involved in helping patients at certain stages of psychoanalytic treatments, particularly with preOedipal patients (Balint, 1968; Marty, 1990). The CARE system is vital to the understanding of the relationships between mothers and their offspring so relevant to psychoanalytic developmental theory. The activation of a mother’s CARE system makes her full with love that will contribute to her protecting a fragile baby that could not survive without her CARE.

FEAR, RAGE, and PANIC/GRIEF have as their basic function tissue protection. As opposed to the pleasant feelings generated by SEEKING, PLAY, CARE, and LUST, these systems generate dysphoric affect. FEAR is the feeling we all get when exposed to dangerous situations that compromise survival. It is not interpersonal. It provides the animal with various choices when endangered. RAGE exists to deter attackers when flight is impossible. Panksepp points out that the “fight/flight” term describes engagement of RAGE or FEAR (Panksepp and Biven, 2012, p. 200), and actually refers to two systems, not one.

PANIC/GRIEF underlies the need to attach to others for survival. It is the perfect complement of the CARE system as seen in mother-child interactions. Activation of the PANIC system is seen when animals separated from their parents call out with “distress vocalizations” to help the protective locate the child. If an animal is separated from its caring object for too long the PANIC separation distress vocalizations cease. Watt and Panksepp (2009)suggest that the original function of vocalization shutdown was to protect animals from signals that might make them vulnerable to attack from predators. Unrelieved alarm at separation finally terminates by entering a shutdown mode, a state of waiting to be found can be understood as a freezing reaction, or—depression. This model corresponds with the literature on psychotherapy and antidepressant medications for depression. Mild major depression responds about equally well to psychotherapy or medication, but more severe and chronic depression requires antidepressants (de Matt et al., 2007). As Watt and Panksepp would say (Watt and Panksepp, 2009), antidepressants change the brain, allowing the patient to return to the broad plateau of anxiety where interpersonal difficulties in being close can be resolved with the psychoanalyst. Panksepp (Wright and Panksepp, 2012) has suggested that treatment must activate the SEEKING and PLAY systems as well as deactivate the PANIC/GRIEF system to treat depression.

An example of dysregulation of the basic emotion systems can be seen in the adoption of psychotoxic drug use. The person feels constantly bad even when the traumatic experiences that caused the negative affects are diminished or blocked by defenses. The person tires of the unpleasant feeling and wants relief. Experimenting with psychotoxic drugs the person discovers the direct neurochemical impact on her or his subjectivity. The patient has become a “psychiatrist” herself or himself, understanding that there is a neuropsychodynamic relationship between mind and brain. Taking the psychotoxic drug creates a “high.” For example, a patient who had been terrorized by a sadistic father, and who met the diagnostic criteria for posttraumatic stress disorder, described the “high” of alcoholic drinking as the feeling of relief from constant reactivation of her terror by random stimuli in her environment.

The basic emotion systems constitute knowledge about subjective states that are always conscious because affect is always conscious. Taking it into account in psychoanalytic theory propitiates metapsychological conceptualizations such as the conscious id proposed by Solms and Panksepp (2012) and Solms (2013). It also facilitates clinical work, particularly with pre-Oedipal patients who do not respond well to the classical psychoanalytic technique, but who require modified approaches mainly based on empathy (Balint, 1968).

#### b. Repetition compulsion.

Johnson and Mosri, 16 [Brian, Psychiatry @ SUNY; and Daniela Flores, Psychology, Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy, and Neuropsychoanalysis @ Universidad Intercontinental (Mexico City): “The Neuropsychoanalytic Approach: Using Neuroscience as the Basic Science of Psychoanalysis,” *Hypothesis and Theory* 7 (October 2016). http://dx.doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01459]//AD

Object representations are cortical. They stabilize and facilitate experiences in the world. Knowing that a certain person always acts the same makes contact less effortful than on first meeting them. Solms (2013) suggested that working memory underlies object representations and that planning ahead is required to inform subsequent encounters so that the interaction occurs with optimal relatedness. This mechanism underlies Freud’s concept of bound energy. If life is always completely predictable, one is living in Freud’s Nirvana principle. Thinking is non-conscious and not effortful. One always expects what one reality provides.

