THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE EVERYDAY

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Geography

By

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Beginning with the premise that the everyday is constitutionally elusive, a mobile structure is formulated and then deployed to, if not capture the everyday, at least corner it. Using Ian Hacking's notion that a formidable analytical apparatus could be created using Erving Goffman's "bottom-up" micro-sociology in combination with Michel Foucault's "top-down" macro-critique, a comprehensive approach is constructed to track the feints and parries of the everyday. This analytical apparatus is extended back into time through the verticality of history and out through space through the horizons of spatial secretion. Socially, its "middle" is filled out by the additions of Marxian reproduction and Weberian typification while the body is added via an exploration of Merleau-Ponty. We conclude with a call for a new sub-discipline of neuro-geography and an a-structural structure, which can be applied to the everyday as well as other knotty theoretical entities.
The Dissertation of Robert Edward Sullivan is approved.

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This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my father, Patrick Lee Sullivan, who earned his Ph.D. in psychology from the University of California at Berkeley in 1950.
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VITA/Biographical sketch

Robert Edward Sullivan received his Bachelor's in philosophy from UCLA in 2007 and his Master's in geography from UCLA in 2009. His master's thesis was published by Ashgate Publishing under the title Geography Speaks: Performative Aspects of Geography. He is working on a second book for Ashgate titled Dystopic Utopia: Los Angeles in the Twenty-First Century. His work has also appeared in the Los Angeles Times, the Chicago Tribune, LIFE Magazine and the Village Voice.
Introduction

In this dissertation I examine the elusiveness of the everyday, my hypothesis being that the addition of a geographical component to the quest for the everyday does much to reduce its obdurate elusiveness.

“Whatever its other aspects, the everyday has this essential trait. It escapes” (Blanchot 1987: 14). Perhaps this trait of escaping remains essential to the everyday because the everyday is too mobile to be cornered, too amorphous to be defined, or, as Paul Harrison puts it: “The everyday experience of the lived disturbs categories of thought by way of contingencies, excess, and indefinite answers” (2000: 499). But perhaps it remains essential (or, rather, seems to remain essential) because the theories typically utilized to locate the everyday lack any sense of the geographical: without geography and its prime component, place, nothing is located in its place and therefore everything by necessity escapes.

As a method by which to test my hypothesis I use as a template a very suggestive but also very underdeveloped notion put forward by Ian Hacking in his essay, “Between Michel Foucault and Erving Goffman: between discourse in the abstract and face-to-face interaction.” In this essay, Hacking takes Goffman’s micro-social approach as a cue to posit an analytical apparatus combining Goffman with Foucault’s macro-social approach. Now perhaps this is a whimsical and possibly even a thoroughly misguided project but there is something intriguing about it nonetheless. As Hacking poses his project:

‘Between Foucault and Goffman’: that suggests a middle ground between the French philosopher and the American sociologist. That would in turn imply that the two stand in opposition. Not so: they are complementary. One needs to stand between the two men in order to take advantage of both. There is a clear sense in which Foucault’s
analysis was `top-down’, directed at entire `systems of thought’ … Goffman’s research was bottom-up’ – always concerned with individuals in specific locations entering into or declining social relations with other people. (2004: 277-278).

Whether Foucault does indeed operate from a “top-down” perspective is a question fraught with some controversy (an issue we will return to), but the proposition that Goffman operates from the “bottom-up” micro-level seems to be eminently non-controversial. But the notion of utilizing Foucault’s analysis for a panopticon view upon the everyday while simultaneously using Goffman’s for a ground-level view (sub-opticon?) is one that is imbued with a certain amount of interest and may prove to be an efficacious method for a holistic analysis of the everyday.

Yet, despite whatever misgivings we may have about Hacking’s appraisal of Foucault as operating from a “top-down” level as well as whatever misapprehensions we also may have about the notion of combining Foucault’s and Goffman’s schemas, Hacking does point out some interesting parallels between this pair of thinkers as well as some ways in which their theories might be melded into just such a greater whole.

First, he notes that the majority of Goffman’s work focuses on “what Goffman called total institutions: prisons, mental hospitals, concentration camps, monasteries, boarding schools, naval vessels” (Hacking 2004: 287). This of course neatly aligns with Foucault’s emphasis on similar institutions, what he calls “complete and austere institutions,” the title of Chapter One of Part Four of *Discipline and Punish*. But Goffman never instigated any sort of analysis of the social or political assumptions underlying such institutions, whereas this is precisely the nexus of Foucault’s concern, i.e., “the preconditions for and mutations between successive institutional forms” (Hacking 2004: 288). However, according to Hacking,
Foucault pays scant attention to the habitual practices and circadian routines by which such institutional forms are embedded in to and then manifested within society. This is Goffman’s precise terrain: he investigates the everyday “in rich detail,” but, as opposed to Foucault, “gives no hint of how the surrounding structures themselves were constructed” or writes “nothing about the history of the social practices he described or the history of the total institution” (Hacking 2004: 288, 294). Thus, their complementary fit: Foucault probes the super-structural matrix of total institutions and their derivatives while Goffman prowls the halls of the same, jotting down notes about face-to-face interactions within those institutions. Put them together and one has circumscribed the institutional framework of society, from tip-top to bottom rock. Or at least that is the hope.

Again, a note of caution is warranted: if it seems too facile, it probably is. Besides, there are those who position Goffman and Foucault not as complementary but as congruent: in Return of the Actor, for instance, Alain Touraine slots Goffman and Foucault together (along with Marcuse, Althusser, and Bourdieu) for “beyond their differences,” which are considerable, to say the least, they share “a vision of the [social] system as order, and a conception of the actor as calculator and as player” (1988: 6). In his study of Goffman, Tom Burns does the same: “What Foucault and Goffman … have attempted is to construct a framework within which it might be possible to identify, observe and record the exercise of power in terms of … hegemony designed for ‘normalisation’” (1992: 164). And Anthony Giddens contrasts and compares Goffman and Foucault vis-à-vis “their common concern with carceral organizations” and “their work” regarding “the positioning and disciplining of the body” (1984: 158, 157). At this juncture we will bypass any analyses of these judgments, for
the point I wish to make here is that, contrary to Hacking’s appraisal, some have noted the supplementary rather than the complementary fit of Goffman with Foucault.

Yet and still, if followed through with a deeper analysis than Hacking provides and if its middle ground is properly filled in, Hacking’s notion may at the least lead to a more comprehensive circumambulation around the wobbly perimeters of the everyday, and at the most to a systematic way in which to, if not precisely measure, at least roughly gauge the approximate extent of those very same perimeters, no matter how wobbly. As Philip Manning states in *Erving Goffman and Modern Sociology*, “the comparison between Foucault and Goffman is indeed worth pursuing” (1992: 53).

Hacking points out another parallel between Goffman and Foucault: 1961. This is the year of the publication of both of their “breakthrough” works, and both feature the asylum as their focus of analysis. Goffman’s *Asylums: Studies on the Social Condition of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* “was the result of a year that he passed as a participant observer in a major psychiatric hospital in Washington DC” (Hacking 2004: 289).\(^1\) In contradistinction to Goffman’s *Asylums*, Foucault’s *Folie et Déraison: Historie de la folie dans l’âge de la raison* (published in English in 1965 as *Madness and Civilization*) was the result of numerous hours spent perusing texts in Foucault’s extended research outpost, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. So perhaps their methods of working as well as their theoretical perspectives might be complementary after all.

So the question is: if indeed, as Hacking avers, there is some “middle ground between the French philosopher [Foucault] and the American sociologist [Goffman],” upon which “one needs to stand between the two men in order to take advantage of both” (Hacking 2004: 277;

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\(^1\)The hospital was St. Elizabeth’s; Ezra Pound was a patient there until 1958. Whether Pound and Goffman were there at the same time and ever crossed paths is unknown to me but the possibility of their meeting is interesting to speculate upon and perhaps awaits a Tom Stoppard-like author to flesh it out.
italics, mine), of what does that middle ground consist? What is there in that middle? What is its geography? What is its topography? It can’t be empty; otherwise there is nothing upon which to stand. So what stands there? Or who stands there? Or, once again, what do they stand upon? Who or what is the mediator between the micro-sociology of Goffman and the macro-sociology of Foucault?

This dissertation takes as its initial starting point a survey of the genealogy of the term, "the everyday," prior to investigating the "bottom-up" analysis of Goffman. The second chapter, "Starting with Goffman," begins with an analysis of Goffman's conception of the situation, a conception that in Goffman's hands lacks any theoretical underpinning and assumes "our Anglo-American" society as its essential foundation. Though Goffman is adept at formulating analytical concepts to plumb the social intricacies of situations (such as his concepts of stalls, involvement shields, main and side involvements, sheaths, and so on), he does not situate the situation. There is an amorphous quality to Goffman's situation; despite Goffman's acute observational skills, there is a sense of the freely floating to his concept of the situation, as if it exists without consideration of time and place.

The third chapter, "The SpaceTimePlace Thing," is an attempt to add a foundation to Goffman's concept of the situation. Through separate analyses of time, space, and place and their insertion into our schema, we set the situation within its physical constraints. Our argument also consists of a claim that space, time, and place are indissoluble elements, inextricably bound together, and should be treated as such. However, the main purpose of the chapter is to bail out “situation” from its deterritorialized, de-spatialized, and atemporal situation by giving it the aid of time, space, and place, or, as I will argue, by the insertion of the space-time-place "thing" into our schema.
But even with this addition, we have not properly dealt with the vertical element of time: history, for time never exists in the moment but resounds with the depth of time that has led to this time, i.e., the present. Through an exploration of the ruse of de Certeau, the analogical transport of Bourdieu, and the essential temporality of the “timeless truths” of analytic philosophy, I demonstrate in this, our fourth chapter, "Time Goes Vertical: History and Its Back-Hoe Tendencies," that history must be accounted for in any analysis of anything whatsoever, including, of course, in any comprehensive analysis of the everyday.

By the end of the first part of this dissertation, we have taken Goffman’s situation, added on time-space-place, and then drafted verticality of time. We have also, at least to a certain degree, widened Goffman’s constricted focus on “our own Anglo-American society” by bringing in other groups (the Berbers of North Africa in Bourdieu's anthropology and the Swedish villagers in Torsten Hägerstrand's time-geography) an expansion which will be followed through in a much more intensive way throughout the rest of our investigation.

Part Two of this dissertation begins with chapter five, "Typification," which consists of an analysis of typifying, an essential tool for the navigation of the everyday. I rely on Max Weber and Alfred Schutz for an unpacking of typification and Ideal Types and then further investigate typification (a sub-species of classification) through three examples in which typification does not successfully function. The first example is the misconception of Viet Cong field commanders by the U.S, military in the Vietnam War due to the US military's notion that their Ideal Type of a field commander would be mirrored on the battlefield. Next I examine my own misconstrual of a woman I typed as a "Drunk" but who turned out to be much more than that. Lastly, I reference several examples from Sartre's *Nausea*, a novel that has much to do with the difficulties of classification and typification.
"What Marx Brought in from the Cold: Reproduction" is the title of the sixth chapter. In any study of the everyday, the elemental requirements of everyday reproduction must be included: eating, sleeping, the housing question, and the elimination of waste matter being necessary for everyday reproduction. Being that this analysis stems from Marx's notion of reproduction, we proceed with a class-based analysis. We examine an idiosyncratic development in the reproduction of the reserve army of the working class through an exploration of circular migration in China and the role of "urban villages" in this migration. In our analysis of the middle class, we take up the pressure being placed upon the middle class of the United States, as its status has been destabilized and eroded over the course of the last forty years with a concurrent and corresponding ascension, especially during the last decade, of the middle class of Brazil, China, and India. Finally, the extreme wealth of the upper class is surveyed by a sketch of some developments in high-end housing in London and Cairo.

The dissertation then matches the vertical trajectory of history (inserted in the fourth chapter) with the horizontal trajectory of spatial secretion. This is accomplished via Nigeria and an exploration of its oil assemblage. Relying heavily on the research of Michael Watts, the multiple synchronous locations of the oil assemblage, from a gas tank being filled in Omaha to the bunkering of oil wells in the delta of the Niger River, are incorporated into our study, as any analysis of the everyday without a spatial component cannot even make the pretense of being comprehensive.

Let us note here that we have thus far made a great deal of headway in widening out Goffman's "Anglo-American" context by the inclusion of places in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, thus expanding the initial restrictions of Goffman's geographical scope into one that reaches out to multiple points of the world.
We then move into Part Three, beginning with an examination of Foucault and his conception of the milieu, a conception that centers on the balance between the limits of security and risk. Using examples taken from Foucault's own life, from his involvement in protest movements in Tunisia and France to his forays into the gay bathhouses of San Francisco, we note the shifting boundaries of these limits as well as their rupture. In addition, we come to understand the significance of the limits of security and risk in the operation of the everyday, every everyday situation being poised between such limits. Finally, we perform a comparison between Foucault and Goffman in an attempt to adjudicate Hacking's assessment that the former works from a top-down perspective while the latter works from its bottom-up opposite, while also trying to a conclusion vis-à-vis the possibility of combining these two theories into a supplementary conceptual apparatus.

The body must be brought into our study, as it is of course essential to any experience of the everyday. In the ninth chapter, "Bringing the Body In," we take three "cuts" at the body in order to recruit it into our "program." First, we trace out Maurice Merleau-Ponty's bodily phenomenology, as he is the first Western philosopher to seriously treat the body as a constituent part of the human being without separating it off from the mind. But then we must give to the body its indexical coordinates, its here and now and back and front, as every body is oriented to its own particular position in space. Finally, we need to come to a deeper understanding of the senses than the one that presumes that there are five separate and distinct senses; instead, we posit a multi-modal and cross-modal sensory system with "separate" senses infusing and informing one another.

With this reconstituted construal of the body, we are ready for the dissertation's final chapter, "Bringing in the Rest." Here, we first acknowledge the requirement of incorporating
things into our schema of the everyday, for without the vibrancy of stuff and the materiality of things, there can be no everyday. We end with a discussion of the mind, its essential unity with the world leading us to a postulation of a neuro-geography as a way (or perhaps the way) to understand the mind. This dissertation, then, has branched out from "Anglo-American" society to the four corners of the globe and then, taking an interior turn, into the very structure of the mind. Hopefully, the dissertation has also demonstrated that placing the everyday in a geographical context substantially reduces the elusiveness of the everyday, as perhaps it is only elusive because it is seldom placed within the context of a place.

Now, an apologia. It is quite obvious that every one of these examinations must be cursory and even superficial to a certain degree. Tomes have been written on each of the thinkers or the ideas under examination in this dissertation. It is also quite obvious that much more should be included to make the present study truly complete: for instance, theories incorporating aesthetics and psychoanalysis are noticeable by their absence, as well as a feminist perspective on home and the everyday. All I can say by way of a mea culpa is that one person can only do so much and additional wings may be added on to this schema at a later date, either by myself or anyone else, for that matter.

The obvious danger with the present study’s multi-pronged and rather omnivorous method is that it may descend into “a soggy eclecticism, an opportunism that laps up any and every kind of theoretical approach,” to cite one of our objects of investigation, Michel Foucault (1980: 81). That will be my pitfall to avoid and yours to use as a reproach, if such a defect should arise in this investigation. An extra dosage of fine-grained rigor on my part will help us avoid that danger, and it is my intention to utilize such a rigor.
A remark or two is in order regarding the systematic nature of the overall schema put forward in "The Geography of the Everyday." Though the structure of this dissertation may feint towards the formulation of what seems like a structure – with the bottom level of Part One (situation, space-time-place, and the verticality of history), the middle level of Part Two (typification, reproduction, and spatial secretion), and, finally, the top level of Part Three (milieu, the body, and neuron-geography) – what is intended is a kind of systemless system, one that is polymer, reversible as well as invertible, a kind of Mobius strip of movable parts.

This "structure" is intended to create a domain in which the imperatives inherent to structure do not rule out the transformations necessary for change. As William H. Sewell puts it in his *Logics of History*:

It is my conviction that a theory of change cannot be built into a theory of structure unless we adopt a far more multiple, contingent, and fractured conception of society – and of structure. What is needed is a conceptual vocabulary that makes it possible to show how the ordinary operations of structures can generate transformations. (2005: 140).

While I agree with Sewell here, we can make this even more flexible by acknowledging that whatever laws govern transformation change as do also the laws that govern structuration: "Not only do parameters change in response to changes in systems of which they are a part, but the laws of transformation themselves change," state Richard Levins and Richard Lewontin in *The Dialectical Biologist* (1985: 277).

The entities that are objects of laws of transformation become subjects that change these laws. Systems destroy the conditions that brought them about in the first place and create the possibilities of new transformations that did not previously exist…. Life originally arose from inanimate matter, but that origination made its continued occurrence impossible, because living organisms consume the complex organic
molecules needed to recreate life *de novo*. Moreover, the reducing atmosphere that existed before the beginning of life has been converted, by living organisms themselves, to one that is rich in reactive oxygen. (Levins and Lewontin 1985: 277).

I suppose we can fairly say that Marx's historical methodology claims much the same thing: the systematic laws of feudalism create the conditions for feudalism's transformation into capitalism while the laws of capitalism create the conditions for the destruction of capitalism and the creation of communism. What this means is that possibilities for change can be built into systems, an architectonic principle that should be verifiable by the structure of the system itself: can the structure mobilize the transcendence of its own structure, which may mean that that it may nullify its own order and negate its own principles, possibly leading to its own destruction?

Interspersed between as well as within the nine chapters of "The Geography of the Everyday" are three other components, one consisting of four observations of different places in Los Angeles, the second consisting of brief sketches of the "everyday" aspects of four Hollywood films (*A Night at the Opera, It's A Wonderful Life, Chinatown*, and *The Bourne Supremacy*), and the third consisting of randomly-placed "found" texts from newspapers clippings to want ads to reproductions of the textual component of road signs.

The four places are selected to reflect four types of places, two kinds of private places and two of public places. They are all what can be termed quintessentially everyday, albeit in very distinct ways. As far as the private places, one is open to the general public, a coffee shop and one is not, a movie studio. The former, a Peet's Coffee Shop on Westwood Boulevard in West Los Angeles, though privately owned, is open to the public, given certain conditions and restrictions. Ostensibly, something needs to be purchased if someone enters Peet's and remains for an extended period of time, though a customer could browse at least for a certain while
without making any kind of purchase at all. Customers face other restrictions as well: they can only enter when the shop is open for business and are only allowed in certain areas of the shop: if a customer abruptly made his or her way behind the counter to pour a cup of coffee, a certain amount of commotion would ensue. The second private place under discussion is a major Hollywood movie studio, Fox Motion Pictures, Inc. This is a private space that is strictly private: highly secured (especially following the events of 9/11), ingress to the studio is only possible for employees or those with direct business there. However, though a coffee shop is easily identifiable as an everyday place, wouldn't a movie studio be classified as eminently un-everyday, for this is a site of a highly atypical and much glamorized business? But for employees of Fox, there couldn't be a more everyday place than this "dream factory," as they work in its studios on an everyday basis: this is how they make their living and what could be more everyday than that?

The two public places are an intersection in Westwood adjacent to UCLA, the corner of Hilgard and Westholme, and a plaza in the complex of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The first is what we might call an unconsciously designed public place, in that it is not designed as intentionally public but is so almost by default. Certainly members of the public intersect here, and a broad cross-section at that: students, UCLA facility workers, nannies and maids working in Westwood residences, and professors, among others. Yet it is not intended as a gathering place for the public in the way that a plaza or a town square is: it is a way station, purely functional, anonymous, just another intersection, albeit one at this particular corner in this particular town with these sets of particular types of people using it. I also use these four places as open-ended sketchpads for ruminating, catchments for notions about the everyday that do not fit under the ambit of the more tightly focused chapters.
Hollywood movies rely heavily on the everyday as a background against which to set their stories. A normative notion of the everyday is assumed and the Hollywood movie very frequently punctures that norm only to reconstitute it in the frame of "the happy ending." When we consider the four films discussed in this dissertation, the use of the everyday as something against which to set themes and plots becomes clear. For instance, in *A Night at the Opera*, The Marx Brothers do their ludic best to perforate the standards of the everyday (turning the opera house into a faux baseball stadium, for instance), yet in the end they institute a regenerated everyday, one in which the subplot of romantic love has been resolved. The everyday norms of an all-American town and its all-American hero is toppled only to be put right on an improved basis in *It's A Wonderful Life*. The sheen of Los Angeles is ripped away in *Chinatown*, the assumptions undergirding its everyday order uncovered through the plot developments of the story. And the everyday does not exist for the main character of Jason Bourne in *The Bourne Trilogy*, as he must hunt down his own identity if he is to have any hope of ever capturing an everyday life again. Once again, though, the main point to be made here is that it is the given, the everyday, which is more often than not the backdrop against which almost every Hollywood film moves, sundering the given, restoring it only to have it sundered and restored again, in a new and improved version, and so on.

The final component of this dissertation is randomly placed ephemera of the everyday: items culled from want ads, the odd newspaper item, aphorisms and road signage taken out of context, and so on. These are used to remind the reader of the assumptions behind the reading experience as well as to indicate the ongoing possibility that these assumptions can be disturbed, roiled, and unsettled.
And so now, with these introductory remarks in hand, it is time to begin the dissertation proper.
Part One
Chapter One:
The Everyday

We want to understand something that is already in plain view (Wittgenstein 2003: 36, remark 89; italics, Wittgenstein).

First though, I think it wise, or at least helpful [and therefore unwise?], to sketch out a chronology of the theoretical use of the everyday. Once again, I need to pre-empt any expectation that this examination will be complete, final, or thorough in any way: that kind of inquiry would fill several tomes (at least!) and what I have in mind will hopefully fall well short of that. But, even given this limited scope, we should be able to fill in the main lexical and philosophical developments in the historical use of the quirky little term, the everyday.

Though the everyday as a philosophical concept was not directly utilized by theorists until the early twentieth century, it had been indirectly conceptualized by many thinkers prior to that time, albeit without using the specific terms, “everyday” or “the everyday.” For instance, when Adam Smith begins *The Wealth of Nations* with his celebrated description of the manufacturing of pins, what is he doing but utilizing the everyday as a concept and category by which to analyze the division of labor?

To take an example, therefore, from a very trifling manufacture; but one in which the division of labor has been very often taken notice of, the trade of the pin-maker…. In the way in which this business is now carried on, not only the whole work is a peculiar trade, but it is divided into a number of branches, of which the greater part are likewise peculiar trades. One man draws out the wire, another straightens it, a third cuts it, a fourth points it, a fifth grinds it at the top for receiving the head; to make the head requires two or three distinct operations; to put it on is a peculiar business, to whiten the pins is another; it is even a trade by itself to put them in the paper; and the important business of making a pin is, in this manner, divided into about eighteen distinct operations, which, in some manufactories, are all performed by distinct hands, though in others the same man will sometimes perform two or three of them. (Smith 1910: 4-5).
CASH ONLY
This “close reading” of a work environment, the analytical breakdown of the division of labor, work’s status as both a necessary and routine activity, and the manufacturing of pins as neither extraordinary nor “peculiar” (to adopt what seems to be Smith’s favorite term) would seem to qualify this investigation of pin-making as a study of the everyday. Marx, also, of course invoked daily working conditions: in *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, Schumpeter reads Marx as claiming that “it is our daily work which forms our minds, and that it is our location within the productive process which determines our outlook on things – or the sides of things we see – and the social elbowroom at the command of each of us” (1950: 12). This reading, besides noting Marx’s focus on the daily routine of work and its effect on consciousness, also highlights a distinctively geographical interpretation of Marx: it is our location (our place) within the work force or on the factory floor that determines our consciousness.

In his *Philosophizing the Everyday: Revolutionary Praxis and the Fate of Cultural Theory*, John Roberts lays out a strong case for classifying Marxism as deeply indebted to a revolutionary conception of the everyday:

In Marx, there is no critique of political economy, no critique of the value-form (the technical division of labour; necessary labour) without the collective aesthetic and sensuous reappropriation everyday experience…. What remains qualitatively distinctive about Marx's programme [is] the fact that it is the first revolutionary programme to bring the transformation of the everyday into some phenomenological alignment with the critique of capital. (2006: 12-13, 12).