#### Existential violence is the emergence of the traumatic Real, or that which resists symbolization through language, through the failure of the symbolic order, or language itself.

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Today, violence is everywhere. We are inundated with it, exhausted by it, bombarded by images and reports of it on a daily, even hourly basis, in real time with minute-to-minute updates via “breaking news” alerts on our iPhones, constant notifications and emails. From terrorism to the “war on terrorism,” from the exponential increase in mortality due to opioid overdose to “the war on drugs,” from mass shootings to the helplessness felt by the impossibility of enacting protective gun legislation, from school shootings by disgruntled, neglected teens to the failure of the mental health-care system to address the often glaring warning signs, from constant coverage of the tweeter-in-chief, who regularly overturns every principle of democratic and humane tenets of government only to replace them with a tyrannical whirlwind of inappropriate, impulsive, narcissistic and highly aggressive rants to hostile contention regarding the reporting of the very facts of the news – is it fake? Is that what really happened? – the crisis in authority is just another way that we can’t get rid of it, make it go away, contain it or limit our access to it. While the debate on the benefits and detriments of technology rages, our ability to concentrate and read anything longer than a headline is increasingly rare, as even professional researchers become reduced to Olympic-level scrollers, skiing on the surface of information. The reduction of education to exam preparation, the addiction of children and teenagers to violent video games and social media, the diminishment of human beings to mere fodder for markets, the demonization of the other and the concomitant “wall” “protecting” “us” from “them” are just some of our daily social realities whose aggression we feel, are horrified by and feel powerless to change. ADHD, autism, panic disorders, depression, anxiety, chronic pain, irritable bowel syndrome, restless legs syndrome, eczema, alcoholism, prescription drug addiction and fibromyalgia are just some of the new names of our cultural malaise.

Systemic violence and racism are pervasive, some have argued even fundamental, to our democracy and to the structure of institutions. What’s been termed the new Jim Crow is effectively destroying families and communities, as our prison system overflows with generations of young black men. The police violence against these young black men seems to know no bounds. The constant assault on the Other: immigrants, women, the LGBTQ community, the disabled, and even the planet itself is part of our daily “aggression fatigue.” No human relation or possibility of human bond is left unthreatened by increasing, invasive and pervasive social paranoia. Harvey Weinstein, Jerry Sandusky and Larry Nassar are names of the new Leviathan, a mythic monster that in our day and age has turned out to be all too real. All the while, underserved populations are continually pushed to the side and ignored. Quoting Harvard sociologist Robert Sampson, Ta-Nehisi Coates (2017) notes, “It’s the myth of the American Dream that with initiative and industriousness, an individual can always escape impoverished circumstances. But what the data shows is that you have these multiple assaults on life chances that make transcending those circumstances difficult and at times nearly impossible.” The American dream has become the American nightmare. There is no doubt that the United States seems to have experienced an uncanny volte-face; now with military parades and nighttime torch marches, we appear to be the bizarre incarnation of the very tyranny democracy has fought against from its earliest beginnings.

Jihadism and radicalization have replaced the love cults of the 1960s with machine guns and revisionist fundamentalist religion. Professor of psychiatry at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Vamik Volkan points out that this fundamentalism promotes a doctrine of “Total loyalty to the leader and to the divine text, ‘removing’ anxiety a member might have due to intrapsychic and interpersonal conflicts.” The aim is to eradicate the unconscious as the topos of alterity since it threatens the fundamentalist credo. In the same vein, the “lone wolf terrorist” becomes a template for copycats who wish to replicate violent acts, testifying only to the violence that inhabits them. The alarming rise of the Altright and conservative populist movements have been given new impetus by the rise to power of tyrants, and the world has a new “Axis to grind” in the Erdogan– Duterte–Putin–Trump era.

The violence we endure extends to the past and the future, with catastrophic effects for future generations as the United States leaves the Paris accords while hurricanes, earthquakes, wildfires, mudslides and tsunamis eat away at the very ground we stand on. The recent tax legislation passed by Congress promises to mire our children and grandchildren in unremitting debt. Moreover, the erasure and denial of the past could not be more egregious as the demands of Indigenous peoples for respect of their tribal lands and burial grounds are ignored in favor of fracking and oil transport and production.

The erasure of time is part of the new neoliberal world of the sleepless 24/7 demand for work, which is only further exacerbated by the sense of timelessness that technology encourages. The new global culture, or mono-culture of sameness, has eviscerated the differences between bodies and information as we are increasingly induced to treat our neighbor as virtual matter. Reality has become virtual and life, a video game. We see this reach new levels in the recent phenomenon of “swatting,” where gamers call police to report violence occurring at the hands of random others as a sort of prank call. The outcome of such a “game” can prove lethal, having recently resulted in the murder of a Wichita man by police answering such a “prank” call during the holiday season. Technology allows the fiction that one is not participating in a social group, interacting with others, but rather removed, autonomous and limitlessly powerful. This is seen in the phenomenon of cyber bullying and the concomitant increase in adolescent suicide. In a recent well-publicized case, Massachusetts teen Michelle Carter was convicted of involuntary manslaughter for egging on the suicide of Conrad Roy, her long-distance online boyfriend, by text message. “Just do it,” she said, the Nike voice of the super-ego. The limitlessness that technology psychically permits and promotes alerts us to the appearance of the uncanny in classical Freudian terms, as something that should have been repressed but shows up in reality where it does not belong. This is illustrated as First Lady Melania Trump campaigns to tackle cyber-bullying, while her husband is a super-villain of the universe of cyber-bullying, threatening nuclear war while boast-tweeting about the size of his nuclear “button.”

This book raises questions about violence and its relationship to the Other. This is why, in our estimation, violence can no longer be relegated to an extrapsychoanalytic concept. For Freud and Lacan, the concept of aggression is a properly psychoanalytic one. Violence, on the other hand, insofar as it is an act, remains outside of the realm of speech or subjectivity proper. At the same time, the more the “disque-cours courrant” – to quote Lacan’s pun on discourse and “disque cours” or “running record/LP” – is one of violence, the more the sub - jective effects abound. Violence is no longer extra-linguistic as the super-egoic hegemony of cultural and ideological imperatives hold sway. Our title, On Psychoanalysis and Violence, brings to mind many properly psychoanalytic concepts: Oedipus, Totem and Taboo, killing Moses, aggression, sadism, masochism and, of course, the death drive. And yet, are any of these theoretical concepts actually violence? Psychoanalysis concerns itself fundamentally with speech and unconscious processes. Violence, on the other hand, concerns the act rather than the word, and while it may be talked about as violence, it has not traditionally been considered a psychoanalytic problem but rather a juridical or social one. At the same time, for Lacan, developing Freud’s notion of primal repression, there is an originary violence of being subject to language. “The letter kills,” Lacan tells us, following Hegel. The Real is simultaneously created and annulled by the encounter with language.

Lacan’s development of the traumatic impact of language on the human follows from his close reading of Freud. Indeed, when asked whether psychoanalysis, a practice in and of language, might help render the world less violent, Freud responds to Einstein’s optimism at the new theory of psychoanalysis with a categorical no, stating:

You begin with the relation between Right and Might. There can be no doubt that that is the correct starting-point for our investigation. But may I replace the word ‘might’ by the balder and harsher word ‘violence’? Today right and violence appear to us as antitheses. It can easily be shown, however, that the one has developed out of the other.