While Smith and Marx were utilizing the realm of the everyday for purposes both economical and political, Lefebvre points out that the quotidian was being appropriated from
another direction as well: Baudelaire, according to Lefebvre, “abandons the metaphysical and moral plane
to immerse himself in the everyday, which from that moment on he will deprecate, corrode and attack, but on its own level and as if from within…..He wants the artist to confront the everyday – and even if necessary to tear through it to reveal the living spirit enshrouded within, not above, or beyond, but within – and in doing so to liberate something strange, mysterious and bizarre…. He tried to think the everyday world of the senses instead of merely perceiving it, and so to uncover its second, abstract truth. (1991a: 106, 107, 108; italics Lefebvre).

Here we could add the prose of Stephan Crane and other writers within the realist tradition of American novelists as well as Zola and other writers within the naturalist tradition of French novelists, who, in distinctly different veins, were also attempting to transpose the everyday onto the page.

Anne Buttimer casts a wider temporal light on the turn to the quotidian by Smith, Marx, and other economic theorists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by reminding us that it was thinkers such as Bodin, Montesquieu, and Rousseau and their general focus on humanism (and thus, humanity) which anticipated this quotidian turn: “While Bodin, Montesquieu, and the Jesuit missionaries’ Lettres edifiantes (1705-1775) stimulated speculation on man-nature relationships, Rousseau directed attention along the horizontal plane, toward the actual social differences of his own day…. Philosophers had thus, by the nineteenth century, laid several conceptual foundations for the study of society and milieu” (1971: 14-15). Match this with Herder’s and Kant’s development of anthropology as well as Comte’s and Spencer’s development of sociology and this turn to the everyday becomes
indubitably associated with the wave of humanistic thought breaking on the intellectual shores of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

But can our search for the quotidian turn’s matrix be limited to any exact origin or even any general philosophical development? Could not Aristotle’s, Bentham’s, and Kant’s ethical inquires (or anyone else’s, for that matter) belong within the category of everyday explorations as well, in that such inquiries concern the moral dimension as it relates to behavior which occurs within the constraints of what we now call the everyday? And should not St. Augustine’s and Rousseau’s confessional writings also be subsumed within the category of works dealing with the everyday, as these autobiographical excursions deal with the typical and the routine (such as Augustine’s youthful stealing of pears and Rousseau's panegyric on the benefits of perambulation), albeit the typical and the routine of extraordinary thinkers in extraordinary times? And should not even the more metaphysical and theological work of, say, a Spinoza or an Aquinas be included within this category as well, as, even though they both delve into what may be regarded as abstruse and lofty issues, both take it as a given that these are precisely the issues which (should) most concern people every day, i.e., the structure and nature of the soul, as well as, at least in the case of Aquinas, the salvation of that soul?

Here we quickly realize that the everyday as subject matter has been with us for a very long time indeed and in very disparate modalities as well, and therefore we also quickly realize that it is the term itself that must be the focus of analysis and not the concept itself, at least at this juncture. And so the question becomes when exactly did the “everyday” enter the lexicon with a distinctly theoretical inflection? Was Freud the first to use it with the publication of *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life (Zur Psychopathologie des*
The given is stretched taut in a crowded bus. Everyone has to behave in order to keep it aligned. Behave like a passenger, behave like a bus driver, don’t bump or twist or cry or shout, don’t sing, don’t dance, and everything will be OK. We’ll get there. Without one puncture or perforation of the everyday.
Alltagsleben) in 1901? Freud’s book deals almost exclusively with what he calls parapraxes: slips of the tongue and pen, misreadings, bungled actions, and instances of forgetting, and of course the repressed emotional and physic inflections such “cross-actions” signify. We can perceive here a sort of adumbration of what is later to become the study of the everyday, as Freud is not directly investigating the everyday as the everyday, but more the everyday as it is precisely not the everyday. In other words, he is examining the everyday as it is transgressed, and not the "normal" operating procedures of the everyday; however, such transgressions serve to highlight both the everyday and a normative reading of the everyday as they expose simultaneously both the norm and its flipside, the abnormal. But Freud certainly never explicitly examines the everyday in its very everydayness; that is, he never attempts to analyze the structure or the underpinnings of the assumptions underlying the everyday. Therefore, I believe it illegitimate to claim Freud as the first explicit inquirer into the very nature of the everyday, though he was certainly poking around in what was transversal to the everyday, and in that effort he obliquely illuminates the everyday nature of the everyday, if only by setting the parapraxes against the praxis of the everyday.3

The American philosopher John McCumber believes that Heidegger’s citation of the everyday in Being and Time was the first instance of the everyday being used as we have come to know it in philosophical discourse.4 However, in his intellectual biography of

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3 Apparently, Freud’s investigation led to a number of other books studying similar phenomena: included in the bibliography of The Psychopathology of Everyday Life are the following: A.A. Brill’s “A Contribution to the Psychopathology of Everyday Life,” (1909); E. Jones’s “Beitrag zur Symbolik im Alltagsleben,” (1910) as well as his “The Psychopathology of Everyday Life” (1911); A. Maeder’s “Nouvelles contributions a la psychopathologie de la vie quotidienne” (1908); Otto Rank’s “Fehlleistungen aus dem Alltagsleben” (1912); J. Starcke’s “Aus dem Alltagsleben” (1916); and R. Wagner’s “Ein kleiner Beitrag zur Psychopathologie des Alltagslebens” (1911), among others. Freud, S. The Psychopathology of Everyday Life. Translated by James Strachey. W.W. Norton & Company: New York, London; 1989. 359-368.

Lefebvre, Rob Shields claims that Heidegger “found” the concept of *Taglichkeit* “in Lukács’ work” (1999: 14). Lukács’ essay “The Metaphysics of Tragedy: Paul Ernst” had been published in Hungary in 1911; it was then translated into German and published in the journal *Logos* in the same year (Bostock 1974: 175). Translated into English by Anna Bostock and published in 1974, this essay doesn’t contain the term “everyday” at all; however, it does contain the word “ordinary,” which I suspect is the term Bostock used for the German *Taglichkeit*. In the essay, originally titled “A tragedia metafizikaja,” Lukács uses “ordinary life” to refer to a state of mind opposite that of the metaphysically tragic or the tragically metaphysical:

> In ordinary life we experience ourselves only peripherally – that is, we experience our motives and our relationships. Our lives ordinarily have no real necessity, but only the necessity of being empirically present, of being entangled by a thousand threads in a thousand accidental bonds and relationships. (1974: 157).

But “in the great moments of life,” in other words, in tragic and metaphysical moments,

> “Many things disappear which before appeared to be the very cornerstones of life, while small barely perceptible things become the new supports for life. A man can no longer walk along the paths where he used to walk, nor can his eyes find any direction in them; yet now he easily climbs pathless mountain peaks and strides confidently over bottomless marshes…. Such a moment [one heightened by the metaphysics of tragedy] is a beginning and an end. Nothing can succeed it or follow upon it, nothing can connect it with ordinary life. (Lukács 1974: 157, 158).

With its evocation of ‘pathless mountain peaks,’ we can perhaps understand why this might have appealed to Heidegger, given his love for and valorization of the mountains of his native Swabia; add to that image of nature the juxtaposition of the metaphysical with the ordinary,

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5 “Metaphysics in Tragedy: Paul Ernst” first appeared in Hungarian in *Szellem* of 1911 (109 ff.) and in German in *Logos* (Vol. 2, 1911, 79 ff.).
and it becomes quite credible that Heidegger did “borrow” this term while also "leasing" at least the penumbra of its concomitant concept from Lukács, albeit Heidegger expands the conceptual apparatus of the everyday exponentially in Being and Time, as we shall see. So, though we can credit Lukács with the first use of the term and thus the prize of provenance, we surely must credit Heidegger with his amplification of the parameters of the concept of the everyday (aka the ordinary).

In his later writing, Lukács tied his concept of reification to an immanence within the everyday which could, if comprehended, lead to revolutionary change:

By incorporating the effects of the ideological mechanisms of bourgeois society [the fetish of the commodity, reification] into an analysis of the self-knowledge of the working class as an exploited class, his [Lukács] concept of reification opens up the everyday under capitalist conditions to its contradictory social essence. The everyday is neither ‘authentic’ nor ‘inauthentic’, but rather, the temporal and spatial order out of which the alienations of proletarian self-knowledge will emerge…. The condition of proletarian self-knowledge are brought into alignment with the expansion of exchange value into all areas of daily life. (Roberts 2006: 35; italics, mine).

This construal aligns quite closely with much of Lefebvre's analysis of the everyday, as both a potential site of revolutionary transformation and as a site which is eroded as it is colonized by an omnivorous consumerism, eager to appropriate everything and anything in its ravenous path.

Here also we can trace out a Marxist lineage to the everyday, from Marx to Lukács to Lefebvre, but also with Leon Trotsky thrown in for good measure. Through a series of articles originally appearing in Pravda and later collected in Problems of Everyday Life, Trotsky advocates for revolution in every aspect of life, from "big" jobs to "petty" jobs:
In order to reach a higher stage of culture, the working class - and above all its vanguard - must consciously study its life. To do this, it must know this life. *Purely practical everyday work* in the field of Soviet cultural and economic construction (even in Soviet retail trade!) is not at all a practice of 'petty jobs,' and does not necessarily involve a hairsplitting mentality. There are plenty of petty jobs, unrelated to any big jobs, in man's life. But history knows of no big jobs without petty jobs. It would be more precise to say - petty jobs in a great epoch, that is, as component parts of a big task, cease to 'petty jobs.' (1973, 27, 27; italics, mine).

Though Trotsky claims that such a practice of purely practical everyday work need not be one that involves 'a hairsplitting mentality,' it is interesting to note that the USSR incorporated the scientific management techniques of Frederick Taylor under the auspices of their own exponent of Taylorism, Alexei Gastev, "Director of the Institute for the Scientific Organization of the Mechanization of Man," which devoted its energies to the calibration of the performance of workers "in order to divest the body of the worker from the bad habits of bourgeois indulgence and lassitude" (Roberts 2006: 23). Such an expropriation of capitalist techniques of course, comported with Trotsky's dictum that

> the negligent, unconscientious worker is now the worst enemy of the socialist society…. The person who does not come to work on time, wastes time to no purpose in the workshop, busies himself in it outside matters, or simply takes days off work, is the enemy of socialist Russia, and is undermining her future…. Long live work - the liberator, the basis of life! (1973: 269).

While Trotsky and Gastev where supervising the minutia of the everyday in the factories and workshops of the USSR, first Lukács and then Lefebvre were theorizing its meaning as a revolutionary tool of the circadian.

However, it should be noted that Lukács and Lefebvre were not the first to use "everyday" to refer to that which is circadian; indeed, “everyday” had been used since 1791 to refer to that which is simply routine and ordinary. The OED informs us that Boswell used the
term in exactly this manner in his biography of Johnson: “This was no every-day [sic] writer” (1989: 467)\(^6\) And, indeed, the word goes back to Chaucer, at least in its denotation as meaning “Each day in continued succession.” Circa 1374, Chaucer writes, “O you man wher fore makest you me gilty by thine euerydayes pleynynges,” revealing to us that the notion that another’s busy schedule may drive one to shameful self-loathing is not exclusively a twenty-first-century phenomenon (1989: 466).

Heidegger introduces the concept of everydayness (*alltaglichkeit*) in the fifth section (“The Ontological Analysis of Da-sein as the Exposure of the Horizon for an Interpretation of Meaning of Being in General”) of the introduction to *Being and Time*:

>The first concern in the question of being must be an analysis of Da-sein. But then the problem of gaining and securing the kind of access that leads to Da-sein truly becomes crucial. Expressed negatively, no arbitrary idea of being and reality, no matter how “self-evident” it is, may be brought to bear on this being in a dogmatically constructed way; no “categories” prescribed by such ideas may be forced upon Da-sein without ontological deliberation. The manner of access and interpretation must instead be chosen in such a way that this being can show itself to itself on its own terms. And furthermore, this manner should show that being as it is *initially and for the most part – in its average everydayness*. Not arbitrary and accidental structures but essential ones are to be demonstrated in this everydayness, structures that remain determinative in every mode of being of factual Da-sein. By looking at the fundamental constitution of the everydayness of Da-sein we shall bring out in a preparatory way the being of this being.(1996: 14-15 [16-17]; italics, Heidegger).

So, in Heidegger’s view, access to being through everydayness will allow ‘this being’ to ‘show itself to itself on its own terms.’ How this occurs and how access to this demonstration is gained from the outside is not elucidated, at least at this conjunction in *Being and Time*. For, if this being shows itself merely to itself, it does not follow that another being has access to that view, i.e., it may be that such a showing is a privileged one, only accessible ‘to itself,’

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\(^6\) Cited is Boswell’s *Johnson*. 1791 (1831) IV. 19.
that is, to ‘this being.’ Heidegger also claims that the mode of everydayness will not entail the accidental and the arbitrary; in other words, it will appear in a mode oppositional to that of chance and contingency: it will only show or demonstrate (entail) that which is ‘essential.’ And so it must be that everydayness manifests that which is exigent, fated, necessary.

But is this necessarily so? Consider, for instance, that it is everyday in California that drivers can turn right on a red light, yet certainly this is contingent if not exactly arbitrary. It is everyday that lights work if there are no power outages, that the electric bill has been paid and that the necessary sockets and adjacent appurtenances subtending the domestic regime of electricity are in working order, but this hardly seems fated or a matter of absolute destiny, and indeed it is not for millions around the globe.

And, besides, why should everydayness be privileged as a route into Da-sein? This particular route to the everyday seems to entail some sort of direct unmediated access to Da-sein, according to Heidegger; it provides Da-sein an opportunity as itself to show itself to itself without interference or interpretation. But is not Heidegger (and by extension, are not we) already interfering by shining a spotlight on to the everyday? Are not we placing ourselves in the same situation as Heisenberg? We have already distorted the process merely by looking at it; therefore, such an “uncertain” operation can never provide an unmediated “certain” view onto being.

And, furthermore, is there so much wisdom embedded within everydayness that it provides some sort of special view into the core of being? Maybe everydayness is obtuse. Or maybe it is not, but at least we should leave ourselves open to its (possible) obtuseness. Heidegger seems to have already decided that the everyday will offer up the essence of Da-sein as well as an unmediated view into the ‘itself to itself.’ But the very structure of itself to
itself may be so self-encumbered, so self-contained, so narcissistic and self-referential – in short, so solipsistic - that no access from the outside is possible. It shows itself to itself indeed, but it doesn’t necessarily show itself to us: there’s the rub.

However, Heidegger does not give the everyday a completely free pass: under its aspect of intersubjectivity, the everyday tends to sunder Da-sein from its authentic self, relegating it to its average self under the regime of Mitda-sein: “In this kind of being [Mitda-sein], the mode of everyday being a self is grounded whose explication makes visible what we call the ‘subject’ of everydayness, the they” (1996: 107 [114]; italics, Heidegger). The impact of they on the everydayness of Da-sein transforms Da-sein from an authentic manifestation of itself into one compromised by an average manifestation of Da-sein, one that is formed by the generalizing of the self through its incorporation into a kind of collective social self, the Mitda-sein. Since this transformation occurs on a collective scale, such an operation occurs en masse, affecting every instantiation of Da-sein.

This being with-one-another dissolves one’s own Da-sein completely into the kind of being of “the others” in such a way that the others, as distinguishable and explicit, disappear more and more. In this inconspicuousness and unascertainability, the they unfolds its true dictatorship. We enjoy ourselves and have fun the way they enjoy themselves. We read, see, and judge literature and art the way they see and judge. But we also withdraw from the “great mass” the way they withdraw, we find “shocking” what they find shocking. The they, which is nothing definite and which all are, though not as a sum, prescribes the kind of being of everydayness…. Everyday Da-sein derives the pre-ontological interpretation of its being from the nearest kind of being of the they. (Heidegger 1996: 119, 121 [127, 130]; italics, Heidegger).

Under the dictatorship of the they, Da-sein is eventually reduced to Das Man, a kind of collectivized anonymous self, that is unless one’s Da-sein liberates itself from the pack mentality of the intersubjectively constituted self:
Initially, “I” “am” not in the sense of my own self, but I am the others in the mode of the they. In terms of the they, and as the they, I am initially “given” to “myself.” Initially, Da-sein is the they and for the most part it remains so. If Da-sein explicitly discovers the world and brings it near, if it discloses its authentic being to itself, this discovering of “world” and disclosing of Da-sein always comes about by clearing away coverings and obscurities, by breaking up the disguises with which Da-sein cuts itself off from itself. (1996: 121 [129]; italics, Heidegger).

In *Being and Time*, the main thing which clears away such ‘coverings and obscurities’ is death, specifically, one’s own death. The inevitability of one’s death and a concomitant constant attention upon this inevitability focus the mind on the extraordinariness of everyday life, releasing the self from the grip of belonging to the “they” as merely one more mundane manifestation of *Das Man*:

What is characteristic about authentic, existentially projected being-toward-death can be summarized as follows: *Anticipation reveals to Da-sein its lostness in the they-self, and brings it face to face with the possibility to be itself...in passionate anxious **freedom toward death** which is free of the illusions of the they, factical, and certain of itself.* (Heidegger 1996: 245 [266]; italics and bold, Heidegger).

In later works, Heidegger will add a deep appreciation of art and the sense of dwelling, of being home, of *indwelling*, to those factors which can activate the possibility (and here we should emphasize that this is framed as merely a **possibility** and nothing more) of the authenticity of a self living within the everyday while simultaneously transcending it.\(^7\)

A very different trajectory into the everyday was occurring in France. In the nineteenth century, two disparate strands were delving into the intricacies of the everyday: on one hand,\(^7\)

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\(^7\) For these other factors, see “On the Origin of the Work of Art” and “Building, Dwelling, Thinking,” in *Poetry, Language, Thought*. It is very much part of Heidegger’s valorization of home, the *volk* of Germany and the pathway which supposedly connected those factors to the self-authentic which at least partially led Heidegger into Nazism.
the sociologist Frederick La Play was writing monographs about various aspects of the daily life of the French, and on the other hand, Emile Zola was systematically researching various aspects of French daily life as well, prior to distilling and transposing them into his novels. De Certeau alludes to the fictional appropriation of the everyday in *The Practice of Everyday Life*:

> As indexes of particulars – the poetic or tragic murmurings of the everyday – ways of operating enter massively into the novel or the short story, most notable into the nineteenth-century realistic novel. They find there a new representational space, that of fiction, populated by everyday virtuosities that science doesn’t know what to do with and which become the signatures, easily recognized by readers, of everyone’s micro-stories. (1984: 70).

In *Society and Milieu in the French Geographical Tradition*, Anne Buttimer reports that “between the years 1829 and 1879 Le Play made an exhaustive inventory of daily life conditions characterizing worker families in several cultural contexts” (1971: 21-22). So it seems from this that, contrary to de Certeau’s claim, at least Le Play was one scientist who did know what to do with ‘everyday virtuosities.’ The geographer Vidal de la Blache took these threads, along with strands of Durkheim’s collectivized social facts and Ratzel’s environmental determinism, and created a regional approach to geography in France, accenting the quotidian aspects of daily life as they are distinctly lived in discrete areal conditions. Vidal’s approach led to the *Annals* tradition and had a profound influence upon the work of Marc Bloch, Lucien Febvre, and Fernand Braudel, historians who worked with a holistic methodology, incorporating not only history into their studies, but geography, economics, and the

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8 According to Buttimer, Vidal did not swallow Ratzel’s environmental determinism whole: “In the past, Vidal remarked, geographers have tended to say, ‘this nature…therefore, this kind of life,’ while in fact, ‘this nature is partly the result of a certain kind of life.’ Buttimer, *Society and Milieu in the French Geographical Tradition*. 54. Buttimer cites Vidal de la Blache’s “Les genres de vie dans la geographie humaine,” 194, for the quote. Ratzel’s deterministic reading of geography became, in Vidal’s transformation of it, a series or a band of relatively circumscribed geographical possibilities, the selecting of which was left to the contingency of human choice.
multifarious aspects of everyday life as well. Buttimer cites the French geographer Elisee Reclus as an example, as he foreshadows (writing, as he was, in 1906) this omnivorous style:

It is no longer the political, juridical, constitutional armor of past times [that concerns us]. It is their whole life, their whole material and moral civilization, the whole evolution of their sciences, arts, religions, trade, divisions, and social groupings. (1971: 81).\(^9\)

This approach culminates in Braudel’s classic tomes, *Capitalism and Material Life, 1400-1800*; *The Identity of France*; and *Structures of Everyday Life: The Limits of the Possible*, first published in French in 1967.

Henri Lefebvre’s conception of the everyday seems to have absorbed equivalent elements from numerous sources, including Marx (Lefebvre was a member of the *Parti Communiste Francais* from 1928 until his expulsion in 1958), Heidegger, Nietzsche, the Surrealists and the Dadaists, Vidal de la Blache as well as Braudel and the *Annals* school; he then mixed these ingredients into an idiosyncratic stew distinctly his own. Lefebvre published three volumes of the *Critique de la vie quotidienne* over the course of almost thirty-five years, the first volume (*Introduction*, the only volume translated into English so far) appearing in 1947, the second (*Fondements d’une sociologie de la quotidiennete*) in 1961, and the third (*De la modernite au modernisme (Pour une metaphilosophie du quotidien)*)) in 1981; a fourth and separate book on the everyday, *La vie quotidienne dans le monde moderne* was published in 1968. However, Lefebvre frequently touched upon the everyday in many other works of his vast corpus (he was the author of over sixty books).

Surrealism first gave Lefebvre a pathway into the critique of the everyday, precisely because the *modus operandi* of the surrealists was to reverse and violate the everyday, to give a

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fillip to the extraordinary by highlighting the absurdity of the mundane. “It is from the Surrealists that Lefebvre drew this central concept of *le quotidien*, the everyday,” writes Rob Shields in *Lefebvre, Love & Struggle* (1999: 66). A heightened indication of the banal, a kind of madcap antic celebration of the ordinary by the Surrealists, focused attention on the fabric of the given, its odd details and the presuppositions undergirding the common dismissal, or outright ignorance, of the ubiquity of the everyday and the habitual. Shields cites Kristen Ross’s comment in her *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* that “Lefebvre `attributes his whole discovery of the concept of “everyday life” to his wife’s tone of voice, one day in their apartment, when she praised a particular brand of laundry soap’” (1999: 66).\(^\text{10}\) Perhaps here we could construct a direct line from Lefebvre’s perception of his wife’s tone of voice as she valorizes this `particular brand of soap’ to the Tide boxes of Andy Warhol and his pop iconography of brand names and their role in everyday life. Regardless of the veracity of this posited genealogy, Lefebvre’s conception of the everyday in its surrealist vein had much to do with a sense of alienation issuing from the calamity of World War One. What is interesting is that it is precisely this sense of alienation which provided a common meeting ground between communism and surrealism, as it gave both a critical perspective from which to mount attacks upon the everyday as it had been instantiated within bourgeois culture and the bourgeois state:

Specifically, Dadaists and Surrealists identified everyday life under modernity as the central locus of sociocultural inquiry, and they felt strongly that any viable politics of liberation would have to be fought on this terrain. Daily life, under capitalism, they believed, was becoming increasingly degraded, routinized and `cretinized’, in that the individual’s capacity for autonomous action and creative self-expression was being squandered in the pursuit of material wealth and social status. (Gardiner 2004: 24; italics, Gardiner).