This intimacy between law, or right, and violence is the core of Freud’s argument in Civilization and Its Discontents. We recall that Freud chose the etymologically unusual noun “Unbehagen” – not an easy one for translators – to describe what has been rendered in English and French respectively as discontents or malaise in civilization. Unbehagen is used in German only as a noun, while Behagen is both a noun and a verb. The Old Norse verbs Haga (to set up, arrange) and Hagar (it fits or to fit) belong to the verb Hagan (to protect, cherish) of Germanic origin, and etymologists think it was developed with the participation of the Old High German Gihagan (maintained, nourished). Etymologically, then, Unbehagen means (un) not set up, not arranged, not protected, not cherished, not nourished – all relating to a structural impossibility that Freud elaborates regarding civilized life.

We contend that Unbehagen is a word that is better suited to another era, and while underlining and capturing well the costs and failures of repression, it does not account for the psychic panic and existential disarray we experience today. Nowadays, the psychic shutdown is not due to repression but to overwhelming stimulation and constant social, political and personal demands that are categorically impossible to meet and come at us from all directions. This makes for a totalizing sense of panic, exhaustion and guilt. It is no longer enough to say in Althusserian terms that the subject of language is the subject of ideology. Today, the very integrity of speech as establishing bonds between people is at stake, as language is more and more harnessed to a culture of enjoyment. Existential anxiety is managed and maintained by ideological and capitalist demands for imaginary belonging. People feel guilty both for not doing enough sit-ups and for sitting too much – what has been termed, by Forbes, the Huffington Post and even the Mayo Clinic, “the new smoking.” Subjective guilt, the loss of desire and ego ideals that previously supported cultural endeavor are harnessed by an ideology that is sustained by our mis-recognizing this guilt as a failure to conform to imaginary cultural injunctions. The constant tsunami of information and demand make for an erosion of the integrity of social-symbolic channels that previously helped access more intimate subjective truth. The blitzkrieg of fake news and the use of blatant lying about known facts only to assert power have made for what Masha Gessen has called “outrage fatigue.”

We argue that we need a new word for our modern “unbehagen.” Lacan posited that anxiety was born of the lack of lack. Anxiety is a direct link with the Real and the failure of the symbolic order to sustain subjectivity in the face of the overwhelming object that threatens to destroy it. In Lacan’s seminar X, L’Angoisse (Anxiety), he develops his own reading of Freud’s “Inhibition, Symptom and Anxiety” with the addition of what Lacan called his only worthwhile contribution to psychoanalysis, the object a. Lacan explains that anxiety never dupes and concerns the presence of something that is not dialectizable by language. Anxiety marks a limit – namely, the presence of the Real. This is rarely any longer “a subjective moment” that underlines the potential failure of fantasy to protect the subject from the Real. Rather, nowadays we are “Angwashed,” flooded with anxiety as we are overtaken by the constant force of the Real.

The attacks of 9/11 inaugurated the 21st century with the word terror, ushering in a new “sense of an ending” – i.e., the twilight of nation states, of which the current ideological backlash is a symptom, as we bear witness to the eroding limits of advanced democracy buttressed by global capitalism and corporate greed. The popular and resounding backlash against our oxymoronic “culture of violence” is often experienced as yet another instance of violence as the #MeToo, Times Up, Black Lives Matter, and demand for protest activism overwhelm our daily lives. We are left with the sense that we need to be actively protesting and “doing something about it” all the time, which either feeds our narcissistic wish to “be good” or aliments our sense of overwhelming impotence. Indeed, identity politics has become a spurious retreat for the ego in the face of the daily barrage. This injunction to defend every group and decry all oppression becomes yet another onslaught. As a result, social discourse becomes reduced, flattened, lacking in nuance, eschewing all complexity into the most simplistic binary of good and bad. The triumph of “political correctness” as a new religion that guarantees “safe places” and averts us with “trigger warnings” is part of the very problem to which it tries to respond. The new identity and gender politics, the culture of medical and educational evaluation, the myriad and increasing diagnoses of mental illness have become the new “symbolic categories” of supposed “being” that risk perpetuating and exacerbating the divides that cause violence in the first place, placing the ego at the epicenter. Instead of opening dialogue, these identificatory categories establish imaginary boundaries that strangle discussion, internal reflection and stymie the ability to think.