As Lefebvre drifted away from the Surrealists (later attacking them with a dismissive fury in the first volume of *Critique of Everyday Life*) to finally join the Communist Party, the teachings of Marx provided him with another avenue for a critique of the everyday; however, “Lefebvre located alienation, not just in the workplace, but in every aspect of life…. within Lefebvre’s concept of everyday life lies a clear use of Marx’s notion of alienation” (Elden 2001: 818, 819). Whether Lefebvre’s expansion of alienation exceeds the scope of the orthodox Marxism is a question we will avoid, for what is significant to note for our purposes is that one of the primary points of origination for Lefebvre’s critique of *le vie quotidien* is Marx’s construal of alienation. In “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts,” Marx states that:

the object which labor produces, its product, stands opposed to it as an *alien thing*, as a *power independent* of the producer. The product of labor is labor embodied and made objective in a thing. It is the *objectification* of labor. The realization of labor is its objectification. In the viewpoint of political economy this realization of labor appears as a *diminution* of the worker, this objectification as the *loss and subservience to the object*, and the appropriation as *alienation* [*Entfremdung*], as externalization [*Entausserung*]. (1994: 59-60; italics, Marx).

Here we have the process of labor within capitalism alienating workers from what they produce, which leads to the diminution of the worker – such a diminution must lead to a shift in perspective from which, or *through* which, the worker is externalized from his or her work and thus, by extension, from the everyday practices of life, work being the most vital of those practices, work indeed being foundational for those practices. Despite his expulsion from the *Parti Communiste Francais*, despite his multifarious interests, and despite the spatial turn which he applied to Marxism, a turn which was rejected by many Marxists (such as David Harvey11 and Lefebvre’s erstwhile student, Manuel Castells12), Lefebvre never abandoned his

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11 Harvey’s critique is somewhat qualified: in *Social Justice and the City* Harvey states that “to say that the thesis [Lefebvre’s] is not true at this juncture in history is not to say that it is not in the process of becoming true or that it
fundamental adherence to communism, or at least to his particular version of Marxism, as well as his belief in capitalism’s destructive impact upon the fabric of the everyday. In his last book, *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*, Lefebvre writes that

Capital has something more than maliciousness, malignance and malevolence about it. The wills, the wishes, of the property owners are not there for nothing: they execute. Through them, the death-dealing character of capital is accomplished, without there being either full consciousness or a clear intuition of it. It kills nature. It kills the town, turning itself back against its own bases. It kills artistic creation, creative capacity. It goes as far as threatening the last resource: nature, the fatherland, roots. It delocalises humans. We exhibit technology at the slightest suggestion. Yet technologies do not emerge from the living. Communication? It remains formal … content? Neglected, lost, wasted away. Technologies kill immediacy (unless the speed of cars, planes or automatic cameras pass for a return to the immediate; but that isn’t saying much). The impact of technological conquest does not make the everyday any more *alive*; it nourishes ideology. (2004: 53; italics, Lefebvre).

If nothing else, we can adduce from the above that Lefebvre’s notion of the everyday and its alienation via the ‘maliciousness’ of capitalism lend the everyday a political inflection: the everyday has been bifurcated by the ‘death-dealing’ quality of capital: on one side of this scission falls the everyday in its pre-malignant state, a kind of communalized golden era of the everyday in a suspended state of pre-alienation; on the other side lies the everyday as torn asunder by capitalism; nourished by the ideology of the market, this manifestation of the everyday is fatally infected by the malignancy of capitalism.

This is not intended to suggest that Lefebvre believed that the everyday was beyond redemption; on the contrary, throughout his life he advocated for a revolution of the everyday:

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in *Critiques of Everyday Life*, Michael Gardiner states that for Lefebvre “everyday life represents a complex, multi-faceted reality, a mixture of repressive and emancipatory qualities which have to be disentangled and analyzed via the application of dialectal reason, to `extract what is living, new, positive – the worthwhile needs and fulfillments – from the negative elements – the alienations’” (2004: 86; italics, mine). Even more directly, Neil Smith characterizes Lefebvre as being imbued with a “philosophically induced intellectual and political optimism” (2003: viii). Stuart Elden believes that Lefebvre’s optimism arose precisely because he was so pessimistic about the quality of everyday life under the capitalist regime: “It [alienation] is not something that can be overcome through reconciliation with the absolute [a Hegelian solution] or the reorganization of labour [a Marxist solution], because it leaves its mark in values and morals” (2001: 75). And, although the everyday realm is also the domain of suppression within the capitalistic state, it nevertheless contains within its very everydayness the possibilities of moments of liberation: in fact, Lefebvre believes that every moment contains such a possibility (Merrifield 2006: 30). The everyday, for Lefebvre, continuously contains within it “the theme of the production of the everyday, of revolution as the revolution of everyday life” (Trebitsch 1991: xxvii).

But Lefebvre also believed that the invasion of alienation into the domain of values and morals is due to the colonization of the everyday by consumerism – here let us recall Lefebvre’s wife with her particular brand of soap. Trebitsch adds that “such a pessimistic prognosis would convince Lefebvre that only a much more fundamental revolution, a revolution of everyday life, could begin to address the problems of contemporary society” (Trebitsch 1991: 75, 76). John Agnew comments on this aspect of Lefebvre’s thinking as well:

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Under capitalism, abstract space’ (the space produced by economic transactions and state policies) has `colonized’ everyday life by means of both spatial practices (commodification and bureaucratization) and representations of space (discourses of planning and surveillance). Lefebvre looked for a movement against this colonization of concrete space (or place) to reclaim the spaces of everyday life. (2005: 90).

Given Lefebvre’s `multi-faceted’ approach to the everyday (as Merrifield notes: as “Lefebvre juggles with this concept he labels `everyday life,’” he is “typically weary [sic] of laying it down solid” (2006: 6), it may be a mistake to automatically connect Lefebvre’s conception of the everyday to an exclusive provenance in either surrealism or in Marxism, for in *The Production of Space* Lefebvre himself connects the sundering of the everyday to an epochal break occurring toward the beginning of the twentieth century:

The fact is that round 1910 a certain space was shattered. It was the space of common sense, of knowledge (*savoir*), of social practice, of political power, a space thitherto enshrined in everyday discourse, just as in abstract thought, as the environment of and channel for communications; the space, too, of classical perspective and geometry, developed from the Renaissance onwards on the basis of Greek tradition (Euclid, logic) and bodied forth in Western art and philosophy, as in the forms of the city and town. (1991b: 25).

So a fragmentation that we could trace, following Lefebvre’s allusions, to Einstein’s upheaval of Euclidian geometry as well as to Braque, Picasso, and Duchamp’s upheaval of Renaissance perspective as well as to budding revolutionary political movements springing up throughout Europe, from the storming of the *Duma* in 1905 to the rise of the SDP in Germany, contributed in different ways to a *certain* space being shattered and an *uncertain* space being created which in turn shattered normative notions of common sense and everyday discourse. From this, we can then deduce that the subject of the everyday may have come into focus
about this time due to the fact that the rug was torn out from under it: what had been given for so many centuries was now uncertain, and so the given, the everyday, was suddenly rendered visible. Simultaneously, with the rise of public relations and advertising following World War One, the mass consciousness of everyday products was deliberately heightened - re the valorization of `the particular brand of laundry soap’ by Lefebvre’s wife.

But any effort to delimit Lefebvre’s conception of the everyday is probably doomed to failure, as his thinking was constantly on the move; suffice it to say, that his sense of la vie quotidienne also absorbed the lessons of Vidal’s regionalism (Lefebvre’s La Vallee de Campan – Etude de sociologie rurale was published in 1963, a study rooted in Vidal’s approach to daily life in the pays); he also had a major impact on Guy deBord and Daniel Cohn-Bendit (both were students of Lefebvre) and influenced their revolutionary attempt in May of 1968 to overturn the strictures of the everyday in all of its multifarious aspects; and in his final book, Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life, Lefebvre offers a new method by which to analyze the everyday:

The notion of rhythm brings with it or requires some complementary considerations: the implied but different notions of polyrhythmia, eurhythmia and arrhythmia. It elevates them to a theoretical level, starting with the lived. Polyrhythmia? It suffices to consult one’s body; thus the everyday reveals itself to be a polyrhythmia from the first listening. Eurhythmia? Rhythms unite with one another in the state of health, in normal (which is to say normed!) everydayness. (2004: 16; bold, Lefebvre).

So here Lefebvre claims that a study of the rhythms of the body as combined with or as manifested within daily life will lead to a deeper analysis of the everyday. He and his wife, Catherine Regulier, mount just such an analysis in the final section of this book, “Attempt at the Rhythmanalysis of Mediterranean Cities,” and though their attempt seems to me to be less
than successful, the idea of rhythmmanalysis is intriguing and may still be prove to be a useful tool in the analysis of the everyday.

One last point: we should re-emphasize the political inflection that Lefebvre gave to the everyday: as Stuart Elden says in his introduction to *Rhythmmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*

Lefebvre himself believed that the introduction and critique of this concept [everyday life] was his most important contribution to Marxism, and in many ways almost all of his writings can be seen as part of that large, multi-faceted and ongoing project…. Lefebvre was concerned with the contrast between the capitalist system and the daily lives of individuals to the very end of his own life. (2004b: xv).

Concurring with this political reading of Lefebvre’s study of the everyday, Neil Smith states that “Via the themes of ideology, alienation, and everyday life,” Lefebvre mounted a “critical analysis of the quotidian in an effort to explore the political fabric and the fabrication of the everyday” (2003: ix). But even an overtly political reading of Lefebvre’s construal of the everyday must be at last bivalent if not polyvalent, for, as Lefebvre himself makes clear, the everyday cannot be interpreted with the use of any singular perspective:

The concept of everydayness does not … designate a system, but rather a denominator common to existing systems including judicial, contractual, pedagogical, fiscal, and police systems. Banality? Why should the study of the banal itself be banal? Are not the surreal, the extraordinary, the surprising, even the magical, also part of the real? Why wouldn’t the concept of everydayness reveal the extraordinary in the ordinary? (1987: 9).

Lefebvre insists that the everyday encompasses both the banal and the magical, and that within the repetition of the quotidian differentiation can be located as well as liberated: ergo,
the revolutionary potential of the everyday. This potential is actualized during rural festivals\textsuperscript{14} as well as during the moments of urban revolution (the Paris of 1871 and 1968). However, Lefebvre also clearly and strategically recognizes the everyday as it abides within consumeristic capitalism:

The everyday is a \textit{product}, the most general of products in an era where production engenders consumption, and where consumption is manipulated by producers: not by “workers,” but by the managers and owners of the means of production (intellectual, instrumental, scientific). The everyday is therefore the most universal and the most unique condition, the most social and the most individuated, the most obvious and the best hidden. A condition stipulated by the legibility of forms, ordained by means of functions, inscribed within structures, the everyday constitutes the platform upon which the bureaucratic society of controlled consumption is erected. (1987: 9; italics, Lefebvre).

Engendered by the productive forces of capitalism and then targeted and probed for soft spots by advertisers, the everyday can be conceived as a space which consumerism colonizes as a place within which to inject merchandise: the everyday is excavated as a site which hygienic products must tame and beautify. The colonization of the everyday begins in the so-called developed world, but, driven by insatiable market forces, it soon metastasizes across the globe; Marshall Berman refers to this as “the internationalization of everyday life – of our clothes and household goods, our books and music, our ideas and fantasies” (1982: 35). As further explicated by Andy Merrifield in \textit{Henri Lefebvre: A Critical Introduction}, this “takeover” of the everyday during the post-World War Two era “had continued to

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\textbf{\textsuperscript{14}“Rural festival traditions, he [Lefebvre] said in \textit{Critique of Everyday Life} (1947) ‘tighten social links at the same time as they give free rein to all desires which have been pent up by collective discipline and necessities of work.’ Festivals represent ‘Dionysiac life…differing from everyday life only in the explosion of forces which had been slowly accumulating in and via everyday life itself’ (Merrifield 2006: xxvi). Merrifield references \textit{Critique of Everyday Life – Volume 1} (Verso, London, 1991) 202.}
\end{flushright}
and vacation time. Indeed, it was a system ready to flourish through consumerism, seduce by means of new media and advertising, intervene through state bureaucracies and planning agencies, ambush people around every corner with billboards and bulletins…. lived experience was changing in advanced capitalist countries; it was under fire from forces intent on business and market expansion, producing fast cars and smart suburban houses, consumer durables and convenience foods, processed lives and privatized paradises…. work and home, production and reproduction – the totality of daily life – have been subsumed, colonized, and invaded by exchange value. (2006: 9, 10, 11).

With the shock of World War One and then the shock exponentially multiplied by the horrors of World War Two, the ground was ready for the installation of a consumeristic version of the everyday. With this brief but ultimately, and perhaps inevitably, incomplete introduction to the everyday as construed by Lefebvre, let us turn to Goffman’s conception of the everyday.

In the preface to The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, Goffman states that he “shall consider the way in which the individual in ordinary work situations presents himself and his activity to others, the ways in which he guides and controls the impression they form of him, and the kinds of things he may and may not do while sustaining his performance before them” (1959: xi). Here ‘ordinary work situations’ serves as a stand-in or a place-holder for the everyday. Indeed, the word “everyday” occurs very infrequently in the book: “everyday persons” are contrasted with characters as they are “staged in a theater” and performers are discussed as “professionals whose everyday job is to put on theatrical performances,” but the everyday per se is never discussed (1959: 255, 254). If that is the case, why include Goffman’s conception of the everyday in the present study at all? There are two reasons justifying the inclusion of Goffman in this analysis: one, though he was not a direct

15 On page 22 of Henri Lefebvre: A Critical Introduction, Merrifield, cites Lefebvre from Everyday Life in the Modern World (Penguin, London, 1971, 78) to make this additional point: “In France and elsewhere, neocapitalist leaders had become aware of the fact that colonies were more trouble than they were worth and there was a change of strategy; new vistas opened out such as investments in national territories and the organization of home trade.”
theorician of the everyday as such, Goffman did mount a penetrating study of the manifestations of everyday behavior as they are presented in everyday situations (and the notion that they are presented is at the very core of Goffman’s analysis); and two, the very inclusion of “Everyday Life” in the title of Goffman’s book, in combination with its critical success, gave the concept of everyday life a huge push into the consciousness of intellectuals and the general public. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* popularized the phrase and it is from this provenance that we can trace at least a portion of the diffusion of the concept into multiple fields.

Goffman was a student of “ordinary situations.” Using the theatre and acting as templates upon which to mount his investigation, in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* Goffman conceives of people in situations as if they are playing roles on a stage. The definitional coordinates of any particular situation are up for grabs, and control of the reading of those coordinates depends on a participant’s ability to “project a definition of the situation” upon the situation (Goffman 1959: 9). Typically, a “veneer of consensus” is projected by the participants of a situation, and “ordinarily the definitions of the situation projected by the several different participants are sufficiently attuned to one another so that open contradiction will not occur” (Goffman 1959: 9). This inevitably leads to a certain amount of repression, given that “each participant is expected to suppress his immediate heartfelt feelings, conveying a view of the situation which he feels the others will be able to find at least temporarily acceptable” (Goffman 1959: 9). Now, though such veeneers of consensus may be breeched, leading to disruptions as well as a great deal of embarrassment, Goffman believes that an incredible amount of social energy is spent in pre-empting such invasive punctures of the veneer of any given social situation: “In addition to the fact that precautions are taken to
prevent disruption of projected definitions, we may also note that an intense interest in these
disruptions comes to play a significant role in the social life of the group” (1959: 14). While
this preoccupation with the security of social veneers may be read as a response to the
“button-down” conservatism of the 1950s, I think it a mistake to dismiss Goffman’s analysis
as merely topical: his insights retain their power, even in a social era supposedly liberated
from the constraints of a more repressive era.

But what directly concerns us here is Goffman’s focus on what he calls “the `is’” (1959: 13). This “is” is the situation per se, as delimited by the definitional constraints projected upon
the situation by the participants; inserted in league with those projected definitions of the
situation are concomitant definitional claims regarding the characteristics of the social
performers making those projections: “when an individual projects a definition of the situation
and thereby makes an implicit or explicit claim to be a person of a particular kind,” through
those combined claims “the individual has informed them as to what is and as to what they
ought to see as the `is’” (Goffman 1959: 13; italics, Goffman). This of course implies that
there is a normative valence to these definitional operations; such readings of the “is” on the
part of one person, if accepted by others, would seem to confer a great deal of power upon
individuals to control the parameters of the everyday as they move through various social
situations; concomitantly, such autonomous power would seem to remove the individual from
the larger constraints of society: here I am thinking of those constraints so well developed by
Marx, Foucault, and others. It almost seems as if Goffman’s world, his stage as it were, is
completely disconnected to those social forces which others claim are the most significant
factors in shaping and influencing behavior: religion, the nation-state, modes of production,
and such smaller yet significant units such as the family. Each individual seems to exist ex
nihilo and sui generis, albeit qua individuals they are liable to multiple pressures exerted by other individuals who also seem to exist as if arisen from the same set of untethered conditions.

While all the above may be true, it would only serve to place Goffman in a nugatory position, as it would relegate him to a sphere from which his utility would be stricken. For it is Goffman’s “attention to the micro-sociology of everyday life (rather than the macro-sociology of social structures) that characterizes Goffman’s contribution to sociology” (Highmore 2002: 50). In the introduction to Behavior in Public Places, Goffman recognizes and demarcates his territory, his lab, his area of expertise:

Sociology does not provide a ready framework that can … show comparisons and continuities with behavior in private gathering places such as offices, factory floors, living rooms, and kitchens. To be sure, one part of “collective behavior” – riots, crowds, panics – has been established as something to study. But the remaining part of the area, the study of ordinary human traffic and the patterning of ordinary social contacts, has been little considered. It is well recognized, for instance, that mobs can suddenly emerge from the peaceful flow of human traffic, if conditions are right. But little concern seems to have been given to the question of what structure this peaceful intercourse possesses when mob formation is not an issue. (1963: 4).

Let me make two brief comments regarding this passage before we move on: one), note the use of “gathering places” instead of his usual “situations;” such gathering places – offices, factory floors, &c – are the receptacles in which situations occur; and two), notice the blithe acceptance of the term “ordinary,” an acceptance which to a certain degree dates this work as being created before the ontological and epistemological metamorphoses subtending postmodernism, the rise of feminist and queer theories, and so on, but which also totally
ignores Goffman’s own bestowal of autonomy upon individuals to define and control the
definitional parameters of any given social situation.

Before taking leave of Goffman, we should once again state that his importance to this
study is the power of diffusion that his work gave to the concept of the everyday: following
the publication and subsequent popularity of The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, the
term “everyday” seeped into mass consciousness and general use. What should also be
stressed is Goffman’s emphasis on performativity within the everyday: even within “ordinary
life,” role-playing and the subtle yet powerful inflections subtending the presentation of the
self in various social situations gives the everyday a complexity which lifts it out of any
notion of simplicity which may have adhered to the everyday prior to Goffman’s analyses.
Goffman viewed the ordinary as an extraordinary field of inter-relational social dynamics in
battle with one another, dominance of and control over the definitional parameters of the
situations and roles at hand being the supreme prize of the “play.”

“Escaping the imaginary totalizations produced by the eye, the everyday has a certain
strangeness that does not surface, or whose surface is only its upper limit, outlining itself
against the visible” (de Certeau 1984: 93). So says de Certeau in The Practice of Everyday
Life, a practice he takes into the streets of New York, as he postulates a kind of localized
experiential geography based on the spatial practices of pedestrians:

Their story begins on ground level, with footsteps. They are myriad, but do not
compose a series. They cannot be counted because each unit has a qualitative
character: a style of tactile apprehension and kinesthetic appropriation. Their
swarming mass is an innumerable collection of singularities. Their intertwined paths
give their shape to spaces. They weave places together. (1984: 97).
De Certeau compares such spatial practices to “pedestrian speech acts” (1984: 97), and he should be understood, Highmore claims, as advocating an approach to the study of the everyday which emphasizes the examination of action: “For de Certeau the everyday is a realm that is both practical and singular [the ‘swarming mass is an innumerable collection of singularities’], and as such everyday studies would need to look at actions, use and ways of operating” (2002: 12-13).

Highmore also underlines de Certeau’s emphasis on the elusive quality of the everyday, and thus its near-invisibility; as he states in The Everyday Life Reader, it would be “in keeping with de Certeau’s position to compare everyday life to ‘inner-speech’; that never-quite-heard rambling, conjuring up memories, and an uncensored response to life around us. In a weak sense the everyday (for de Certeau) is ‘unconscious’ in that it is not open to direct observation, or ever fully controllable” (2002: 13). This places de Certeau’s project, as well as his denotation of the everyday, in another realm besides those of either Goffman or Lefebvre, in that Goffman’s entire oeuvre consists of one long observation of everyday life, and Lefebvre believes that the everyday cannot only be accessed, but can also be harnessed to revolutionary strategies while for de Certeau is not accessible enough to either directly observe or to leverage for its revolutionary potential.

It should also be noted that de Certeau transposed the everyday into domains which until that time no one had ever conceived could be broached by the conceptual apparatus of the everyday: in The Practice of the Everyday Life, de Certeau interpolates the everyday into popular culture, the linguistics of Saussure and the ordinary language philosophy of Wittgenstein, the theoretical works of Foucault and Bourdieu, the military strategies and tactics of von Clausewitz, the spatial practices of railway travel and perambulation, the
narrative practices of the novel as well as of historical and philosophical discourse; thus he exponentially expanded the application of the everyday and therefore also exponentially expanded the denotation of the everyday. Through his tethering of theory to practice (and practice specifically as it occurs within the everyday), de Certeau transformed the everyday into a subject matter applicable to a stunning variety of disciplines. Now it wasn’t as if the everyday was not already inscribed within these areas, but it was de Certeau who made scholars realize that everyday practices were scattered far and wide, simply waiting to be discovered, examined, and analyzed.

One of the primary arenas of this investigatory focus of everyday practices became the domestic realm. Feminist theorists may want to claim that this effort was well under way by the time The Practice of the Everyday Life was published in 1984. In this, I would not only agree with them, but also push back the provenance of the feminist investigation of domestic practices at least to the 1800s. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century feminists such as Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Henrietta Rodman, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton investigated the everyday practices of the domestic sphere; indeed Gilman’s Human Work; Man-Made World; or, Our Androcentric Culture, and Women and Economics all deal with issues of the everyday (though that specific term is not utilized in these works) as it relates to the domestic sphere.

To cite just one example of a feminist who investigated the everyday inflections of the domestic realm, in 1926 the philosopher, professor, and feminist Ethel Puffer Howes founded the Institute for the Coordination of Women’s Interests at Smith College, marshaling historians to research the experience of managing careers and homes, career guidance specialists to devise new strategies for conquering employers’ prejudice against women, a housing expert to study the architectural implications of employed
women’s needs, and home economists and child care experts to demonstrate the feasibility of services to assist employed mothers. (Hayden 1981: 271).

Such challenges to the conception of home space as being a space dominated by one woman (wife, mother) who has no interests outside the domestic arena led to alternative conceptions of the home as a communal, socialized space in which women as well as men pooled their resources to cook, clean, and care for children, allowing mothers the time to dedicate themselves to pursuits external to the home.

This conception was criticized not only by conservatives but also by some academics on the left who believed that any concern with the functional aspects of the domicile “would lead to the introduction of applied sciences to home economics in all parts of the curriculum;” in 1931, the Institute for the Coordination of Women’s Interests “was rejected by the Smith faculty for its `unintellectual and unacademic concerns’” (Hayden 1981: 277). But the pressure from the right, driven by the patriotic fervor of the post-World War One era and the rising tide of consumerism which targeted the housewife as both its heroine and its “victim,” provided the fatal nail which hammered shut the cooperative ventures of 18th and early 19th century feminism. One of President Hoover’s primary responses to the Great Depression, articulated in the 1931 report of the National Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, which Hoover announced on September 15, 1931, saying that:

Adequate housing goes to the very roots of well-being of the family, and the family is the social unit of the Nation. The question involves important aspects of health, morals, education, and efficiency. Nothing contributes more to social stability and the happiness of our people than the surroundings of their homes. Although we have a larger proportion of adequate housing than any other country, we have not yet reached our ideal of homes for all our people. It should be

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16 Hayden is citing a letter from Lawrence K. Frank to President Thomas C. Mendenhall, Smith Collège, Belmont, Massachusetts, May 7, 1963, Smith Collège Archives.
possible in our country for any person of sound character and industrious habits to provide himself with adequate and suitable housing and preferably to own his own home. (presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=22804#axzz1oSEy9YTa).

The final plan formulated a national building project in which suburban homes would be constructed on individual lots. Each isolated home, managed by a housewife who would be inspired by principles of scientific management, would require its own set of appliances as well as its own two cars; such ideal sites of consumerism, designed to rescue a moribund capitalism, were too ambitious to succeed in the 1930s, but by the late 1940s, they aligned perfectly with the “modern” conception of stream-lined functionality, Fordism, and the post-World War Two poster family (white, smiling, father, mother, son, and daughter). The rhetoric of technology was applied to the housewife, as corporations appealed to the morality of hygiene, the strictures of homogeneity and the convenience of modernity while hawking their wares. Though originating in America, this message was exported world-wide in a kind of capitalistic colonialism: “An exhibition home featured in the August 1946 issue of *AHB [Australian Home Beautiful]* was the result of `more than 100 manufacturers, engineers and designers exhibiting their best and most advanced products and materials. Germ-killing equipment, inter-phone system, built-in radios and television set, automatic dish-washing and waste-disposal units, infra-red bathroom fixtures – these are but a few of the many gadgets contained in the experimental house’” (Johnson and Lloyd 2004: 71). This commodification of the home, along with the concomitant commodification of the standardized family as it “should” live within the confines of the everyday, retained its position of absolute predominance till the rise of a new wave of feminism burst on the scene in the early 1970s; there have been many permutations of housework and home as they are instantiated within the everyday since that time. Home is now a place undergoing substantial transformations under the pressure of the emergence of new
familial patterns. Gay couples are adopting babies; single mothers, grandparents, extended families, foster parents and step-parents are often in charge of the rearing of children; institutional settings substitute for home in more and more scenarios (e.g., assisted living for the elderly). All these variations of “home” inflect our conception of the everyday as it is manifested within the home.

By the time Home by Alison Blunt and Robyn Dowling was published in 2006, the study of home and domesticity had become such an extensive field that it (obviously) warranted the publication of this book, a sort of compendium text of the variety of ways in which home is experienced. More directly relevant to our purposes, by 2006 the concept of the everyday had become so ubiquitous, such a given, so everyday, that the mention of the everyday had become, well, everyday: e.g., in “Setting Up Home: An Introduction,” Blunt and Dowling write that their “aim in this book [Home] is to present an argument about home that will first help you navigate through this voluminous literature [on home, that is] and secondly aid your ability to understand practices and notions of home that you will encounter in the course of your everyday life” (2006: 2). Here “everyday life” is a given: it is understood that it is understood. It has entered the terms of discourse and needs no further explanation. Or at least so it seems. For the main point of this study (The Geography of the Everyday, that is) is that this is precisely not the case; the everyday continually evades us, forever dangling out of reach. And that perhaps these quests for definitional finality regarding “the everyday” is inherently fruitless and, to a certain extent, useless: as Doreen Massey asks about the search for the fixity of the term, place: “Who is it really that that is hankering after a notion of place as settled, a resting place” (1992: 122; italics, Massey)? In other words, do we need a definitional resting place for “place”? Or might it not better, truer to the conceptual labiality of place, if a less than
finalized construal of place is tolerated, if not outright accepted? And might not the same be true for “everyday,” that a more polyvalent and ambiguous conception of the everyday is possible exactly to the extent that its denotation remains polyvalent and ambiguous? Here we can think of vagueness as operational, allowing for open rather than restricted lexical and definitional space.

The publication in 2007 of *The Design of Everyday Life* captures the everyday as a thing to be consciously designed, fabricated, and constructed. This book is an example of a line of work that can be traced back at least to Bourdieu’s work on practice, existing at the intersection of the study of material things (the investigation of all things “thingly”) as they are coordinated with the domestic economy and the everyday. So we get the observation from *The Design of Everyday Life* that “materials are themselves implicated in the reproduction and transformation of the design of everyday life” giving us a perspective on the everyday from the point of view of things themselves: a sort of ultimate form of materialism or an ontology of thingliness, I suppose one could say (Shove at al. 2007: 147). In a review of this book in *The Journal of Design History*, Highmore points out that the very banality of the subject can rather easily lead to a banality of analysis: “The book reminds us that the empirical focus on the ordinary and the everyday can result in compiling evidence that is at once trite and banal,” he claims prior to citing the following from page forty-seven of *The Design of Everyday Life*: “people are more likely to employ a contractor when dealing with large-scale and complex, complex and risky jobs and reserve other "easier" tasks for themselves” (2009: 289). Highmore quips that this is tantamount to letting us in on the secret that “Just as I may apply a sticking plaster to a small cut, I hang back from resetting broken bones and performing

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appendectomy” (2009: 289). He also points out that in the book “The world of kitchens, photography…and plastics are held at arm’s length: we are told how people think about these things, how they understand their practices and not about the feel of the designed world (its tactilities and mnemonic proclivities, for instance)” (Highmore 2009: 289, 290). This will be of interest to us when we turn to the subject of the haptic and note that many other analysts have also ignored the tactile along with its mnemonic provocations. However, the point that needs to be made here in regard to domesticity and the everyday is that this conceptual reference point again extends the inflection of the everyday into a vaster area.18

The everyday seems to have hit some sort of stride as a term of use (which is probably a tell-tale sign that its days of faddishness are numbered): The Design of Everyday Life was published in 2007: the everyday and its attendant quality of “life” is now an official byproduct of intentional design. Indeed, John Roberts contends that:

The concept of the everyday has [recently: i.e. 2006] undergone a widespread revival. It is the subject - or reference point - of a wide range of books and essays on art, architecture, design, urban studies, anthropology and political science, as well as being the interdisciplinary theme of many recent art exhibitions and cultural events. On these grounds the concept has become the current currency of much contemporary discourse on art and popular culture and cultural studies. After modernism, after postmodernism, it is argued, ‘the everyday’ is where art goes, not only to recover its customary and collective pleasures, but to display its own ordinariness, just as it is also the place where the pleasures of popular culture are indulged and negotiated, from soap operas to celebrity magazines and out-of-town shopping stores. (2006:1).

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18 There are a number of other books along the general lines of The Design of Everyday Life, including Toothpicks and Logos: Design in Everyday Life by J. Heskett (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)Wild Things: The Material Culture of Everyday Life by J. Artfield (Oxford: Berg, 2000); Consumption and Everyday Life, edited by H. Mackay (London: Sage and the Open University, 1997); and Emotional Design: Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things by D. Norman (New York: Basic Books, 2004), none of which we will investigate in this study. However, these titles certainly testify to the intense interest in the general subject of the everyday.
On the futuristic front, claims for the primacy of the everyday are also being made: *The New Everyday: Views on Ambient Intelligence*, edited by Emile Aarts and Stefano Marzano of Philips Design of Rotterdam, forecasts a brave new world of everyday technology, in which the "poetry within everyday life" is depicted as existing within a domain so lyrical that "an inert kitchen utensil may tell a poem about the qualities of the food it helps to prepare" (Rees and Cass 2003: 224). And Penfolds Winery advertises its Koonunga Hill Shiraz Cabernet by asking: “What does our most collectible wine have to do with our everyday wine?” And then answering their own question with: “Well…Everything” (Penfolds Winery 2009; italics, mine).

New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art recently mounted, “American Stories: Paintings of Everyday Life, 1765 to 1915,” which makes one wonder if everyday life in America came to an abrupt halt in 1916, or perhaps it is that stories about such life halted at that point. *Everyday Food Magazine* has spun off *Everyday Cooking Show*, which is broadcast over PBS. And then there is Shea's Everyday Moisturizing Body Wash, a "butter soap," paraben- and fragrance-free. On the academic front, the everyday is flourishing: just to mention one instance of this trend, in the last decade Ben Highmore has edited one collection of scholarly material on the everyday, *The Everyday Life Reader* and written a volume on the subject, *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory: An Introduction*.

And so we see that though we have traced the history of the denotation of “everyday,” at least to a certain limited extent, we still cannot hold it fast in the hand.
Woman found with body parts is charged

Prosecutors filed a murder charge Tuesday against a woman found pushing a trash bin that contained human body parts, and detectives are examining whether the remains are those of the woman’s ex-boyfriend, who recently disappeared.

Carmen Montenegro, 51, remained in custody at the West Valley Detention Center in Rancho Cucamonga and has refused to cooperate with detectives, authorities said.

Montenegro was found Sunday in Ontario, rolling the trash can along Homes Avenue, police said.

Investigators and coroner’s staff say the remains belong to a male but have yet to determine the identity, said Det. Jeff Crittenden.

At a home on Holmes Avenue where one of Montenegro’s relatives lived, investigators found evidence that suggested the body had been kept there, perhaps buried in the yard, authorities said.

After Montenegro’s arrest, detectives began an exhaustive search of the home and yard, Crittenden said. By Monday afternoon, work tents covered much of the backyard as investigators excavated some soil to check for other body parts or evidence, he said.

Montenegro apparently was asking for relatives for help getting rid of the body and had tried to leave it in front of a nearby home, the detective said.

The boyfriend, last seen by relatives May 1, was reported as a missing person to the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, Crittenden said.

The former boyfriend’s sister-in-law said the man met Montenegro online about a year ago and the two had lived together on and off. She said he lived in Diamond Bar and described him as a “veteran, a loner, but a great and generous guy.”
Chapter Two:
Starting with Goffman

Asylums

First, a heads-up, as they say, before we begin. In this chapter, we will start with some of Goffman’s early work, concentrating on his study of the mental hospital as he depicts it in *Asylums*, focusing particularly on Goffman’s construals of various regimens of everyday order in the asylum, and comparing some of this work to Foucault’s in *Madness and Civilization*. We will then move on to Goffman’s work on interaction within “situations,” as we take a micro-survey of his micro-sociology. We end by thinking about some of the limitations of Goffman’s work, especially in regards to an ostensible lack of concern with history and geography or time and space.

Let us initiate this investigation by presenting two excerpts from Goffman’s field notes that Goffman himself cites in *Asylums*:

Movie night. The police patrol car drives slowly past the theater building as the patients come out, in order to ensure an orderly dispersal. The car slows to a stop, the policeman watches the crowd of male patients looking over the female patients, and singles out a well-known well-liked parole patient. The patient turns and greets the policeman as he would a friend.

Patient: Hi’a man.
Policeman: I seen you last night [at the patient dance]; if y’d danced any longer y’d shake them balls right off.
Patient (dismissingly): Go away, man. (Goffman 1961: 292-293; brackets, Goffman).

Am eating with a patient-friend in one of the large patient cafeterias. He says: “The food is good here but I don’t like [canned] salmon.” He then excuses himself, dumps his plateful of food into the wastebucket, and goes to the dietary section of the steam-tray line, coming back with a plate of eggs. He smiles in a
mocking conspiratorial way and says: “I play pool with the attendant who looks after that.” (Goffman 1961: 293; brackets, Goffman).

I start with these two citations for three reasons: first, we should note that, though the citations are concerned with the inmates of a mental hospital, the same form of “total institution” which will also be the focus of Folie et Déraison: Historie de la folie dans l’âge de la raison [Madness and Civilization], the methods Goffman employs here could not be further removed from those of Foucault. Can one imagine Foucault writing up such notes? Or composing or even transcribing anything exhibiting the salty vernacular of ‘If y’d danced any longer y’d shake them balls right off’ or whatever its salty equivalent might be in French? I am not making the silly claim that Foucault was somehow aloof from such concerns or was too prudish to succumb to slang. All I am pointing out is that the citations point to the gulf separating Goffman’s and Foucault’s methods and citational practices: while Foucault was buried in books in the National Library in Paris, engaged in a form of what he calls “febrile indolence – a typical affliction of those enamoured of libraries, documents, reference works, dusty tomes, texts that are never read, books that are no sooner printed than they are consigned to the shelves of libraries where they thereafter lie dormant to be taken up only some centuries later” by one precisely such as he, as when he was researching the conditions of the insane in 18th century France (1980: 79), Goffman was jotting down field notes on the sly as he posed as an assistant to the athletic director at St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in Washington, D.C.

Yet it would be a colossal mistake to assert that Goffman does not mine an archive as rich and as deep as Foucault’s, the difference being that while Foucault
excavates in a vertical fashion back into the recesses of history,¹ Goffman is moving horizontally, his omnivorous latitudinarian bibliographical impulses vacuuming in everything from newspapers fillers to pulp fiction excerpts, from unpublished dissertations to tidbits from advice columns, to his own ethnographic “jottings.” For instance, in Frame Analysis, Goffman, throwing his referential net ever wider, cites V.I. Pudovkin’s Film Technique and Film Acting, The Autobiography of Malcolm X, various items from the San Francisco Chronicle and The Evening Bulletin of Philadelphia, as well as Alfred Métraux’s Voodoo in Haiti, the TV series, What’s My Line?; along with such arcane tomes as Carnap’s The Logical Syntax of Language and Quine’s Mathematical Logic. The one "historical" text for which he seems to have a special fondness, as he cites it quite frequently, is the anonymously penned The Laws of Etiquette, published in 1836.

In the posthumously published “On Fieldwork,” Goffman makes what is virtually his only methodical statement. In his description of “what I conclude from studies of this kind that I have done” (1989: 124), Goffman lays out a groundwork for research which could not be more diametrically opposed to Foucault’s methods of archival excavation: “Participant observation,” Goffman says, is a way “of getting data, it seems to me, by subjecting yourself, your own body and your own personality, and your own social situation, to the set of contingencies that play upon a set of individuals, so that you can physically and ecologically penetrate their circle of response to their social situation, or their work situation, or their ethnic situation, or whatever. So that you are close to them while they are responding to what life does to them. I feel that the way this is done is to not, of course, just listen to what they talk about, but to pick up on their minor grunts and

¹ Or perhaps it’s a diagonal movement: here is Deleuze on Foucault: “the new archivist” remains “mobile, skimming along in a kind of diagonal line that allows him to read what could not be apprehended before” (1988: 1; italics, mine).
groans as they respond to their situation…. You try to accept all the desirable and undesirable things that are a feature of their life. That “tunes your body up” and with your “tuned-up” body and with the ecological right to be close to them (which you’ve obtained by one sneaky means or another), you are in a position to note their gestural, visual, bodily response to what’s going on around them and you’re empathetic enough – because you’ve been taking the same crap they’ve been taking – to sense what it is that they’re responding to. To me, that’s the core of observation. If you don’t get yourself in that situation, I don’t think you can do a piece of serious work. (Goffman 1989: 125-126).²

Once successfully embedded in the situation (the ultimate test of which, Goffman says, is that “you … settle down and forget about being a sociologist. The members of the opposite sex … become attractive to you” (1989: 129)), then the sociologist is ready to burrow in for an extended stay – “I think you should spend at least a year in the field” (Goffman 1989: 130) – while taking copious notes “in lush adverbialized prose” (1989: 131) until one is ready to depart and “fink” on the situation under review.³ Besides noting the disparity between Goffman’s and Foucault’s methods, we should also remark on Goffman’s emphasis on a researcher’s body being ‘tuned up’ to the intricate matrix of the situation under investigation. It’s also telling that Goffman advises sociologists in the field to become attuned to the ‘gestural, visual, bodily’ responses of the subjects under study as well as to ‘their minor grunts and groans;’ in this itinerary, speech or indeed any mention of verbal responses (excluding those minor grunts and groans) is not included.

The second thing I want to point out here is that Goffman (as well as Foucault) is working at the conjunction where everyday behavior intersects with “large systems” and “superindividual institutions” as described by Simmel (“who has some claim to be

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² “On Fieldwork” is a transcription of a rather informal talk Goffman gave at the Pacific Sociological Association Meeting of 1974. Hence the rather informal diction.
³ Goffman uses the words “finks” on page 125 of “On Fieldwork” while discussing the similarities of the work done by sociologists and police. I transpose it here with the imagined implicit blessing of Goffman.
Goffman’s *un-acknowledged master*” (Burns 1992: 360; italics, Burns)) in the following manner: “The large systems and superindividual organizations that customarily come to mind when we think of society, are nothing but immediate interactions that occur among men constantly, every minute, but that have become crystallized as permanent fields, as autonomous phenomena” (Goffman 1950: 10). Such ‘immediate interactions’ are conjunctions, the points of contact where ‘superindividual institutions’ and plain old individuals intersect, and where discipline can be instilled. This is the precise pivot-point, according to Foucault, where the “analysis in question,” that which needs to be done, is located:

It [the analysis in question] should be concerned with power at its extremities, in its ultimate destination, with those points where it becomes capillary, that is, in its more regional and local forms and institutions. Its paramount concern, in fact, should be with the point where power surmounts the rules of right which organize and delimit it and extends itself beyond them, invests itself in institutions, becomes embodied in techniques, and equips itself with instruments and eventually even violent means of material intervention. (1980: 96).

And the points of origination leading to Goffman’s field notes are located precisely at the same conjunctures.

The first example from Goffman’s field notes (cited at the opening of this chapter) describes an encounter between a police officer and a patient after ‘movie night’ at a local theatre. The officer is present, according to Goffman, ‘to ensure an orderly dispersal’ on the part of the patients after their cinematic outing. Here we may want to recall Foucault’s remark that “Confinement, that massive phenomenon, the signs of which are found all across eighteenth-century Europe, is a ‘police’ matter,” with ‘police’

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4 Cited in *Erving Goffman* by Tom Burns, 360.
here signifying “the precise sense that the classical epoch gave to it – that is, the totality of measures which make work possible and necessary for all those who could not live without it” (1988: 46), i.e. the presence of police ensures order, exactly their function in Goffman’s example. The second example depicts an exchange between Goffman (posing here as assistant to the athletic director) and a ‘patient-friend’ as succeeds in wangling a plateful of eggs instead of canned salmon at the hospital cafeteria.

In both examples ‘power at its extremities’ is situated, localized, disseminated. Yet in both examples there is also a certain curtailment of power that occurs as well, or, perhaps better, there is a certain covert disregard of extant power relations, a feint around them, a minor rebellion against them, a capillary emergence of interstitial upheaval, or at least a slight rearrangement of the presuppositions of power. Exiting the movie theatre is a ‘well-known well-liked parole patient,’ who is singled out by the policeman for an exchange of jocular banter in that masculine idiom frequently utilized by American men of the 1950s and 60s to signal a mutual understanding of sexuality, an amused nonchalance typically instrumentalized to mask sexual anxiety. The exchange is of the everyday variety, one guy joshing with another, yet its sense of ease and familiarity thinly laminates its social reality: this is a police officer talking with the inmate of a mental hospital: no matter how fast and thick the jibes may fly, that reality cannot be erased and is always poised to re-assert itself if any untoward behavior may be manifested by the inmate, regardless of how well-liked and well-known he may be. We also learn that the officer witnessed the patient `shaking his testicles’ at the patient dance on the previous night; and so we know, presumably at least, that the officer was present at that occasion to `ensure’ its orderliness as well. The officer, as a member of the local police force,
serves as a stand-in for the state as well as its power and its implied coercion, and, in the case of an emergency (in which case the implied coercion may presumably be rendered explicit) as a ‘violent means of material intervention.’

In the cafeteria scene, the patient has used his skill at “working the system” to obtain a plateful of eggs rather than canned salmon. Here, desired provisions are garnered through a route that bypasses the “official” conjunctions of power. This is an example of a tactic whereby a certain sense of self-esteem is captured by the institutionalized; and, while in no way threatening the structure of power at work in the mental hospital, the patient’s subterfuge demonstrates that organizational control extends only so far and no further. However, his “devious” act does not run outside the circuits of absolute control required for the ongoing functioning of the hospital: the deviation as well as the order undergirding those operations are weak enough on the one hand and strong enough on the other for the misdemeanor to be tolerated and, besides, such acts could even be encouraged by the authorities to lend the impression that a certain degree of liberty is allowed, therefore proving that the institution is not so “total” after all. Such tactics line up nicely with de Certeau’s theorization of the same: “Tactics,” writes Michael Sheringham on de Certeau’s use of the term, “work within the constraints of a given order” (2006: 214), without disrupting or even threatening to disrupt the givenness of that order; in fact, the success of a tactic or what de Certeau also calls a ruse may hinge precisely on the constraints of the order against which it is used: this is a subject we shall return to as we forge our way ahead. However, what I want to make clear here is that Goffman is analyzing “on the ground,” as it were, exactly those points of articulation that Foucault alludes to, the intersections of regimes of power and the subjects of those
regimes, as well as those interstitial gaps where “deviant” and/or “subversive” acts may emerge in a capillary secretion.

The third reason I have started with these field notes is that they reflect the concern Goffman has with the everyday, and on a variety of interwoven levels. On the surface, the field notes describe two everyday scenes: one depicts two men kidding around after a movie, the other a man describing a successful act of petty rebellion. But, though they both carry the conceit of conveying descriptions of everyday behavior, they also depict extremely un-everyday scenes. A police officer is ensuring order as a group of mental patients leave a movie theatre: there is nothing everyday about that; yet Goffman has managed to perceive and then to communicate to his readers that within those very un-everyday parameters a very everyday encounter occurs: two men bantering with mildly sexual overtones. The same is true in the other scene: this is not simply an everyday story of one everyday male getting away with a modest everyday infraction of the rules: this is a mental inmate in a mental hospital relaying this to a sociologist posing as an assistant to the hospital’s athletic director! So the everydayness of the depicted events thinly masks their un-everyday circumstances and conditions.

But there is much more to it than that. Why are these inmates inmates in the first place? According to Goffman, it is due to their inability to play by the rules of the everyday: incapable of maintaining behavior aligned with normative codes regulating the order of the everyday, they are sequestered, quarantined, institutionalized. “Mental patients are persons who caused the kind of trouble on the outside that led someone physically, if not socially, close to them to take psychiatric action. Often this trouble was associated with the ‘prepatient’ having indulged in situational improprieties of some kind,
conduct out of place in a setting” (Goffman 1961: 305). Such infractions, such
‘situational improprieties,’ and the resulting hospitalization of those engaged in
reiterations and/or variations of such infractions, testifies to the strength reflected in “the
fact that everyday secular performances in our own Anglo-American society must often
pass a strict test of aptness, fitness, propriety, and decorum” (Goffman 1959: 55; italics,
mine). Failure to pass such a test can result in institutionalization: “Stigmatization as
mentally ill and involuntary hospitalization are the means by which we answer these
offenses against propriety” (Goffman 1961: 306). And institutionalization of those either
refusing to conform or unable to conform to such strictures ensures the ongoing
continuation of that everyday code with its rules and its strict regimen upholding the
normative everydayness of the normative everyday. And so the everyday is everyday
only because those who violate it are banished through what Foucault calls “formulas of
exclusion” into an un-everyday environment, but an un-everyday environment in which
the everyday is re-inscribed, and in fact must be re-inscribed by the inmates upon
themselves in order to appear to be normal enough to be released back into “the world”
(1988: 7). This exclusion of the insane puts into “effect moral syntheses, assuring an
ethical continuity between the world of madness and the world of reason … by practicing
a social segregation that would guarantee bourgeois morality a universality of fact and
permit it to be imposed upon all forms of insanity” (Foucault 1988: 259). By segregating
the insane, the sane and their world of reason is certified as, respectively, both the ruler
and the rightful domain of the everyday order: it is against the insane that this order is
formulated, secured, and maintained. In Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled
Identity, Goffman formulates this in his usual pithy way: “Now turn from the normal to
Here, Goffman almost (unintentionally, I presume) puts a Schmittian cast to the formulation of normality, as the norm of the “normal person” comes into existence only, or primarily, against those deemed by the normal to be not normal, that is, abnormal.

Mental patients are asked to “act normal” and manifest everyday behavior in a setting which is one of the most abnormal and un-everyday settings in existence: a mental hospital. Furthermore, signs of normal behavior may be perceived as duplicitous, as merely acts (as “acting”) manifested in order to (falsely) reflect a state of normality, and therefore not normal at all. In short, as portrayed by Goffman, the patient is caught in a vicious circle, one whose circumference is patrolled by both the staff and the patient, for a rigor of authenticity may be encouraged which impedes “performances” of normality, as is reported by Sheldon Messinger, Harold “Hal” Sampson, and Robert D. Towne in their “Life as Theater: Some Notes on the Dramaturgic Approach to Social Reality,” published in *Sociometry* in 1962:

Mrs. White said that, if she decided to, she could easily get out of the hospital: she realized that she had come to learn what one was “supposed to say and do” to accomplish this. However, she added, to do these things was to deny one’s “own self” and what “one felt.” (1962: 101; italics, Messinger et al.).