René Girard in his famous book Violence and the Sacred underlines the social function of sacrifice as that which quells violence, and as such is constitutive of community, appeasing potential conflict. This notion of sacrifice makes a cut, like circumcision as a founding cutting away of jouissance due to which the social tie is invented and secured. This echoes Freud’s myth in Totem and Taboo wherein the primal father is murdered and, as a result, sacrifice of enjoyment becomes the foundation of law. The 20th century saw this notion of sacrifice take off, and we learned that sacrifice marks at the same time, as Freud argued in Civilization and Its Discontents, the constant proximity between civilization and barbarism. For Hitler, in Mein Kampf, for example, people are “freed by nothing but sacrifice.” Mid-century fascism finds new life in today’s Angwash where we are never freed, and we never stop sacrificing.

How do we create the space that allows for thought that could make for a relation to the subject, ushering in the relief provided by speech? Walter Benjamin’s critique of violence echoes something of the Freudian discovery. Benjamin explains how all contract “points toward violence.” He continues, however, that “There is a sphere of human agreement that is nonviolent to the extent that it is wholly inaccessible to violence: the proper sphere of understanding, language.” Slavoj Žižek has said that psychoanalysis today is the one practice that allows us the luxury not to enjoy. We contend that psychoanalytic thought and clinical practice can contribute to thinking through the challenges of our current moment, and we turn to Freud’s reflections on war and the psychic origins of violence to situate our argument.

In his letters to Einstein, Freud writes:

Such, then, was the original state of things: domination by whoever had the greater might – domination by brute violence or by violence supported by intellect. As we know, this régime was altered in the course of evolution. There was a path that led from violence to right or law. What was that path? It is my belief that there was only one: the path which led by way of the fact that the superior strength of a single individual could be rivalled by the union of several weak ones. “L’union fait la force.” Violence could be broken by union, and the power of those who were united now represented law in contrast to the violence of the single individual. Thus we see that right is the might of a community. It is still violence, ready to be directed against any individual who resists it; it works by the same methods and follows the same purposes. The only real difference lies in the fact that what prevails is no longer the violence of an individual but that of a community. But in order that the transition from violence to this new right or justice may be effected, one psychological condition must be fulfilled. The union of the majority must be a stable and lasting one. If it were only brought about for the purpose of combating a single dominant individual and were dissolved after his defeat, nothing would have been accomplished. The next person who thought himself superior in strength would once more seek to set up a dominion by violence and the game would be repeated ad infinitum. The community must be maintained permanently, must be organized, must draw up regulations to anticipate the risk of rebellion and must institute authorities to see that those regulations – the laws – are respected and to superintend the execution of legal acts of violence. The recognition of a community of interests such as these leads to the growth of emotional ties between the members of a united group of people – communal feelings which are the true source of its strength.

Our book aims to revitalize, renew and encourage this strength, bringing together psychoanalysts and psychoanalytic scholars to address, explore and interrogate our current cultural moment from a psychoanalytic viewpoint that is non-moral, non-putative and non-identificatory in its theorization and conceptualization. The field of psychoanalysis is just as rife as any other field with debate, theoretical disagreement and conceptual antagonism. At the same time, the possibility of thinking psychoanalytically about the problem of violence is an occasion for our diverse group of international clinicians and scholars to rally together, an example of the strength in community that Freud contends is the albeit fragile bulwark against tyranny.