And so the circle is tightened, as the patient disciplines herself (a la Foucault) to the regimen of auto-normality:

We are led to see, then, that the mental patient is not satisfied to appear “normal,” he [sic] strives to be “normal.” Paradoxically, this means, in part, that he wants to appear normal to himself. Striving to “appear normal” for others – putting on a show of normality” – interferes with this objective…. This is to be accomplished by “watching” one’s own “reactions” and by fitting them to the model of a
“normal person,”…. As well, the patient attempts to restrict the actions of others toward him to those which may appropriately be directed to a “normal person.” (Messinger et al. 1962: 102; italics, Messinger et al.).

Fitting one’s reactions into the strictures of normality while simultaneously restricting the actions of others so they are ‘appropriately … directed to a “normal person”’ would seem to be an open invitation for the vicious circle to shrink to the size of a straight-jacket, inscribing a realm of abnormality rather than normality. Yet it also seems like a fair analysis of precisely the bind that the mental patient is circumscribed within. Let us return to Foucault for a variation on the theme: “The madmen of modern confinement are under arraignment; if they have the privilege of no longer being associated or identified with convicts, they are condemned, at every moment, to be subject to an accusation whose text is never given, for it is their entire life in the asylum which constitutes it” (1965: 269). Compare Foucault’s remarks to Goffman’s concerning the constitution of the self:

Each moral career, and behind this, each self, occurs within the confines of an institutional system, whether a social establishment such as a mental hospital or a complex of personal and professional relationships. The self, then, can be seen as something that resides in the arrangements prevailing in a social system for its members. The self in this sense is not a property of the person to whom it is attributed, but dwells rather in the pattern of social control that is exerted in connection with the person by himself and those around him. This special kind of institutional arrangement does not so much support the self as constitute it. (Goffman 1961: 168; italics, mine.)

This citation cannot be passed by without returning once again to Foucault, as Goffman, by way of this quotation from Asylums, so clearly extends his analysis into the
disciplinary regimen at the epicenter of Foucault’s early work.\(^5\) Note that Goffman states that the self exists ‘in the pattern of social control that is exerted in connection with the person by himself and those around him,’ thus construing the self as implicated in its own discipline as it resides within and aligns itself with patterns of social control that both support and constitute it, a conception with a distinctly Foucauldian hue.

The vicious circle of the mental patient is inscribed within an institution where “every place and every thing within the grounds of a mental hospital seems to share with the worst wards an appreciable sense of isolation, banishment, and ritual disease” (Goffman 1961: 289, f.n. 149). Here is something else which moves us in to close proximity with Foucault’s diction, especially that final term, ‘ritual disease;’ for Foucault, in his *Madness and Civilization*, (once again originally published in the same year as Goffman’s *Asylums*, 1961) writes about “the strange chemistry that seethed behind the walls of confinement … the powers forming there that were threatening to propagate.… The disease [of madness] having already assumed the ambiguous aspects of fermentation, of corruption, of tainted exhalations, of decomposed flesh” (1988: 206). Foucault’s predilection for the lurid, frequently rendered with an almost gothically-tinged prose (the famous introduction to *Discipline and Punish* comes to mind) is nearly matched by Goffman’s taste for the lurid, though Goffman utilizes a style more redolent of the antiseptic surfaces of the modern than the ‘decomposed flesh’ of a Gothic veneer: for instance, Goffman cites the “extreme … situation of a self-destructive mental patient who is stripped naked for what is felt to be his own protection and placed in a constantly lit

\(^5\) Here, once again, this is done without intention, as none of Foucault’s work had been published in English as of this date (1961), and there is no evidence that I am aware of that Goffman was aware of Foucault’s work either in 1961 or at any time, for that matter.
seclusion room, into whose Judas window any person passing on the ward can peer” (1961: 24).

Another passage from *Madness and Civilization* can be read as if it was intended to be a commentary on the visual arrangement of an optical apparatus such as the Judas window:

> Madness no longer exists except as *seen*. The proximity instituted by the asylum, an intimacy neither chains nor bars would violate again, does not allow reciprocity; only the nearness of observation that watches, that spies…. The science of mental disease…would not be a dialogue…. (Foucault 1967).  

Madness can be seen – and, in fact, Foucault claims that it no longer exists *except* as seen, its existence being entirely predicated on being observed – but madness can not see. Is not this very similar to the visual situation that the Judas window replicates? There is no reciprocity in this optic arrangement: stripped naked in the `constantly lit seclusion room,’ the mental patient is a “spectacle” on display for the sight of anyone with access to the observatory, i.e. the Judas window. But can the patient gaze back at her audience? Can she switch perspectives and watch those observing her illuminated nakedness? Even if she can turn the tables and watch, there is no dialogue, there is no reciprocity. For the Judas window is known as a peephole and “peepers” can peep both in and out; however, the Judas window is typically used in a mental hospital or a prison to gaze in at the inmate. It’s nominally a one-way street, “optic-wise,” that is.

Here we should also add that Foucault and Goffman, if not a central part of, are at least closely aligned to the cohort of critics of psychiatry and its practices, specifically in

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regard to the treatment of the insane, a criticism which extends even into the very
diagnosis and classification of the insane as insane, all of whom are blasting away at their
target at precisely the same time, the late 1950s and the early 1960s. Among Goffman’s
most incisive remarks along these lines are the following from “The Insanity of Place,”
which first appeared in *Psychiatry* in 1969 and was later included as an Appendix to
*Relations in Public: Microstudies of the Public Order*:

In the last twenty years we have learned that the management of mental illness
under medical auspices has been an uncertain blessing. The best treatment that
money has been able to buy, prolonged individual therapy, has not proven very
efficacious. The treatment most patients have received – hospitalization – has
proven to be questionable indeed. Patients recover more often than not, at least
temporarily, but this seems in spite of the mental hospital, not because of it. Upon
examination, many of these establishments have proven to be hopeless storage

As members of this cadre of critics we need to include R.D. Laing, whose *Divided Self:
An Existential Study in Sanity and Madness* was published in 1960, while its sequel, *The
Self and Other: Further Studies in Sanity and Madness*, made its appearance in 1961;
Thomas Szasz’s *Myths of Mental Illness: Foundations of a Theory of Personal Conduct*
was also published in 1961. Clearly, the time was ripe for such a battery of critiques. This
is not the place for even a cursory inquiry as to why this occurred at this time; however,
let us at least make the suggestion that the tightly-wound everyday regime of the post-war
era with its strict tests of ‘aptness, fitness, propriety, and decorum,’ and its manifestation
in a particular ‘Anglo-American’ guise, as Goffman puts it, may have reached the point
where its release valve had to blow and so these thinkers can be thought of as merely the
heralds (those who “blow” about the upcoming “blow”) of such a release.
Goffman inscribes at least two other orders of the everyday which operate in “Central Hospital,” the name he uses to maintain the (relative) anonymity of St. Elizabeth’s. For one thing, “Behind a ward show of frank psychosis was a basic ward routine that was quite fully adhered to” (Goffman 1961: 209, f.n. 57). So, despite the fact that in “Central Hospital, many patients remained entirely mute, were incontinent, hallucinated, and practiced other classic symptoms” of mental derangement, an everyday regime was maintained: “Very few patients, as far as I could see, had the temerity purposely and persistently to drop ashes on the linoleum floor, just as few declined to line up for food, take their shower, go to bed, or get up on time” (Goffman 1961: 209, f.n. 57). Here I would like to insert that it may have been the very power of routine in and of itself, the very weight of the everyday, its persistence and its purpose, which caused the patients to adhere to the daily routine of the ward, and not, as suggested by Goffman, any lack of temerity on their part.

The other everyday order Goffman delineates is one maintained by the professional staff of the hospital. Or, rather, it is one shared by both the inmates and the staff, to the effect that a clinical situation is in process at the hospital with all the attendant ramifications of that conceit, i.e., that the psychiatrists understand mental illness as well as how to successfully treat it, that patients can be cured, and so on. According to Goffman, the creation and maintenance of such an order in the hospital involves a great amount of “translation,” to use his term:

Daily staff actions must be defined and presented as expressions of observation, diagnosis, and treatment. To effect this translation, reality must be considerably twisted, somewhat as it is by judges, instructors, and officers in other of our coercive institutions. A crime must be uncovered that fits the punishment, and the
character of the inmate must be reconstituted to fit the crime. (Goffman 1961: 384.

And, to assure the ongoing efficacy of this ‘twisted’ translation, “Inmates and lower staff levels are involved in a vast supportive action – an elaborate dramatized tribute – that has the effect, if not the purpose, of affirming that a medical-like service is in progress here and that the psychiatric staff is providing it” (Goffman 1961: 385). Not only that, but “the wider community is engaged in this role support, too. There is an important sense in which the ideal therapeutic experience envisaged today is a prolonged immersion in individual psychotherapy, preferably psychoanalytic” (Goffman 1961: 385, f.n. 50). However, Goffman claims this possibly has more to do with the psychiatrists and the maintenance of their role along with the underlying everyday order providing them with a foundation than it does with any therapeutic benefits that may accrue to the inmates: “It is possible that this kind of solution is more likely to help the role predicament of psychiatrists than to help the human situation in which mental patients find themselves” (1961: 386, f.n. 50). The resulting effect is that a conceit of improvement and progress is sustained as it is embedded within the everyday routine of the hospital, with the “problem” of the fulfillment of roles catalyzing the need for that order and the resolution regarding the ‘predicament’ of roles following thereafter.

And so multiple manifestations of the everyday are operating within the setting of the asylum, as if the everyday is folded over and over upon itself in this setting, a convolute infolding of layers of the everyday, “constant folds … which curve the outside and constitute the inside,” creating new and discrete replications of itself as both inmates
W LA 11730 National Blvd, Sat 3/5 & Sun 3/6. 11am-3pm. Traditional Dining Set, Trad
+ Mid Century Bedroom Furn & Living Room Decrotive items, Collectibles, Dozens of
Everyday Things; Books, Kitchen, Electronics, Etc. **Must Sell Entire Contents.**

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and staff struggle to achieve some semblance, at least during that period of time, of what passes as normality (Deleuze 1988: 97).

That qualifier ‘at least at that time,’ appended to the conclusion of the previous sentence, serves as a reminder that prior to proceeding we must return to Goffman’s identification of ‘our own’ society as specifically of the ‘Anglo-American’ variety. This is one of the few instances in which Goffman sets his analysis within a larger frame (he uses the term “middle-class” as a qualifier for “society” as well). For instance, in the essay, “The Nature of Deference and Demeanor,” Goffman uses the phrase “American middle-class society” to describe the milieu in which he is investigating the functionality of deference and demeanor (1967: 79); yet in the same collection of essays, Interaction Ritual, in which “The Nature of Deference and Demeanor” appears, Goffman uses the phrase, “our Anglo-American society” as well (1967: 113). First, it should be noted how astonishing the latter phrase in this context seems today (or in any context today, for that matter): such astonishment testifies to the ways in which the everyday order can and does evolve: such changes usually occur incrementally over a long period of time, and frequently the increments by virtue of which they change are so gradual that the order of the everyday does not seem to have been altered at all, even when the change is substantial, as in this case. This, in turn, testifies to both the perdurance and the resilience of the everyday, as its elastic durability serves the everyday in a reciprocal fashion: its resilience guarantees its perdurance while its perdurance guarantees its resilience. Yet that it does indeed change, no matter how extensive its persistence or how intensive its resilience, also testifies to the pliable nature of the everyday. And so we notice that a dialectic of the everyday is ingrained within the very order of the everyday, one hinged
between stability and evolution, perdurance and dynamism, custom and revolution; it is out of this dialectic that the everyday order emerges and is then sustained, subsisting as if on its own, seemingly untethered, yet deeply rooted in mores, codes, laws, rules and regulations, both published and unpublished, acknowledged and unacknowledged, implicit and explicit, those that are noticed and those that exist without even a claim to the anonymity of invisibility or the invisibility of anonymity.

In his preface to *Relations in Public: Mircostudies of the Public Order*, Goffman admits that his practice of using the modifier “American society” as the descriptive term for the generalized social unit under discussion is “something of a conceptual scandal” and “very nearly a contradiction in terms;” yet he goes right on using it just the same (1971: xv). It doesn’t help much that he adds that “other reference units are not much better. There is the English-speaking world, the Anglo-American community, West European nations, Protestant countries, Christian society, and the West” (1971: xv). He also confesses that in using the term “our” (as in “our own Anglo-American society” or “our American society”), he does so in full knowledge “that in regard to small behaviors the ‘our’ cannot be conventionally or conveniently specified” (1971: xv). He deems his own methodology “unsystematic, naturalistic observation” – fraught with “very serious limitations,” but counters, somewhat feebly, with the argument, if it can be rewarded with such a label, that “the traditional research designs thus far employed in this area have considerable limitations of their own,” prior to making the offer that “in spite of disclaimers, the findings of these studies are assumed to hold more broadly than the particularities of their execution can immediately warrant” (1971: xv – xvi).}

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7 Here I don’t want to give the impression that I can write this present study without the impress of cultural values being impressed upon me as well. This is part of the given of writing anything and everything. At least as far as I can tell.
this last comment, I concur: otherwise, I would not be writing about Goffman’s work. In short, his acuity of observation, his talent as a writer and his brilliance as a thinker at least partially warrant the veracity of his research. Still, as he admits, there are limitations to his approach: we will return to those limitations later in this chapter.

However, we should also point out that even though Goffman states that this middle-class Anglo-American society is ‘our own,’ there is every reason to believe that Goffman did not consider himself to be a bona fide member of such a society. As both a Canadian immigrant and a Jew, Goffman was doubly outside his own construction of such a norm. His sense of possessing a status exterior to ‘our own Anglo-American society’ is revealed in “The Interaction Order,” his 1982 Presidential Address to the American Sociological Association. In this address, Goffman remarks that “ritual enterprises,” such as presidential addresses to associations of sociologists, for instance, “shouldn’t [be] knock[ed] too much. Some goy [sic] might be listening and leave here to spread irreverence and disenchantment in the land. Too much of that and even such jobs as we sociologists get will become empty of traditional employment” (1983: 1; italics, Goffman). Here, the implied equations of sociologists with Jews and ‘some goy’ with Anglo-American society testify to Goffman’s perceived assessment of his exclusion from the latter.

Now in no way do I intend to veer into either a sociological or a (god forbid!) psychoanalytical analysis of Goffman, but we can, I think, safely venture the claim that Goffman’s perception of his outsider status, regardless of whether that perception was justified or not, may have influenced his predilection to study those who also exist well
outside the norm, such as mental patients, con-men, pick-pockets, prostitutes, the stigmatized, and so forth.

This may also at least partially explain Goffman’s extreme interest in that which fits within the norm, that is, his fascination with everyday behavior set within the parameters of what he calls ‘our own Anglo-American society.’ If we refer to the pages of Stigma, Goffman tells us that a “stigmatized individual” is “sometimes” stimulated “into becoming a critic of the social scene, an observer of human relations” (1974a: 111). Being that Goffman presents Jews as one of the groups liable to such regimens of stigmatization, let us stipulate that Goffman himself is among those so stigmatized, and then let us apply Goffman’s analysis to his own case:

He [the stigmatized individual, who, as such, has become ‘a critic of the social scene, an observer of human relations,’ i.e. a sociologist, i.e. Goffman’s occupation] may be led into placing brackets around a spate of casual social interaction so as to examine what is contained therein for general themes.\(^8\) He can become “situation conscious” while normals [sic] present are spontaneously involved within the situation, the situation itself constituting for these normals a background of unattended matters. This extension of consciousness on the part of the stigmatized persons is reinforced … by his special aliveness to the contingencies of acceptance and disclosure, contingencies to which normals will be less alive. (1974a: 111; italics, Goffman).

And so, following Goffman’s cue, let us turn to one who have may have been especially “alive” to ‘the background of unattended matters’ and ‘the contingencies of acceptance and disclosure,’ as he extended his consciousness into situations, observed them and then

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\(^8\) It might be useful at this juncture to refer the reader to footnote 3 on page 251 of Goffman’s Frame Analysis, where there is a lengthy exegesis on Husserl’s concepts of bracketing, with the final judgment that although Husserl’s use and theory of bracketing “seems entirely desirable in the study of the established, effective sciences, application to the social sciences produces a certain amount of understandable hard feeling, since their practitioners themselves claim to be in the business of formulating sociological concepts, analyzing social presuppositions, and so forth. [For Husserl and other phenomenologists] To bracket their doing is to claim, in effect, to do it better” (1974b: 252, f.n. 3; italics, Goffman).
reported back upon their dynamics. That is, let us turn to Goffman himself and his
treatment of the “interaction order” within the framework of the situation.

*Interaction Order, Framed*

Famously, Goffman had something between a tendency and a compulsion to jump
theoretical ships from book to book, shifting metaphorical construals of social reality as
he tacked along. However, the theatrical metaphor, which he first adopted in *The
Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, was never fully abandoned. Even in one of his final
… provide *the natural theater* in which all bodily displays are enacted and in which all
bodily displays are read” (1983: 4; italics, mine). And whatever metaphorical armature
Goffman may have used – involvement shields, *withs* and *ands*, floodings, coverings,
frontstage and backstage (to name just a few) – they were always used as tools of
microanalysis to focus on interactions within the order of the everyday: “My concern
over the years has been to promote acceptance of this face-to-face domain as an
analytically viable one – a domain which might be titled, for want of any happy name, the
*interaction order* - a domain whose preferred method of study is microanalysis” (1983:
2; italics, Goffman).

“The rule of behavior that seems to be common to all situations and exclusive to
them is the rule obliging participants to ‘fit in’” (Goffman 1963: 11). Perhaps by starting
with an analysis of this rule and its place within Goffman’s schema, we can begin to
approach some sort of fundamental appreciation of the scope and methods by which
Goffman examined ‘face-to-face’ behavior within social situations. And, furthermore, it
may be that the best way to make an approach to comprehending the operation of this rule, its functioning, that is, is via a negative route.

First, let us note that Goffman stipulates that this obligatory rule allows for a certain level of withdrawal from its strictures, as long as such withdrawals do not formally deny the validity of the norm. And second, those who cannot or will not abide by this rule are excluded from its normative domain: thus, the domain of the imprisoned, the inmates of asylums, and, in general, the stigmatized; and then the domain of those whom willfully exclude themselves from the strictures of conforming, that is, criminals, prostitutes, grifters, and others who choose to be “on the stem,” to borrow Goffman’s citation of the vernacular of his era. However, as Goffman recognizes that each of these “excluded” domains will also have everyday interaction orders and obligatory rules by virtue of which one does or does not fit in to their respective social situations, these domains are certainly not thought of as outside the scope of his analysis, and, indeed, some of Goffman’s most notable work on everyday behavior is performed in his investigations of these realms of exclusion.

So let us make an initial approach to the interaction order through the ways in which withdrawal from this order can be achieved without “banishment” or withdrawal to a zone of exclusion. But before proceeding, I want to make the caveat that the following is intended merely as a cursory survey of Goffman’s work and does not even make the pretense of being complete, final, or exhaustive. Having enunciated that apologia, we can now turn to Goffman’s work itself.

Goffman argues that some level of perceived involvement in situations is obligatory for those claiming to be normal members of “Anglo-American society.” One
needs to “sustain some kind of cognitive and affective engrossment” in the situation at hand, and, furthermore, “some mobilization of one’s psychobiological resources” must be requisitioned and applied to the situation (1963: 36). But an obverse mechanism is available as well: one can retreat behind “involvement shields,” and thereby withdraw from a situation without the usual negative repercussions attendant to situational improprieties.

Because one perceives the individual’s involvement in reference to the whole context of his activity, involvement can be shielded by blocking perception of either bodily signs of involvement or objects of involvement, or both. Bedrooms and bathrooms are perhaps the main shielding places in Anglo-American society, bathrooms having special interest here because in many households these are the only rooms in which the solitary person can properly lock himself. (Goffman 1963: 39).

Goffman recognizes, however, that a complete withdrawal is not mandatory in order to accomplish an orderly retreat from an undesirable situation. For instance, reading on a bus can deter unwanted advances, yet the pretence of reading will do the job just as well. There are other involvement shields that have the same “useful attribute of being portable,” some of which were not available to Goffman and his consociates during their era, such as cell phones, I-Pods, and laptops (Goffman 1963: 40). And there are certain situations in which levels of non-involvement are tolerated: for instance, Goffman cites “such places as the New York subway during the evening rush hour” in which relatively “normal” people “may let expression fall from their faces in a kind of temporary uncaring and righteous exhaustion, even while being clothed and made up to fit a much more disciplined stance” (1963: 25). A kind of suspended state of day-dreaminess (what Goffman calls an “away) is permissible in most transport situations without the bestowal
of any “negative sanctions” upon those lost in such sinkholes of reverie (Goffman 1963: 39). But these kind of generalized retreats also seem to be a built-in component of most social settings, as if escape from too tight a circumference being drawn around situations is part of their functional requirements: “It can be assumed … that every round of life provides at least a few places for getting away with going away,” even though “the degree to which individuals ordinarily go away in situations in which they are participants … is little known” (Goffman 1963: 70). Note the hint of mystery there: the degree to which people `ordinarily go away in situations in which they are participants … is little known;’ this psychological territory of the unknown is left alone by Goffman, but the implication seems to be that one can only gauge the universal extent of this unexamined “away” by subjectively calculating one’s own degree of situational drift and then applying it generally on a more or less intersubjective basis.

And, though direct withdrawal from conversation is tolerated to a certain degree, depending upon the situation and the individual’s relationship to that situation, Goffman is quick to note that the silent individual “cannot stop communicating through body idiom” (1963: 35). Here, we have “body symbolism, an idiom of individual appearances and gestures that tends to call forth in the actor what it calls forth in the others, the others drawn from those, and only those, who are immediately present” (Goffman 1963: 33-34). This idiom of the body “is a conventionalized discourse … a normative one,” and includes “bodily appearance and personal acts: dress, bearing, movement and position, sound level, physical gestures such as waving or saluting, and broad emotional expressions” (Goffman 1963: 33-34, 33). Now, while Goffman acknowledges that such “signs seem ill suited for extended discursive messages, in contrast to speech, they do
seem well designed to convey information about the actor’s social attributes and about his [sic] conception of himself, of the others present, and of the setting” (1963: 34). And, if one wishes to communicate as little information about one’s self as possible, the best option is not to retreat into a sullen state of withdrawal, but “to fit in and act as persons of his kind are expected to act” (Goffman 1963: 35). In a parenthetical aside, Goffman adds that this last strategy “paradoxically” provides “one motive for maintaining the proprieties” and acting in accordance with them, actually allowing for perhaps the most complete form of withdrawal from the strictures of the proprieties, as one fits in simply by acting as ‘persons of his kind are expected to act’ (Goffman 1963: 35). Thus, among the rewards of conformity can be the freedom to disengage behind the pretences of propriety. All that is required is to master the basic semiotics of “normal” situational behavior and then use the automatic mechanisms of those signals as a sanctuary behind which to shelter a disjointed psyche, a roving mind or a particularly dyspeptic gastrointestinal system.

Again, we should note here that Goffman’s investigative zone moves into close proximity with Foucault’s, as the latter’s excavations will lead Foucault to conclude that the realm of the body is of vast significance, as he conceives it as the surface upon which the disciplinary practices of society are inscribed:

The historical moment of the disciplines was the moment when an art of the human body was born, which was directed not only at the growth of its skills, nor at the intensification of its subjection, but at the formation of a relation that in the mechanism makes it more obedient as it becomes more useful, and conversely [i.e., as it becomes more useful, it becomes more obedient]. What was being formed was a policy of coercions that act upon the body, a calculated manipulation of its elements, its gestures, its behavior. The human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down and rearranges
Thus discipline produces subjected and practices bodies, ‘docile’ bodies. (Foucault 1995: 137-138).

And, though we may want to succumb to what seems to be a well-considered impulse to note that Foucault’s signification of the body should be quickly differentiated from Goffman’s, both in degree and in kind, as Foucault seems to be describing a strict bodily discipline, a subjection and subjugation of the body on a massive scale far removed from Goffman’s much more narrowly drawn analysis, we should defer that impulse until we retrieve evidence from Asylums, in which Goffman can almost be construed as Foucault’s co-author, the two setting up business as partners in an enterprise depicting the Gothic horrors of disciplinary regimes applied upon inmates of total institutions:

In addition to personal defacement that comes from being stripped of one’s identity kit [i.e. “cosmetic and clothing supplies” (Goffman 1961: 20)], there is personal disfigurement that comes from direct and permanent mutilations of the body such as brands or loss of limbs. Although this mortification of the self by way of the body is found in few total institutions, still, loss of a sense of personal safety is common and provides a basis for anxieties about disfigurement. Beatings, shock therapy, or, in mental hospitals, surgery [e.g. lobotomies] – whatever the intent of staff in providing these services for some inmates – may lead many inmates to feel that they are in an environment that does not guarantee their physical integrity. (Goffman 1961: 21).

Here, the main difference between Goffman’s and Foucault’s analysis may be that Foucault traces the genealogy of these disciplinary practices from their point of origination in “complete and austere institutions” to the more general society, with total institutions serving a pedagogical function for that more generalized society as the “teaching” of the disciplines spreads throughout the realm, whereas Goffman keeps his analysis within the institutions he is examining. But their tone and their diction, at least in
this instance, are quite proximate: they are ranging across the same territory and even speaking in the same coin.

Returning from our parenthetical excursion, our Foucauldian aside, let us note that Goffman’s flair for the analysis of everyday behavior in “normal” society comes to the fore when he dissects “involvement” into its main and side components. For instance, while engaged in a main involvement of talking “to Marsha,” John may be “exchanging a knowing glance with his brother,” or “Marsha” may be “biting her finger while listening to John” (Manning 1992: 84). Such a dual structure allows individuals to maintain a level of autonomy within a social situation without rupturing whatever proprieties may be constructed as borders around the situation. “Provisions for the demonstration of autonomy are built into the structural arrangements of everyday life,” states Philip Manning in his *Erving Goffman and Modern Sociology*, “and this is central to the elasticity of quite routine social situations” (1992: 84-85). However, a display of autonomy that strays too far may betray one’s non-adherence to propriety: “It is also understandable that these [side] involvements will be a constant threat to obligatory behavior, ever ready to absorb more of the individual’s concern that [sic] is felt proper” (Goffman 1963: 45). As an example of a side involvement that may potentially threaten the stability of a main involvement, Goffman cites gum chewing, which he deems perfectly acceptable as a subordinated activity but quite improper as a primary one. However, side and main involvements may switch levels, given the demands of the situation; for instance, “on the job, the drinking of a cup of coffee may be a subordinate involvement; during official coffee breaks, it may be the dominating activity” (Goffman 1963: 45).
Goffman is at his most incisive when making an inspection of the finely chiseled contours of everyday routines; for instance, he describes “side activities … whether momentary or continuous, simple or complicated,” as “appear[ing] to constitute a kind of fuguelike dissociation of minor muscular activity from the main line of an individual’s action. Humming while working and knitting while listening are examples” (1963: 43). Goffman’s own fuguelike hermeneutical exposition of the everyday forefronts the banal within the banal:

Whether an occasioned main involvement is prescribed or not, the participant in a social gathering – at least in a middle class gathering – may be obliged to sustain at least a certain minimal main involvement to avoid the appearance of being utterly disengaged. This is one reason why waiting rooms, club cars, and passenger airplanes in our society often are supplied by management with emergency supplies such as magazines and newspapers, which serve as minimal involvements that can be given weight (when there is nothing but waiting to do) yet can be immediately discarded when one’s turn or destination arrives. Newspapers, in particular, play an important role here, providing a portable source of involvement, which can be brought forth whenever an individual feels he ought to have an involvement but does not. (Goffman 1963: 51-51; italics, Goffman).

Lack of access to such ‘portable sources of involvement’ can lead to an over-exposure of the self, or what Goffman calls “‘over-presence’” (1963: 52, f.n. 9).

It is easy to appreciate to what degree disciplinary regimes must be practiced upon the self to ensure that main involvements are correlated with their appropriate situation while side involvements are kept safely and securely in abeyance. Goffman asserts that such self-discipline subsumes instances of solitude, e.g. to avoid being taken by surprise and the possibility of embarrassment which may ensue from such an “ambush,” the “individual may maintain presentability even when alone – thus forcing us
to allow that situational behavior may occur even in the absence of an actual social situation” (1963: 41). This may be easily confirmed by anyone who has ever slipped while alone in their residence, as such accidents are typically followed by a frantic effort to align one’s self back into proper self-maintenance, as if hidden cameras were catching every false move and broadcasting them hither and yon. This, of course, also speaks to a Foucauldian regime of discipline and its codes, which have been so successfully inscribed within the self that they seem to be utterly and patently natural, while also being utterly and patently absurd, that is, if one can simply pause to consider the criteria upon which they are based: that no one is present to witness the accident as well as its concomitant “humiliation.”

Goffman also asserts that rightful claims upon territory on behalf of the self are embedded within the order of the everyday. He breaks out these territorial claims into a variety of differentiated units in Relations in Public: personal space, the stall, use space, the turn, the sheath, possessional territory, the information preserve, and the conversational preserve. Though all of these are of interest, we will only place the stall, personal space, and the sheath within our ambit of investigation, as time and space press upon us, as both reader and writer have only so much of each as well as little of both.

Stalls are “well-bounded space[s] to which individuals can lay temporary claim, possession being on an all-or-none basis. A scarce good will often be involved, such as a comfortable chair, a table with a view, an empty cot, a telephone booth” (Goffman 1971: 32). Here, I would like to amend Goffman’s criteria a bit, as in certain circumstances

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9 Parenthetically, and submitted to the reader to add to our sidebar on the cornucopia of Goffman’s citational practices, we should note that Goffman cites “ethologists who study the daily round of the domestic cow” for his use of this term (1971: 32, f.n. 7).
even an uncomfortable chair or a table without a view can qualify as a scarce good; and of course telephone booths are fast becoming the stuff of curiosity and nostalgia. On a rainy day at UCLA, for instance, when outdoor chairs and tables in the common areas adjacent to cafeterias become undesirable commodities, their indoor counterparts are scarce to the point directly preceding zero and are therefore hoarded with the zeal of art collectors relishing their latest purchase of rare fifteenth-century Venetian prints. I would also like to take the opportunity here to point out the odd status of at least some of these items as they can also be itemized as common property. Only claimed by individuals or groups on a temporary basis, they retain a status as property available to all and sundry, at least to a greater or lesser extent, depending on subtending claims, such as their grounding within public or private institutions, the demand that a particular purchase attend their general use, and so on. Still, despite these qualifications, important as they may be, there is an element of commonality here that should be indicated, and, that indication having been duly indicated, let us proceed.

Stalls can be claimed by bodily use, for example, by sitting in a chair or by lying on a cot, but their use can also be reserved by what Goffman (“following ethological practice”) calls “markers” (1971: 41). These consist of “objects that announce a territorial claim, the territory radiating outward from it, as when sunglasses and lotion claim a beach chair, or a purse a seat in an airliner, or a drink on a bar the stool in front of it” (1971: 41-42). Here, we could add other significant everyday markers which may be more current, such as a book placed on a table at a coffee shop or a cup of steaming mocha sitting on the same. An extension of territory can be accomplished through the dispersal of personal items as well: for instance, an individual can make a successful
claim on a table as his private preserve for four at a coffee shop or a cafeteria by spreading out books, notebooks, pens, paper, and so on, sending a signal that no one should even consider making a counter-claim upon the table.

Goffman’s sociology extends into the geographical domain as well as into the realm of ethology when he states that “The point about stalls … is that they provide external, easily visible, defendable boundaries for a spatial claim” (1971: 34). By occupying a stall, by making a spatial claim to its boundaries and staking out, at least on a temporary basis, that which resides within those boundaries, one has marked off a territory and, to a certain extent, created a place. One has, as it were, announced that this place is “my own place” and that the place in question has thus been marked off as a kind of indexical use space: as long as one has marked it off and as long as those markers remain in effect, the territory immediately circumambulating the body or bodies of those making the claim and setting the markers are the rightful occupants of the stall. In Lefebvre’s terms, they have engaged in a production of space, albeit on a micro scale and on an impermanent basis, creating a temporary zone of use, a place dedicated to their own purposes. This allows for certain rights to be held in regard to the stall; anyone violating those rights will be committing a “territorial offense” (Goffman 1971: 50).

What is interesting about such a production, this taking hold of a territory and making it one’s own via the staking of a spatial claim, is that this act is most typically accomplished without the consciousness that one is engaged in such an act. One does it without thinking anything along the lines of: ah, such is the spatial claim I now enunciate.

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10 Goffman frequently cites the ethologist, Heini Hediger, especially his *Studies of the Psychology and Behavior of Captive Animals in Zoos and Circuses*, zoos and circuses being total institutions in their own right.
by the movement of my body and the placement of my buttocks in the contours of this chair! Usually, one simply proceeds; and this is precisely what makes such an action an everyday action: its givenness, its procession along an unconscious line, the routine of it, the unthinkingness of it, the way one accomplishes it without pronouncement, without acknowledgement, without the claim even emerging as a claim. “Ordinarily, the normality of the everyday world we move around in is not a matter of conscious awareness…. It is the exceptional that triggers awareness” (Burns 1992: 97). That is, the everyday remains everyday, unless and until it is violated. Violations bring claims to the fore, as they suddenly make visible the territoriality of the territory.

But is that right? For, typically, when one leaves a book upon a table at a coffee shop, one knows full well that a claim is being enunciated. That’s exactly why the book is being left there, as a specific place-marker specifically signifying: taken. Perhaps it is the spatial and the territorial allotments of this operation that proceed on a more or less unconscious basis; that is, the particular spatiality and territoriality of such a claim do not come to consciousness, are not thought of, until violation brings them into focus. Without making any final adjudication regarding this knotty problem, we proceed, the problem’s resolutions in abeyance, dangling, unclaimed or perhaps unclaimable, as it were.

Personal space is that territory “surrounding an individual, anywhere within which an entering other causes the individual to feel encroached upon, leading him to show displeasure and sometimes to withdraw” (Goffman 1971: 29-30). Personal space consists of a contour in front of the body, not a sphere around it, and personal space is portable with the body, making it the indexical space par excellence. “It is a central feature of personal space that legitimate claim to it varies greatly according to the
accountings available in the setting and that the bases for these will change continuously” (Goffman 1971: 31). For instance, an elevator with only two passengers aboard makes for a very different ambience for the articulation of personal space that one that is packed. Goffman states that both intrusions and obtrusions can violate personal space, the first consisting of encroachments into someone else’s space, the second “the capacity of a claimant to press territorial demands into a wider sphere than others feel is his due…. The standard example occurs when an individual makes what are taken as overextensive claims to personal space, incidentally encroaching on the personal space of those adjacent to him or an area felt to be public in the sense of being non-claimable. “Offensive” loudness which sustains an encounter over a long distance is another common case. (Goffman 1971: 51).

Here it might be useful to extend Goffman’s analysis into the present and include cell-phone use in his critique of intrusion and obtrusion. Unwanted sound interference in one’s own personal space runs endemic in areas within the auditory ambit of cell-phone users. Highly intimate details of private lives mixed in with the most banal of exchanges are broadcast without regard for the auditory spatial claims ambient to others, making personal space highly porous, punctured and perforated by the details of such “conversations.” Goffman provides his own “snooty” example of this in what seems to be almost a “put-on” of blue-blooded airs:

The ski slopes of New England are beginning to enjoy patronage by young men of no background, who, having their own understanding of ritual sociability, maintain a running exchange of derisive greetings, banter, and other loud impieties from slope to lift, finding that this sort of separation between friends is a reason for establishing connection, not foregoing it, thereby giving considerable offense to those properly born to the silent sport. (1971: 51).
Momentarily retrieving our discussion of Goffman’s “outsider” status vis-à-vis members of “our own Anglo-American society,” we can, without too much fretting (I think), insert Goffman himself into the category of “impious” ‘young men with no background’ who banter on the slopes, while slotting ‘those properly born to the silent sport’ as those “goys,” to cite Goffman’s use of the term, who may have more easily purchased a foothold on to “our own American society” than could a Canadian-born Jewish sociologist such as Goffman. Still, Goffman composes this as if he is the insider born to the manor of the silent sport and those calling out ‘loud impieties from slope to lift’ are outside the circle of his “own” society. But perhaps I stray too far from my line of discourse.

Here we should also note the role evolving improprieties may have on the status of obtrusions and intrusions, for what may be a clear violation at one time and place may be neither at other times and places. Though Goffman is often branded as being both ahistorical and ageographical, he does make some concessions towards time and place: “Charlatan professional activity of one decade sometimes becomes an acceptable legitimate occupation in the next. We find that activities which are thought to be legitimate by some audiences in our society are thought to be rackets by others” (1959: 64). But I am rushing ahead of my story, as we shall consider this subject in the last section of the present chapter.

In Goffman’s schema of the various territories of the self, the sheath consists simply of one’s skin and clothes. The sheerest of personal spaces, the most closely guarded of spatial claims as well as (at least typically) the most carefully groomed, and the most securely protected, the sheath, that “purest kind of egocentric territoriality,” is
“divided up” into different “segments,” according to culture: “Among the American middle classes, for example, little effort is made to keep the elbow inviolate, whereas orifice areas are of concern. And, of course, across different cultures, the body will be differently segmented” (Goffman 1971: 38). Again we have another concession to that which can be differentiated from “our own Anglo-American society,” and again I must rein in an exegesis of this element until the “proper” section is broached. We could also include various accessories and prosthetic devices as being contained within the sheath as well; here I am thinking of such things as canes, backpacks, wheelchairs, and purses. Sheath violations can be startling, and can even be classified as acts of molestation. For instance, if one is walking along a crowded street, say, and a woman grabs one’s genitalia, calling out, “The cosmic penee-pusher has struck again,” as happened to this author on San Francisco’s Haight Street circa 1968, one may be justified in feeling that an intrusion into one’s sheath area has occurred. Or one may laugh in wonder, amazed that such a thing can happen in broad daylight. Stories of rush-hour sheath violations in subway cars are perhaps more typical examples of this kind of intrusion, as passengers, usually males, take advantage of the crowded conditions to perforate the zones of privacy of the sheaths of other passengers, usually females.

Sheath and personal space are both portable, as they are carried around with one as one moves along, and they are indexically oriented, as personal space is coordinated to the viewpoint and position of the self, and the sheath is coordinated with the actuality of either being a self or having a self (whatever the metaphysical case may be presumed to be), with its subtending body, distending mind (distending as it roams here, there and everywhere), and attending clothes.
Self-violations of one’s own sheath or one’s own personal space can also occur. Goffman refers to such auto-encroachments as self-defilements or self-befoulments: “The individual as a source of contamination defiles himself as a preserve. The extreme here, at least in our society, is smearing oneself with and eating one’s own fecal matter – a type of heroic perversity now becoming rare in our mental hospitals” (Goffman 1971: 52-53).

Of course contaminations of an other can also occur: “First,” in this line-up of contaminating breaches are:

corporeal excreta (or their stains) that contaminate by direct touch: spittle, snot, perspiration, food particles, blood, semen, vomit, urine, and fecal matter…. Second, there is odor, including flatus, tainted breath, and body smells. (Goffman 1971: 47).

Here, I’d like to point out three things. One, and perhaps the most obvious point, is the gusto with which Goffman seems to enumerate these items of “befoulment.” We can almost sense his juvenile glee in recounting such an itinerary of taboo; not that he is wrong in his observations or off-base somehow; still, there is a certain roguish schoolyard prankishness about the diction of Goffman’s catalogue, at least as I read it, as if he is merrily exercising an obligation to violate norms. Second is the specificity employed by Goffman: this is a nice example of what we might dub Goffman’s clearing-house approach to the everyday: everything is included, farts and all, “up-close and personal,” as Howard Cosell used to say. Third, note the oddly geographic element of odors, as smells have the potential to puncture boundaries without any visible ruptures being perpetrated. We might even say that smells have their own distinct geographic attributes.
and limitations and that these can be, or, rather, *are* disconnected to what are typically referred to as physical barriers.

I want to wrap up this section with a brief survey of what Goffman calls “Remedial Interchanges,” a term he deploys to encompass the processes of “patching up” social situations that have been subjected to violations or that have even become vulnerable to such a violation.

When individuals come into one another’s immediate presence, territories of the self bring to the scene a vast filigree of trip wires which individuals are uniquely equipped to trip over. This ensures that circumstances will constantly produce potentially offensive configurations that were not foreseen or that were foreseen but not desired. Also, strangers will impinge upon each other briefly and wordlessly in passing, the result being that the individual will be witnessed by others in acts whose meaning depends on its place in his unfolding course of action, and the witness will have no opportunity to wait for this unfolding to occur. (Goffman 1971: 106).

Applied to the order of the everyday, that unstated but pervasive and ever-present code of rules and regulations that underlie the ongoing and efficacious operation of the everyday, it is astonishing to note the alacrity with which remedial action is taken if and when the order of the everyday is even to the slightest degree endangered. Most of us are continually poised, at the ready to jump in and smooth over whatever violations threaten the veneer of the everyday. “The function of remedial work is to change the meaning that otherwise might be given to an act, transforming what could be seen as offensive into what can be seen as acceptable” (Goffman 1971: 109).

Frequently, a kind of pre-emptive remedial operation is necessary in such cases, as in this example described by Goffman: “Two females and a male, all in their early twenties, walking down the main street of a large Eastern city while together carrying by
hand a second-hand, medium-sized sink, constrained out of all measure from sustaining the usual poise of downtowners … may, in unison, with much laughter, act out immanent collapse for the whole duration of the trip” (1971: 137). The advantages this hypothetical trio cheerily hauling along their hypothetical sink have gained from such pre-emptive work functions at several levels: their acting out of ‘immanent collapse’ can serve as a possible cover in case any actual collapse occurs, ensuring that no untoward humiliation will befall them at the dropping of their burden; their “hi-jinks” also cover the actual stress of carrying the load, so that a norm of comfort is sustained (or at least appears to be sustained, depending on the “success” of their “act”); and, finally, their assumption of gaiety transforms what is most likely a burdensome task into what at least is presented as a frolicking adventure.

Typically, remedial work is not accomplished with such (hypothetical) cheeriness. As Goffman puts it,

The individual does not go about merely going about his business. He goes about constrained to sustain a viable image of himself in the eyes of others. Since local circumstances always will reflect upon him, and since these circumstances will vary unexpectedly and constantly, footwork, or rather self work, will be continuously necessary. (1971: 185).

In such a construal, the self is `constrained’ (note the disciplinary overtones of this word, a word frequently employed by Goffman in the remedial context), to sustain `a viable image of himself.’ While motives with an orientation directed at the individual self and its agency (or purported non-agency) certainly form an important part of the totality of actions with remedial ramifications, I would instead like to stress the motive I previously
mentioned: the maintenance of the everyday order, a job which requires that communal
as well as individual attention be focused on the continuing sustenance of the everyday
and its `viable image,' a job involving remedial work flowing from the group as a whole
as well as from each individual comprising the group. I stress this not so much to suggest
that Goffman does not, as he most certainly does: “I have argued that … remedial activity
is a constant feature of ordinary action and that … it provides the organizational
framework for encounters” (1971: 184), but to point out that Goffman’s emphasis favors
the work done to maintain the viability of the self, whereas I would like to favor the work
done to maintain the viability of the everyday order itself, work done in support of the
linkage between the self (and/or the group) and `ordinary action’ as it occurs within `the
organizational framework for encounters,’ which I take as at least somewhat equivalent
to the realm of the everyday. Such an approach also underlines the ongoing nature of
such work, whether conceptualized at a collective or an individual level: “The social
order is not a finished system which we individually acknowledge by obeying its rules,
but a modus vivendi which operates in so far as – and only in so far as – we, also
individually, take the time and trouble to keep it going” by “promoting, reinforcing,
repairing and restoring the social order” as well as by “creating, recreating and
rearranging it” (Burns 1992: 82).

What I hope to have accomplished in the foregoing section is of course not
necessarily equivalent to what I have accomplished. Therefore, let me sum up those
hopes, in what may be taken as remedial work of my own. Goffman’s work across the
contours of the everyday, operating as he does at a very minute scale, “up-close and
personal,” composes one trajectory of work on the everyday, a type of work involving
tight inspections of, among other items, gestural and vocal behavior, violations of norms, invocations of norms of demeanor and decorum, body idioms, and a kind of intimate social analysis which brings us into proximity with everyday norms of a certain kind. Those `norms of a certain kind' circumscribe the area of Goffman’s expertise but also the area of his limitations. It is to those limitations that we turn next.

_Goffman’s Place, Goffman’s Time, Goffman’s Problems_

“The key to understanding his [Goffman’s] ethnographies is to see them as ethnographies of concepts rather than of places. They are utopian ideal-types (such as the total institution) existing nowhere” (Manning 1992: 17). So this leaves us with a dangling question: where is the _where_ in Goffman’s work? Does place exist for him? Are we situated anywhere, somewhere or nowhere?

Typically, Goffman uses the term” situation” to describe the particular nexus under examination. But is the situation _situated_? In other words, does the situation exist in space, time, and place? Or is it purely abstract? And wouldn’t an ethnography of a concept have to be purely abstract? But wait, doesn't an ethnography have to be concrete? Or at least be based on the concrete?

And what exactly is a situation? In _Frame Analysis_, Goffman states that “I assume that definitions of a situation are built up in accordance with principles of organization – which govern events – at least social ones – and our subjective involvement in them: frame is the word I use to refer to such of these basic elements as I am able to identify” (1974b: 10-11). Goffman usually “frames” place as a setting or a stage on which social
beings or actors perform their roles, though he does come close to a nice definition of place while elaborating the qualities of what he terms sitedness:

Whenever an individual participates in an activity, he will be situated in regard to it, this entailing exposure over a given range to direct witness, and an opportunity, over much the same range, to acquire direct observations. These latter implications of “sitedness,” in conjunction with his auditing capacities, generate a series of points beyond which he cannot obtain evidence as to what is going on. He will find barriers to his perception, a sort of *evidential boundary* (1974b: 215; italics, Goffman).

Such a description, based on the limits of optical and auditory perceptual capacities and bounded by a series of points beyond which such evidence cannot be obtained, puts conditions of inclusion and exclusion upon place: place is conditioned by what can and cannot be perceived, with a series of points demarcating the border separating these two domains. Except that “place” is never mentioned; instead, situation and sitedness are the preferred terms. A somewhat similar definition is provided by Goffman in his aptly-named essay, “The Neglected Situation.” Here, Goffman performs a lexical apologia as if from a sociological confessional: “Let us face what we have been offhand about: social situations.” He then goes on to attempt to clear up the *situation* about “situation,” at least in its social manifestation:

I would define a social situation as an environment of mutual monitoring possibilities, anywhere within which an individual will find himself accessible to the naked senses of all others who are ‘present’, and similarly find them accessible to him. According to this definition, a social situation arises whenever two or more individuals find themselves in one another’s immediate presence, and it lasts until the next-to-last person leaves. (Goffman 1972: 63).
Again, we have “situation” tied together by the limits of accessibility to the *naked senses*, and so a sensorial border is created around the domain of a situation. Before moving on, we should also note the Foucauldian surveillance hue of that wonderfully dystopian phrase, ‘mutual monitoring possibilities,’ possibilities which must be characteristic of any social situation, according to Goffman.