We open the volume with some reflections of the French psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, analysand and student of Lacan, Jean-Jacques Moskovitz. Moskovitz writes that he is called upon to respond to the question we asked him when inviting him to contribute to our book – namely, “Why do we kill?” He argues that the jouissance involved in murder annihilates not only the life of the victim, but aims at annihilating the unconscious of both the murderer and the victim as the constitutive site of difference. Using Freud’s theory of primal repression and the mythic murder of the father that founds the unconscious, Moskovitz is able to contrast the symbolic coordinates of human existence by opposing them to the demand for jouissance necessitated by ideologies of destruction. Well known for his work in Paris on cinema and psychoanalysis, Moskovitz shows how cinema can be a way of reestablishing symbolic links as well, and it is particularly well situated to constructing, après coup, testimony as symbolic death or inscription. Reading Lanzmann’s Shoah and Nemes’s Son of Saul, Moskovitz incites his readers to rally, act and bear witness to defend the integrity of the symbolic register.

The inherent contentiousness of the symbolic register is addressed as famed philosopher and gender theorist Judith Butler delineates the effects that Freud has had on philosophical and political thought. In Freud’s “Thoughts for the times on war and death” (1915), written six months after the outbreak of World War I, he reflects on the bonds that hold communities together as well as the destructive powers that break them apart. By the time he develops the death drive in 1920, Freud becomes increasingly concerned with the destructive capacities of human beings. He addresses the dangers of nationalism, the phantasmatic characteristics of citizenship, the problem of authority, the origins of violence and war, and the dim prospects for peace. Butler points out that at work in Freud is an operative metaphor of the psyche as a legal system unto itself, passing judgment, asserting authority, banishing foreign elements and meting out forms of punishment. Butler’s contribution underlines that the psychic sphere is already political, and that the distinctly human capacity for destructiveness follows from the ambivalent psychic constitution of the human subject. Freud is clearly looking to find a possibility in the life of the drives to counter the horrific destructiveness that he saw in World War I. Reflection on how best to avert destruction must do something other than provide an argument acceptable to rational thought; it must somehow appeal to the drive, or find a way of working with – and against – that propulsive destructiveness that can lead to war.

Literary and psychoanalytic scholar Juliet Flower MacCannell reminds us that Freud’s pessimism was mitigated by his thoughts regarding the life-preserving drives. She looks at the Freud–Einstein correspondence, “Why War?,” with the horrors of the recent events in Charlottesville in mind. She reflects upon the new audacity of the Alt-right and Trump’s outrageous response – “very fine people on both sides.” MacCannell notes that Freud sees the aim of law as binding us to the erotic and life-preserving drives, with the expressed purpose of uniting and protecting the social body. Freud demonstrates that the law developed out of violence and represents the triumph of the “might of the community” over brute force. Freud’s aim, he explains to Einstein, and the aims of psychoanalysis in general, concern a transformation of the psyche, of mentality itself. MacCannell shows how this transformation is antithetical to the aims of the new administration where the triumph of the “celebration of violence” is presented as trumping the law and is instituted as a kind of imposter of the law. She shows that the Alt-right “demonstration” in Charlottesville was not a demonstration in the name of the law, but a literal demonstration – a parade of imaginary power, vaunting the “muscular superiority” of the Alt-right. MacCannell uses the images and chants of the Alt-right to reveal a movement based solely on the power of posturing, whose intent is to show that violence and destruction trump any gesture towards preservation and community. Like Moskovitz’s contention that violence concerns the eradication of the unconscious, she underlines that this constant propping up of a violent imaginary serves to “eliminate the idea of a psyche.” The Alt-right and similar reactionary right-wing movements aim at turning Freud’s end of war into “endless war.” MacCannell utilizes Arendt’s discussion of “robotic violence” to illustrate the wish to eliminate the subject altogether, diagnosing our current moment with recourse to Arendt’s famed critique of totalitarianism.

#### 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.

#### 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