And so let us return to Goffman’s assumptions regarding his ’definition of a situation.’ This definition is ’built up in accordance with principles of organization,’ those ’which govern events - at least social ones – and our subjective involvement in them.’ Sitedness, I will assume, as Goffman does not supply his own definition, equates with being situated in a situation. But of course the situation in which one is “sited” is abstract, because Goffman is concentrating on the structural components of the definition of the situation and not the definition of the situation itself! No wonder we feel as if we are navigating through nowhere when we read Goffman.

But if we return to the field notes with which we began this chapter, we can make an argument that the situations described in those notes are, indeed, situated, located, placed, as it were. The field notes are taken from “real” incidents happening at “actual” times and in “actual” places, and so do not proceed from a strictly conceptual apparatus. In other words, they are grounded, in the sense that we know that the movie theater outside of which the police officer ensuring that order is kept jokes around with the “well-known well-liked patient” and the cafeteria in which the “patient-friend” displays the canned salmon he has managed to obtain are based on actual places and not simply categorical universals standing in for particulars. Now, while this is the case for much of Goffman’s work, he often will resort to conceptual places which seem to hover above
reality, in a kind of hypothetical suspension. And even in *Asylums*, based as it is on a year’s study in St. Elizabeth’s, though the book “analyzes the experiences of inmates in a Washington mental institution,” it “by extension” is applicable to “any institution in which the time and space of subordinates are carefully monitored and restricted,” i.e., any total institution: “The result is an ethnography that is less a study of a specific hospital and more an ethnography of the concept of the total institution itself” (Manning 1992: 8-9). Manning adds that “Goffman’s major interest [in *Asylums*] was to understand the ramifications of an analytic framework; understanding inmate culture at St. Elizabeth’s hospital was only a secondary consideration” (1992 155). So, once again, the concept is primary, not the place.

A similar sense of practicing “conceptual ethnographies” bleeds into Goffman’s hypothetical examples. For instance, while discussing the ramifications attendant to “the game of surveillance,” Goffman notes that “After a block or two, and well before suspicion is likely to be aroused, one tail can turn off and radio a second to pick up the trail at the next intersection” (1969: 48). Where are these blocks? Where is this intersection? Being that they only exist for hypothetical purposes, that is, to illustrate a point, they exist nowhere, and indeed, to fulfill their purpose, they need not exist anywhere else but nowhere.

So what is the problem? Or, perhaps better, where is the problem? Perhaps it is located (if I can be allowed to use that term in this context) in the realization that even Goffman’s hypothetical places are more or less of “our own Anglo-American” variety, but are seldom, if ever, acknowledged as such. So that even in the example cited above, we somehow know that this intersection and these blocks are taken from an imaginative
repository specifically geared to America, or at the least to what used to be called “the West.” Now, is there anything inherently wrong with that? Only that it presumes specificity without enunciating that presumption, and then takes that specification as a universal. Let me cite a few examples from Relations in Public which may clarify this point.

A boy taking his girl an amusement park picture booth, alive to the fact that the booth is seen as a place where couples go to neck, elaborately goes to the change booth for change and holds the necessary quarter up by means of two fingers, so anyone present will see that his intended use of the booth is innocent. A man looking at a girly magazine in a store specializing in this commodity may be careful to leaf through the magazine at a rapid pace, giving the same amount of attention to each page, as if looking for a particular article or wanting to see what in general a magazine like this could be like. (1971: 129-130).

Now, while these examples are both hypothetical, or at least appear to be hypothetical, they are in fact tightly hinged to time and place, specifically the United States of a distinctly “Anglo-American” variety, circa 1955, as the references to girly magazines and amusement park picture booths seem to predate 1971, the publication date of Relations in Public. And if they seem dated relative to 1971, as I believe they do, then surely they are doubly or even trebly anachronistic now. Here, the point is that Goffman uses these examples as exemplars, that is, as if they transcend both time and space, when they are distinctly situated temporally, spatially, and culturally as well, as who can doubt that these hypothetical people are of “our own Anglo-American variety”? So that, while making a pretence of being outside of time and space, of having universal status, Goffman’s analysis is clearly embedded in both time and space and is, indeed, particular to a certain place at a certain time, the United States of America of the 1950s and ‘60s.
But then why have I (as well as others) branded Goffman as both ahistorical and ageographical? If his terms of analysis are embedded in a certain time and place, how can they not be embedded in both history and geography?

Perhaps the confusion arises from Goffman’s assumption of a norm without an acknowledgement that he is assuming such a norm, so that “our own Anglo-American society” seems to serve as a stand-in for life itself, as lived anywhere and everywhere. Now, this is a bit unfair, as Goffman does admit in the Preface to Relations in Public that the “full location of the practices considered in this volume” are “the units” I have already enumerated, i.e., “the English-speaking world, the Anglo-American community, West European nations, Protestant countries, Christian society, and the West,” and he has confessed (again, I have already referenced this) that “the reference unit, ‘American society,’ (which I use throughout [Relations in Public])… is something of a conceptual scandal” (1971: xv; italics, Goffman). In further delineating the scope of this “scandal,” Goffman goes on to say that:

I can with least lack of confidence make assertions about my “own” cultural group, the one with which I have had the most first-hand experience, but I do not know what to call this grouping, what its full span or distribution is, how far back it goes in time, nor how these dimensions might have to be changed, according to the particular behavior under question. (1971: xv).

What is this grouping? Who belongs to it? As a Jewish intellectual and a Canadian immigrant, is Goffman himself a member of this normative group? One is prone to assume (at least I am prone to assume) that this group and “our own Anglo-American society” are equivalencies, yet Goffman specifically states that he does not know what to call this group. But haven’t we witnessed numerous instances when he uses precisely the phrase,
“our own Anglo-American society,” in order to name the group ‘under question’?

Goffman also confesses to his geographical ignorance about this group (‘I do not know … what its full span or distribution is’) as well as to his historical ignorance regarding the group (‘I do not know … how far back it goes in time’). And he also confesses to a lack of knowledge regarding prognoses about the group’s modes of behavior on both a geographical and a historical front: ‘I do not know … how these dimensions might have to be changed, according to the particular behaviors under question.’

And so we are left with a distinct sinking feeling in regards to both history and geography, or time and place, in terms of Goffman’s work. On the one hand, things sometimes seem to be tethered to particular epochs and specific locations; on the other hand, everything seems to be floating above the page, while eradicated conceptual ethnographies go parading by, looking for a home. Assumptions that seem to necessarily depend on a reading implicating a standard-brand, even stereotypical, white Protestant Americana culture circa 1955 are sealed with the imprimatur of the universal as if good for all times and all places. “Given their social identities and setting, the participants will sense what sort of conduct ought to be maintained as the appropriate thing, however much they may despair of it actually occurring,” Goffman states in “Embarrassment and Social Organization,” published in The American Journal of Sociology (1956 268). ‘Given their social identities and the setting,’ – but this is exactly the problem, as such things are not given, but come with the burdens of history and geography attached to them, and, furthermore, such things are formed following the rules and codes of a social order. What I am suggesting is that we must apply some temporal and spatial discipline to Goffman’s work to make it whole.
But there’s another problem with Goffman’s oeuvre as well. This has to do with the disconnection, or the lack of any attempt to even make a connection, between the tightly circumscribed and highly ritualized interaction order which Goffman so deftly delineates and the larger apparatus of the social world from which these elements derive. Or, rather, from which we assume they derive, this last qualifier inserted because Goffman generally offers no rationale as to how such elements are created or whether their derivations can be traced to any sort of provenance, as they seem to appear fully formed from out of a sociological blue. As Burns describes this problem, “There is hardly any discussion in his [Goffman’s] writings of the way in which the traffic of social interaction, which is the stuff of social order, organises itself, or is organised, so as to constitute society, which we ordinarily conceive of as populated by organisations and social institutions, large and small … ranging from the U.S. Congress to the corner shop” (1992: 359). This may be a bit overboard, as of course Goffman does place total institutions, such as mental hospitals, convents, orphanages, and the military, within his ambit, though it may not be too much of an exaggeration to claim that Goffman does not pay sufficient attention to how numerous iterations of particular types of social interactions mount up to ‘the stuff of social order.’ But even here, Goffman does at least present some evidence for the processes which constitute such structural formations. For instance, in Asylums, Goffman cites Ivan Belknap’s Human Problems of a State Mental Hospital to illustrate the pedagogical functions of punishment and humiliation:

This knowledge [of shock therapy] is based on the fact that some of the patients in Ward 30 have assisted the shock team in the administration of therapy to patients, holding them down, and helping to strap them in bed, or watching them after they have quieted. The administration of shock on the ward is often carried
out in full sight of a group of interested onlookers. The patient’s convulsions often resemble those of an accident victim in death agony and are accompanied by choking gasps and at times by a foaming overflow of saliva from the mouth. The patient slowly recovers without memory of the occurrence, but he has served the others as a frightful spectacle\textsuperscript{11} of what may be done to them. (Goffman 1961: 33).\textsuperscript{12}

Here we can discern at least the outlines of the dissemination of discipline from the mental hospital’s administrators and physicians to the patients who assist in the ‘spectacle’ of shock therapy to the patients in general; for the patients this “lesson” of ‘what may be done to them’ is auto-didactically absorbed: having seen what happens to those who “misbehave,” they alter their behavior, squeezing it between normative parameters. Such a “lesson” can lead to what Goffman calls “conversion,” depicted as a “mode of adaptation to the setting of a total institution” in which “the inmate appears to take over the official or staff view of himself and tries to act out the role of the perfect inmate…. presenting himself as someone whose institutional enthusiasm is always at the disposal of the staff” (1961: 63). Of course they must have also reported on the "treatments" to the other patients, thereby distributing the "lesson" to a wider audience. There is a trace of a genealogy hinted at here, but Goffman never thoroughly follows up on such hints, especially when he is describing normative behavior in “Anglo-American society.” It’s as if such behavior has existed for all time, its genealogical tracings and archeological remains not even mentioned, let alone inspected.

I am deliberately employing Foucauldian terms here, as what I want to suggest is that the Foucauldian methodologies of archeology and genealogy are precisely what is

\textsuperscript{11} We should point out the resemblance between the administrative use of this “spectacle” and the use of spectacle as Foucault delineates it in \textit{Discipline and Punish}.

needed to “fill out” Goffman. He needs history, he needs time, he needs a delineation of the means by which interaction rituals are tethered to social orders. And he needs space and place as well. Goffman himself was not unaware of these shortcomings, as he admits that he never theorized the roles that time and place or history and geography should play in a sociological analysis. In one of his last pieces, his address to the American Sociological Association in 1982 (the year of his death), Goffman states that “Orderliness is predicated on a large base of shared cognitive presuppositions, if not normative ones, and self-sustained restraints. How a given set of such understandings comes into being historically, spreads and contracts in geographical distribution over time, and how at any one place and time particular individuals acquire these understandings are good questions, but not ones I can address” (1983: 5; italics, mine). I take this to mean that he not only cannot address these issues in this, the presidential address he is delivering, but, also, that he cannot address them at all, given his focus on micro-analysis.

Goffman also needs a more deliberative mid-level analysis of how individual selves and social groups are interrelated, or of how the macro and the micro scales of social analysis can be linked at the meso level so the full range of the social order can be illuminated. But, once again, Goffman was aware of this, as during the same address he states that: “Insofar as agents of social organizations of any scale, from states to households, can be persuaded, cajoled, flattered, intimidated, or otherwise influenced by effects only achievable in face-to-face dealings, then here, too, the interaction order impinges on macroscopic entities” (1983: 8). Here, Goffman does not so much analyze this mid-point meeting place between the macro and the micro, as simply thrust his way into that realm, shoving his analysis into the breach. In other words, he never truly
accomplished such an analysis in his work, but seems to be attempting to patch over this hole by bodily tossing his form of interaction analysis into its vacancy.

Prior to leaving Goffman aside, let us once more iterate what Goffman has done for us in this venture. I would say that he has given us a standard which can still “stand” as the criteria *par excellence* by which to analyze, or rather, micro-analyze social interactions through the most minutely performed observations of the slightest bits of behavior, what Giddens calls “the normatively regulated control of what might seem … to be the tiniest, most insignificant details of bodily movement or expression” (1984: 78). Goffman took as his field the “face-to-face domain” and has left us with a rich legacy, which can be used as the first step on the first level of an overall analysis of the everyday (Goffman 1983: 2). The other thing that Goffman has bestowed upon us, albeit it in a negative mode or as a lesson-in-reverse, as it were, is that we need to widen out his narrow construal of our own Anglo-American society, a task we will progressively assume as we move through our investigation.
Place One: Bus Stop

Let us begin at a bus-stop. What could be more everyday than that?

Let us begin at the southwest corner of Hilgard and Westholme Boulevards, an intersection on the eastern boundary of UCLA in Westwood, California.

Let us begin on a bench, waiting for the Big Blue Bus, #12, the Westwood & Palms Line.

Let us sit here and wait for the bus, seemingly an ordinary everyday thing to do.

Let us be scientific about this: let us notate the time and the date: 4:29 p.m., a Wednesday afternoon, 16 July 2008.

But wait - does recognition and acknowledgement of time bring us any closer to an everyday sense of the everyday? Is time, the knowledge of it, a necessary element of the everyday? Or is the everyday signified by a lack of the same? Is an ease about time, a nonchalance about the temporal, an insouciance about its passage, a disregard for its rigors, even an abhorrence for the haughtiness of time’s pretensions, its pretense of calculation, its conceit of fragmentation, its absurd temerity, thinking it can parse one moment from another (but can time think? does time itself have agency?); - can time demarcate the everyday? Is the everyday within or without the parameters of time? Does time have parameters? Boundaries? Borders? Not limits that we impose, but boundaries that are inherent to time itself? Does the everyday fall so deeply within time that time subsides, dissipates and eventually disappears? Or is the everyday spectacularly coordinated with time? In other words, does one need to be perfectly aligned with the temporal in order to be within the limits of the everyday? (Does the everyday have limits? If so, what are they?) But, if this is true, what is it to be so aligned?
We were waiting for the bus and time interfered. We were sitting on the bench and time reared its head, a head smeared with hands (second hands, hour hands, decades marching hand in hand, centuries and millennia bringing up the rear, eons and epochs hovering overhead in V-formations), distracting us from our purpose, which was: to begin our inquiry into the everyday.

So let us begin.

Let us wait for the bus, the #12, Big Blue, that great ox.

Waiting opens up reverie. Waiting allows for reverie. We don’t have to do anything, we can simply wait, and while we wait, just dream. We can simply stare into the distance and no one can accuse us of slacking, of indulging ourselves in the sweetness of reverie or the idleness of daydreaming. For we are engaged in waiting, an activity without activity, an act of suspension, an engagement with drifting, and those engaged in such a passive and amorphous form of activity are given a reprieve from the urgent need (a specifically American need?) to be forever accomplishing something, anything, it doesn’t matter what it is, what matters is that something must always be being done. But anyone observing us would not mistake us for philanderers with the exigencies of time. Such an observer, even an extremely obtuse one, would know that we are engaged in waiting and that those who wait are pardoned from the rigors and regimen of the daily grind.

And so can the daily grind be parsed away from the everyday? Are they mutually exclusive or analytically inclusive, the daily grind and the everyday two parts of the same whole? But, if this is so – what whole? Or, (perhaps) rather: the whole of what?
But wait: have we ascertained that while waiting for the bus (#12, Big Blue) we are partaking of the everyday? And, indeed, can one “partake” of the everyday? Partaking connotes a dipping into and lifting out, a diving into, a participating in, a taking part of (not taking a part out of a whole (as in cutting a piece out of a cake), but taking part as in joining in and becoming a part of an ongoing and infinitely re-organizable whole) and so indicates an active stance in regard to the everyday, as if one could say something along these lines: “I believe I shall now partake of the everyday for a while,” and then go right ahead and do such. But is the everyday something we do? Willfully, with intent? Intentionally, with will? And does it exist in a place that can be located? Does the everyday function as a noun or a verb? It would seem to be the former, for we refer to it as the everyday, never saying anything like: “I shall now everyday” or “Tomorrow I think I need to everyday” or “Wow, look at her everyday” (not to be confused with the (possibly) prescriptive: “Look at her every day.”). “Everyday” can also function as an adjective, of course, as in: “I shall now do my everyday things” prior to brushing one’s teeth, defecating, shaving, and so on (but would one would announce the commencement of an everyday routine, and, if one did, would not that proclamation in and of itself remove the routine from the un-self-conscious confines of the everyday?). And though those things are locatable via specific places, in this instance the bathroom, they are not necessarily rooted to place. One could conceivably do these things anywhere, though if one shaved in an elevator it would strip shaving of its everydayness while also (presumably) divesting the other passengers of the everydayness of their elevator ride. Or if one brushed one’s teeth while giving a lecture one would risk aborting the everyday quality of teeth-brushing while also distorting one’s speech. One can shit in the woods
while retaining the everydayness of the function, but if one defecates in the middle of a
city street one has destroyed whatever everyday qualities shitting may have while also
splintering the everydayness of that particular day for anyone who may be strolling by,
not to mention the extremely un-everyday event of (possibly) being arrested, although the
arrest may be, at least relatively, everyday for the officers making that arrest. So, it would
seem that the everyday is locatable, at least to a certain extent.

Well, if it can be located, where is it? And how would we know it if we saw it?
Can it be seen? Is it observable? Is it labeled? Does it stay in one place or does it move?
Can it be experienced one day in a certain place and not the next in the exact same place?
Is it portable? Can the everyday be carried around with one, every day? Can it be planned
for? That is, can an architect design an everyday space and guarantee that the everyday
will show up? Can city planners hand out a warrantee that the inherent qualities of the
everyday will instantiate themselves in a city square? And if the everyday does not
manifest itself in said city square, how might one be able to gauge such a failure? Could
one sense it right off? Or might the everyday quality of a place elude detection? Might all
experts on the everyday be stumped, as they try to calibrate if the everyday is indeed at
hand? And what skills and expertise would qualify one as an expert on the everyday? Is
there a certificate of the quotidian? Should there be one?

But let us return to the task at hand. Let us not be diverted. After all, we agreed
(did we not?) that we were waiting for the bus (Westwood & Palms, #12) and,
furthermore, we agreed that waiting for the bus seemed to have something to do with the
everyday.
So what exactly *does* waiting for the bus have to do with the everyday? Is it that waiting for the #12 is eminently ordinary? That it is perfectly mundane? That we would never think twice if we saw someone waiting for a bus?

But what if we saw President Bush waiting for the bus or Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt along with their children, assorted nannies, personal assistants, and security personnel waiting for the Number Twelve? Then we’d no longer be in the everyday. Something strange would be occurring, something transcending the everyday, something catapulting the everyday out of its very everydayness. But if the appearance of a person, *any* person, can knock a place out of its status of being everyday, then it would seem that the everyday cannot be entailed within strictly geographical parameters, but must have something to do with what happens at that place. It cannot merely be the place, it must be place *plus* the activity normally associated with that place. After all, given the most ordinary everyday location in the world – say, a diner in Toledo, Ohio – and, e.g. a lightning bolt rips the joint in two, or Osama bin Laden sits down at the counter and orders a cheeseburger and fries, and things are not so everyday any longer. So it must be the place *and* the activity normally associated with that place.

But this brings us back to something else: can there be a place - *any* place - that is *not* associated normally with *some* kind of activity? Conceiving of a place disassociated from activity is impossible. Even a black pit radiates blackness and assumes the form of a pit. Even nothing must be translated as nothing, and can only be comprehended (if it can) as a lack of something. Absence cannot be known without presence, and a specific form of absence cannot be known without its particular counterpart, its corresponding presence. So is the everyday everywhere, even inhabiting - in some obscure way and
perhaps only in a mode of potentiality - the deepest recesses of the deepest caves and the
most remote nooks of the most remote corners? Does the everyday lurk unseen
everywhere, waiting to be catalyzed by some heretofore unrealized instantiation of a
routine? And, if it were to be instantiated, by what signs would we know it? Would it
take on a certain aura of the given? If so, what would that aura be? Would it be marked
by a certain kind of routinized activity, such as shaving, walking, waiting, chewing gum,
and so on?

So what kind of activity is it that takes place within the everyday?

Well, let us begin to figure that out.

We are here at a bus stop. We are waiting for a bus, an everyday thing to do, or so
it seems, being that waiting for the bus is commonplace, ordinary, mundane, routine, and
occurs at multiple sites around the globe. So does that mean everything that is
commonplace, ordinary, mundane, and occurs at multiple sites around the globe qualifies
as everyday? Is sleeping everyday? Is defecating? Well, if one suffers from insomnia or
constipation, then they are not so everyday. But then we made the stipulation that the
everyday occurs within the normal functioning of a commonplace activity. So this would
seem to rule out such abnormalities as insomnia, constipation, somnambulism, paralysis,
amnesia, schizophrenia, and so on. So must one be in a normal frame of mind to partake
of the everyday? This seems unjust, somehow, as it cancels out the participation of the
“abnormal” in the normal, disallowing certain forms of alterity within what should be
the wide and open expanse of the everyday; as well as just plain wrong, as those who
suffer from such ills do partake of the everyday and on an everyday basis. The blind man
shaves. The insomniac walks her dog. The somnambulist defecates, even if he does it in
his sleep. But, without any further delays, digressions or diversions, let us return to our site on the bench and test this hypothesis.

We are waiting for the bus. It is a Wednesday afternoon in America, the summer of 2008, the 16th of July to be exact, and so we are situated not only within a geographical location but an historical conjunction as well. There may be a legitimate question to be raised regarding this, i.e. can anything in the United States of America be considered everyday at this point in time, given the crises confronting us like phalanxes of some demonically outfitted army galloping at us from both the past and the future? Here I am referencing such items as global warming, the situation in the Middle East, the price of oil, the ever-expanding gap between the haves and the have-nots, the Iraq War, the genocide in Darfur, and so on. Can the everyday be located amidst such a mangle? Does not the everyday forever recede when we are so preoccupied with these multiple catastrophes piling up in the national consciousness? How can the everyday exist among such rubble?

But still we sit and still we wait. The bench hasn’t left; its place is still intact. St. Alban’s Episcopal Church still beckons to us from its “chosen” spot diagonally across the intersection, its brick facade hinting that a refuge for the soul can be counted on within those walls. Alpha Gamma Pi is still peach, and the asphalt on Hilgard is asphalt black, smeared with macadam blacktop, white lines and yellow, cars and trucks, the advertisement on the bus bench across the street claiming that Amir Solemanian attorney-at-law can rescue you from the following scrapes with the law:

Got DUI, Traffic Citations?
And UCLA is still extant, behind us, this intersection a gateway to one of the major educational institutions in the world, its lecture halls and research labs, its libraries and computer files, its swimming pools and squirrels and rats, its elevators and lawns, its corridors, rivets, and crows, its students and professors, their craniums crammed with information and data, notions and ideas, propositions and proposals, hypotheses and the incomprehensible mumblings of minds too long exposed to too many words, sentences spilling out on paper, paper shooting out into the universe (flights courtesy of the Internet, the FAX machine, and the U.S. Mail); the universe replicated in the knowledge embedded and embodied in the university and its adherents and devotees, its novices and attendees.

Everything is still there, despite the multiple breakdowns taking place across the globe (on large scales and small, from wars to flat tires). So perhaps the everyday persists in spite of - or maybe even because of - the calamities of this, our era. Perhaps it is exactly the persistence of the everyday, the assiduousness of its sticking power, along with the further fact that the perdurable persistence of the everyday is the only firewall between us and a descent into the madness that is surely emblematic of our age, that gives the everyday its ability to remain in place, there where we are, that is: here, on this bench, waiting for the bus, #12, Big Blue, Westwood & Palms Line.

But wait, what is this?! The #12 is pulling away. As we stand and run after its hulking form, it douses us with its gaseous fumes, it bears its haunches at us, as if
taunting us with its naked ass, and then it’s off and away south down Hilgard, and we have missed it…we have dropped out of the everyday from over-exposure of the same, thus providing a bit of foolproof proof that the everyday can only be adhered to by lack of attention to its essence, whatever that essence may or may not be.

So back to the bench and the quotidian details of the everyday. Here is a pertinent question: there is a girl to my left, waiting for the bus (presumably): is she aware that she is situated within the everyday? But if one is aware that one is within the everyday, can one still be said to be within it? In other words, does the everyday require ignorance for its ongoing existence? Does it splinter into fragments once it becomes self-conscious? Judging from the fact that we just missed the bus, this would certainly seem to be the case.

But wait, the everyday can never become self-conscious! The everyday has no consciousness to be self-conscious of! We only lend it ours! We only unfurl our anthropomorphic net of consciousness and wrap the everyday in the voluminous webs of that humanoid web, wrapping up the everyday in our trappings. So, to put it more accurately, with a greater degree of perspicacity, that is: does our sense of the everyday rely on a certain lack of awareness as to the everyday? Once indicated, does the everyday collapse? Once pinned down with an ostensive definition, does the everyday implode? Once brought out into the open, does the everyday withdraw? Does it flee once an all-observant EYE (the omniscient and omnivorous spectacle of the panoptican) is trained upon it? Does the everyday recede into itself when it is bracketed, inspected, investigated, and reduced to an object of scholarly pursuit? If so, that would make the present effort a quixotic one, a waste of your time not to mention mine, and so all we can hope for is that
such is not the case, and that the everyday can be successfully pursued, and that its intangibles can be seduced into the circle of the tangible, that its mysteries can be rendered fathomable and its amorphousness transformed into that which can be poked, prodded, and pushed into a haptic circumference which does not elude examination.

So let us sit here and hope the everyday does not vanish as we march into its domain, notebook in hand, poised to notate the slightest hints of revelation from the obscure territory of the quotidian.

OK, fine. But what is its territory?

Is it not right here, on this bench, as we wait for Big Blue? Does not the everyday belong to this place, or is it situational, its existence hinging on the fact that here we are waiting and without this it would not exist? In other words, do we carry the everyday with us and, in effect, deposit it here as an aspect or component of the situational ontology indicative of our presence as prospective bus-riders, or does the everyday inherently reside in this location, the bus-stop a geographical receptacle of the everyday in which we enter and are contained as long as we sit here, waiting for the bus? Or is it a combination of the two, place and situation commingling, geography and sociology holding forth as the defining arbitrators of this everyday event? Or is such parsing contingent? Might it not be that the bus-stop is an everyday place at one moment but not the next, depending on its use? Or does the everyday subsist outside of any ramifications subtending utilization, its existence so expansively polymorphous that it allows for an almost endlessly resilient series of contingencies? Can the bus-stop’s status as an everyday place survive vast discrepancies of use? Say, one person is studying, another drawing, someone else staring into space, another reading a book, the fifth breaking up
with her boyfriend on her cell phone, and the last listening to his I-pod. Do any of these, or the combination of any or all of them, violate our site’s everyday status?

But such questions, placed as they are in such a scenario, inevitably raise multiple other questions. Does the bus-stop indeed have any status as an everyday site? Has that been adjudicated and certified yet? For, if it has, how did it gain such status? Is there a registrar somewhere listing such sites, an official catalogue of the everyday? Are there government officials, odd neo-quasi-scientific types, anonymous bureaucrats with anonymous clipboards in anonymous hands, traveling town to town in white government vans, inspecting candidates for inclusion within such a registrar? Of course not, but it does seems that we nevertheless naturally consider certain places and situations as partaking of the everyday and others as not; however, as stated previously (but within a different context), the very consideration of such sites may automatically cancel their everyday status, as the everyday may necessarily be subsumed within the given and the given may abdicate its status as given if and when it is classified as such, that is, as given. In other words, the given may necessarily depend on non-recognition, receding into the obscure depths subtending the given (would this be givenness itself, the frame maintaining the ontological status of whatever is given?) once attention is focused on it. Perhaps this is a necessary risk of any investigation into the everyday.

Also: do people relinquish their place within a place if and when they psychologically (in the widest sense of the term) transport themselves (in the widest sense of the phrase) beyond the parameters of the place in which they happen to be? And can the everyday status of a place survive such self-removing acts of auto-transportation? What kind of connection to a place is required for a place to remain within its normally
constituted parameters? Say, if someone is so engrossed within a book that for all intents and purposes at that particular moment they exist more within the place of the book than within the place of the place in which they are placed (taking their place within Burnham Wood rather than West-Wood, for example); or what if someone is talking on their cell phone: do they take their place within the place of their co-communicator, transporting themselves to the location of whomsoever is talking into their ear, or do both discussants subsist within a kind of virtual third place composed of equal parts the elements of their conversation (phonemes and morphemes, syntax and semantics, implicit and explicit meanings, pauses as well as words and phrases, the syncopation of vocal rhythms an element which must also be attended to by those engaged in dialogue of any form); the cross-connections instantiating this particular cell-phone conversation in all its networked articulations (cyber-cell-satellite-phone-place); and the respective geographical sites in which the two are situated (quadrants of longitude and latitude, calibrated by GIS down to the nth degree); or does each participant in the conversation never leave the place where they are, and thus remain as coeval partners with anyone else who happens to be partaking of the ongoing everyday existence of the everydayness of this everyday place? Or do they identify their place, their location, more with their cell-phone number than their address, e.g.: “I’m at 123-456-7890” rather than “I’m standing at the corner of Westholme and Hilgard, waiting for the Blue Bus,” actually misplacing their geographic site with the sequence of their phone number rather than the location of their feet? But is that a mistake? That is where they can be located at, in a certain sense. Their ring-tone has a distinct and quantifiable parameter in which it sounds. There is a cartographic grid attending a cell-phone number: it is accessible via the morphology of the earth as it is
situated and reflected by sites in space (satellites), so is therefore contingent on place.

And the person whose cell phone it is must be situated within an audible and/or tactile zone (if the phone’s on vibrato) in order to answer it when it rings; but to actually transpose the site of the self with the number of a phone seems to be a profound mistake: how can one be at 123-456-7890? Can one actually insert one’s self into a phone? Inhabit the structural arrangement of that sequence of numbers? Does that sequence have its own topography, its own geographical coordinates, its own digital site? Well, a phone can be correlated to coordinates and one can be there when someone calls; one can have one’s voice subtending that number, ear and mouth hooked into it, as it were. And is that a certain kind of place? If so, what kind of place? What is there? Is it a there somewhere floating around in virtual AT&T Motorola Verizon space? It certainly qualifies as a there actual enough to link two consciousnesses for a certain amount of time and be billed for it.

What if someone waiting for the bus is more attuned to the music they are listening to than the place in which they happen to be: should we make an ontological-geographical cross-section of them, splicing their beings into separate parts, one part residing within the place the music evokes, another within the place in which they are physically located, and a third (possibly) drifting through the immediate past, gauging recent events for the possibilities of positive and negative ramifications? If someone is listening to a particularly compelling song by say, Mos Def or The Beatles or a saxophone solo by Sonny Rollins or a flute concerto by Mozart or a country tune played on the banjo by Doc Watson, might not that piece of music pre-empt the exigencies of the everyday, making the mind of the listener mobile and thereby relaying it (the mind, that
is) to a kind of virtual place formed by the song and the brain of this particular set of ears listening in this exact location at this specific time? But, if such is the case, would not the listener entirely abdicate the cartography of their immediate location and completely forget to board their bus (as we just did), thinking that instead of waiting for the next Big Blue #12 (or 8 or 3 or 2 or 1 or the MTA 2 or 761) they were waiting for the next flute cadenza? But this doesn’t seem to happen, at least very often. Multi-tasking as we multiple ourselves (producing virtual versions of our selves) into multifarious places, people remain basically *in situ*, as it were. Or do they take it for granted that one is not irrevocably tethered to place (thus giving this given to themselves), but can manage in a very everyday mode to board a bus while the mind drifts across vistas unequivocally removed from any immediate circumstances or circumambient environs? Perhaps this is a kind of auto-pilot navigation of the self, a self so dedicated to the contours of the everyday that it can move through it without any sense of situated focus or overt acts of intentional concentration.

And isn’t that exactly the purpose of the everyday? It catches us as we toss ourselves into its grooves and keeps us well within the radius of our various daily routines, no matter how discombobulated our sense of personal cartography may become (what is `personal cartography’? the way we know how to get from A to B? the maps embedded in our heads? the self-induced cognitive directions we use to travel to and fro?) Isn’t it true that a sure sign of psychological disorder (or at least extreme stress) is an inability to confine oneself within the grooves of the everyday? One who, without planning to and without quite knowing how it happened, is found wandering in the woods instead of attending to everyday tasks in everyday places is thought to be well out of joint
(and out of place as well). On the other hand, planned absences from the demands of the everyday are perceived as being necessary and are called vacations.

But let us return to the everyday details of this place. Let us inhere to the absolute parameters of description, pure and plain and simple, one of the geographer’s most reliable and handiest tools.

So what is here at this intersection that qualifies and certifies it as being an everyday place? Let us take out our clipboards and notate them:

A bus bench (Exhibit A).

People waiting on that bench, thereby fulfilling the functionality made available by said bus benches.

Affixed to a light pole, a bus schedule (let’s you know where you’re at and where you might be at if and when you board the bus and pay the fare).

Exhibit D: trees: magnolia, eucalyptus, pine, and so on, providing shade and wind sounds as well as dwelling places for bugs and birds and squirrels and such (Ex. E, F, etc. (Should I list all specimens of fauna and flora in separate slots for themselves? (And slots for the wind and the sun and clouds as well?))).

Concrete macadam blacktop, two roads, Westholme Boulevard (headed west and east) and Hilgard Boulevard (going north and south), along with the vehicles they carry, the roads carrying trucks and buses and cars on blacktop macadam concrete.

St. Alban’s Episcopal Church, brick structure on the northeast corner.

UCLA to the west.

An apartment building on the southeast corner.

A row of sororities, lined up in a southerly direction past the apartment building.
One U.S. mailbox in front of the apartment building.

Westwood residencies visible down Westholme.

But might this description have more clout if I unfurl the structures and networks instantiated within them?

First, the bus. The Big Blue Bus and the MTA are transportation companies with labor contracts, safety regulations, routes, sexual harassment codes, payroll accounts, fuel costs, a hierarchy of management, and any number of other systems. UCLA is a public university, and contains within it research centers, athletic teams, a host of academic departments, its own police force, food facilities, orchestras, trees, recreation facilities, parking lots, counseling centers, and so on. The street itself is a creation of – what? – most likely, the Department of Transportation of Los Angeles County, its construction funded by what? – most likely, taxes collected from the county’s citizens. Beneath the street run pipes and lines – gas lines, water lines, copper piping, fiber optic wire, and the miscellaneous whatnot that keeps institutions such as major universities, churches, and apartment buildings running in a smooth and uninterrupted fashion. The many vehicles that pass by are registered with the DMV, they are fueled by oil companies, and their drivers are beholden to a code of laws and regulations known as the California Vehicular Code. On the southeast corner is the rather non-descript apartment building. Entailed within it are the various networks encompassing relationships between landlords and renters: rental and/or lease agreements which reference and relate to the various agencies that regulate housing and rental units, and so on. Beyond this apartment building are a series of sorority houses which trail south down Hilgard. These sororities have their own
histories and characters, with a regulatory code governing them as a whole as well as individual codes governing each house as a discrete unit.

St. Alban’s Episcopal Church is part of a worldwide Christian movement that has been in existence since the conversion of St. Paul on the road to Damascus. It has a minister, services, congregates, outreach efforts, and so on. This is where couples are married. This is where deaths are commemorated. Marriage and death certificates and the systems encompassed within the recording of those milestones can be traced to this institution. The minister has been educated within a structured pedagogical and theological setting and is duly certified as having the expertise to lead a congregation by the hierarchical network which controls the Episcopal denomination of the Christian church. Most likely there are sub-structures (derivative social networks) within this particular congregation. There must exist a group responsible for fund-raising, possibly a committee for outreach, perhaps a small group of leaders called into session whenever a crisis arises within the church, and so on. There may be various Bible study groups, and there may be a range of groups which sublet meeting rooms on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, such as neighborhood associations, Alcohol Anonymous groups, and so on. A similar structural web can be presupposed for the Hillel Center, directly north of St. Alban’s on Hilgard, albeit one with a network and a character rooted in Judaism rather than Christianity.

There are people arriving and departing at this intersection. They have structures instantiated within their bodies; otherwise they would collapse and die. Nerve systems send signals at quicksilver speeds throughout the body, respiratory systems regulate intake of oxygen and outtake of carbon dioxide, circulation systems keep blood streaming
through these various bodies, digestive systems continually break down food, and so on. We also must acknowledge the networks and structures of social relations that exist between people and are made manifest at this intersection. Sorority sisters greet one another as they pass to and fro from school, classmates run into one another and exchange gripes about professors, co-workers meet as they wait for the bus and exchange gripes about bosses, students attracted to one another exchange furtive glances, hoping one or another has the temerity to break the silence and strike up a conversation, or the good sense and graciousness to leave them well enough alone. All these relationships and exchanges reflect structural networks as well: the university, the sorority house, and the web of nascent sexual relationships, a possible prelude to sex, love, marriage, and children, and the systems and sub-systems they entail.

Much that is taken by faith in the routines of the everyday is made manifest in this intersection. Stepping into a bus, we have faith the driver has a certain expertise in handling the vehicle and will not abruptly decide that a side-trip to Indiana is in order. We have faith that our fellow passengers will fulfill their roles as passengers and not attempt to hijack the bus. We have faith that a letter dropped into the mailbox will reach its destination and that the series of anonymous (to us, at least) workers handling the mail will keep their systematic delivery of the mail subsisting in its present form while the letter goes from this particular spot to its ultimate destination. If we happen to be a student, we have an implicit faith that our classes have not been cancelled, that the locations of courses have not shifted overnight, that professors have retained their knowledge since the last lecture, and that UCLA has maintained its status as a university. We have an unstated but necessary faith that pedestrians will generally stay within the
limits of a certain standard walking style and that automobiles will not abruptly veer off the road to run us down. We have faith that our fellow bus-bench-sitters will not suddenly attack us or ask us to pose nude in the middle of the street or tell us out of the blue that once in a Mississippi thunderstorm they contemplated suicide or that they have frequently thought of killing their mother with a hack-saw or that they would like to gaze upon our penises or vaginas. In other words, we share a common faith that people will generally leave us alone and not impose extraordinary demands on us or assault us physically, sexually, or psychologically.

All this has nothing to do with faith as understood in St. Alban’s or the Hillel Center: faith in the religious sense is something that seems to require renewal at regular intervals; thus, churches, synagogues, and temples and the periodic services therein. In contrast to that, there are no places of worship where faith in the everyday is renewed, regulated, and routinized. Unless a bus-stop or a urinal can be understood as such a place. It seems that faith in the given is given. It is only noticed when things go askew. Madmen do get behind the wheel and kill pedestrians. The mail does get lost. Bus drivers have accidents. Classes are cancelled. Strangers reveal secrets without prodding. Universities are shut down. The power goes out. The road is closed. Dogs lie down and die. A man breaks down crying. A book is thrown away in disgust. A bag of money is left on a bench. Someone takes off their clothes. A bird lands on a baby’s head. A woman falls to her knees and prays. A man pulls out a gun and waves it around. But, though all these things do occur, they fail to do so on a regular basis, or, inversely, they occur on such an irregular basis (which of course is no basis at all) that they do no lasting and irremediable harm to the everydayness of the everyday.
Besides, our dependency on the everydayness of the everyday is so powerful that it would take multiple perforations of the everyday for it to undo itself. Without the presuppositions underlying the continually rejuvenating basis of the everyday, nothing would be possible but chaotic dodges through the veering irregularities of the unexpected. Isn’t the relative stability of the everyday, its resolute and doughty steadfastness, precisely what accounts for the ease with which we navigate through the ordinary routines which account for the vast majority of our time? But do we navigate through the everyday with ease? Or is such navigation forever fraught with tension, a tension always on the verge of exploding/imploding? Is our faith in the everyday as strong as we might suppose? Does it really take a multitude of punctures of the everyday for it to unravel? Or is the everyday so fragile it’s always in imminent danger of reversing itself, unsheathing its skin and revealing its essentially extraordinary nature? Are the cracks of the everyday forever and always on the brink of ripping apart? Isn’t that what the tension of normality is? As a high degree of tension is actuated, inflected and accented in our efforts to maintain the everyday, to pretend, in effect, that normality, the given, the ordinary, the everydayness of the everyday, is proceeding along as usual, when in fact the sheathe that encapsulates the everyday is almost constantly stretched to the bursting point and one false move will explode it. One slight tremor, one whispered swear word, one tiny display of emotion, one inappropriate touch, one shouted formula, one overly anxious sigh, one propulsive fart, one abrupt gesticulation will rip the seams off the everyday, exposing its ever-present vulnerability, a vulnerability that is protected by a mutually constructed and a tacitly acknowledged collective agreement that the everyday exists as such and should not be tinkered with, that its boundaries and limits
exist for the perpetuation of the common good and that disturbing it will lead to an
unmitigated disaster of an unknown kind.

On the other hand, is the constitution of the everyday supple enough to allow for
such disturbances without the occurrence of its own nullification? Does the everyday
have one of those resilient hides which always snaps back into its original shape no
matter if it’s bent into the craziest shape? Or is it capable of altering its essence and
superstructure, reshaping itself anew with the slightest alteration in its immediate
surroundings? But are we not speaking here as if the everyday had the qualities of an
organism, as if it had a sense of volition and an instinct for survival when, in fact, it is a
construction of humans via a slow accumulation of mutually-agreed-upon routines and
cooperatively enacted and reenacted practices? Yet its construction is formulated with no
blueprint in hand, no prospectus in sight, no plan of action – its creation is given, as if it
arose by itself, emerging from nowhere, utterly without origin, creator, or goal. What is
given (or taken) as the everyday is unacknowledged as even existing, and its provenance,
its matrix, is remote, buried, lost. But whenever the everyday is punctured, this
unacknowledged non-being is quickly annealed by a process of twin actions: on the one
hand, it seems to patch itself together, reverting to its original status without any outside
interference; on the other hand, we offer whatever assistance we can to restore the
everydayness of any perforated instantiation of the everyday. For instance, we might say
something like, “It’s going to be all right,” this state of ‘being all right’ a stand-in for the
regular operating condition of the everyday, the statement also operating as a fillip to a
reversion to the everyday; or we may pretend that no perforation of the everyday has
actually even occurred when it most indubitably has, as if such a pretence could hasten
the return of the exiled given. For the absence of the given opens a void and such
emptiness threatens the normality of the everyday, and the normality of the everyday, its
well-worn contours and habitual presence, is what makes smooth the functioning of our
ongoing activities. If we were confronted with new sets of givens and strange
manifestations of the everyday *every day*, we would be forced to spend an inordinate
amount of time and effort simply comprehending what the structure and form of the day
is: by the time we had figured out the parameters of the given, the day would be spent
and nothing would have been done. So the everydayness of the everyday supplies us with
a regularity allowing us to focus on the necessary tasks enfolded within the everydayness
of the everyday.

Calamity, war and acts of violence are extreme rearrangements of the everyday,
or the complete obliteration of the same, something new and strange being substituted in
their place. What existed as given is now in smithereens. The road to town no longer
exists. The mother is dead and the fields of corn have been ripped out. Walls fall and the
words that come out of our mouths are not understood by strangers with guns. A new flag
hangs in the town square and a new anthem sounds out from unseen amplifiers. People
now walk with their eyes on the ground. They eat roots. Through the regularity instituted
by repetition and the osmosis catalyzed by the slow accumulation of sameness, the newly
established order gradually becomes the everyday way of life. The old order may be
retained as a substrate, something recalled with bitter rue or as a token of nostalgia.
Regulations are issued and one learns to bow to officers. People float down rivers on
makeshift rafts; they cry for help but are identified as looters and shot. The courthouse is
converted into barracks and the softball field becomes an execution ground. Rations are
delivered on a bi-weekly basis; those who have lost their homes live in trailers dipped in formaldehyde.

Dystopian visions root the given in nightmare scenarios; utopian visions root the given in communal bliss. That which is will be overthrown by that which will be, then comes the new millennium. Barter will replace money. Jobs will no longer be necessary as common fields will sustain the people. The stranger will be greeted by friendly smiles instead of furtive glances. Vehicles will no longer be owned or claimed as private property: once a destination is reached, cars will be left unlocked by the side of the road for the next traveler.

Only Christians will remain; only Germans will remain; only the proletariat will remain; only Muslims will remain; etc.

War will become obsolete as greed and aggressive nationalism (its ostensible causes), will have been eliminated. And so forth.

Meanwhile, the given as it has been given (who gave it? was it a gift? was its reception optional or required (required by whom?)) retains its status as the substrate of the everyday, refusing to be dislodged by mere visions, whether of the dystopian or the utopian kind.

But is that what the given is, the substrate of the everyday? Is the given then the primordial form of reality with various culturally contingent versions of the everyday laminated on top of it? Once given (again we ask: by whom? and how?), does the given remain as it was given? Or does the given evolve, changing as the contours of the everyday are worn down by time and our own hysterionic histories, the hysterical manipulations of space and time by humanity? And does the given have to be received?
Does there have to be an act of reception for the given? In other words, does someone have to be there to receive it? And, if so, does the receiver have to fulfill certain necessary and sufficient conditions to be the one to whom the given is delivered? But is this postulated reception not an act performed by a single being, but something done by a group or a society or by all humanity or the Earth itself or the cosmos as a whole? However, if the receiver is the cosmos, then the receiver encompasses the given, unless that is the given exists (or pre-exists) outside the confines of the cosmos, an impossibility as far as we can imagine. But perhaps all this indicates is that the demarcation between that which is given and that which is received is a false construction, a boundary that doesn’t exist, or only exists as an formulation arising out of the human mind, borne from our insatiable need to bifurcate everything into binaries. Obviously, this doesn’t put a final seal on the question of the relationship of the everyday to the given, a question to which we will return. For now, we must settle for our everyday coordinates within the given: the place we are right now.

And so here we are, smack dab in the middle of our particular place within the given, waiting for a bus at Westholme and Hilgard. And as we wait we wonder if this is indeed the everyday, the very fabric of it manifesting itself, maids and bus-drivers and maintenance workers and nannies and sorority sisters and professors passing by, buses pulling up with the screeching groan of pneumatic brakes, the flanks of the buses emblazoned with film and television ads:

He’s in way too deep.

Californication.
And how do we know the given as given? Once arrived at a new location, do we immediately reconnoiter the zone, scan the territory, observe the routine, absorb the standards of behavior, note the typicality of gestures, take mental snap-shots of average strides, slot our bodies into a pre-given space and only then begin to locomote ourselves into the crowd? Do we keep categories of places within our minds and patterns of behavior to match, as in: such-and-such is a transport way-station (airport, train station, bus-stop) and so we should assume our anonymous traveler routine; or as in: such-and-such is an entertainment spot (night-club, bar, rock concert) and so we should assume our rock `n’ roll nighttime routine; or, as in: this is a house of worship, and so we assume the manner and style of one who cares for God in a routine borne of religion? Or is it that we are virtuoso copy-cats, master chameleons, actors so absorbed in our roles that we are absolutely unconscious of acting, monstrous thespian-being-things who can subsume the given no matter where we are, passing ourselves off as sustainers of the everyday even when we are aliens of the highest degree? But this is discounted by how frequently strangers and foreigners can be spotted as exactly such, not only by disparities and differences in language, but also by a curious sense of misplacement that gives them away: they’re a half-step slow or a half-step fast; they glance around too much, as if looking for a familiar sight which has abruptly disappeared from view and for signs of home, signs which will never arrive, at least at this particular conjunction.
And so instantiations of the given are culturally specific? Do they also depend on historical time? Do we wait for the bus differently today than we might have in 1922? Perhaps, and of course prior to a certain point in time there were no buses, and when buses were initially manufactured and presented to the public, there was no everydayness inhering in them at all; in fact, they were novelties, and treated as such. As newly-instantiated givens attempting to find a place within the given, buses may have been resisted for a period of time; there may have been those who refused to take a bus, preferring to walk or ride in a car or in a horse-drawn trolley instead of clambering into these strange new vehicles. As well as those who were relegated by instantiations of intolerance to the back of the bus. But with the passage of time and the concomitant manifestations of so many buses traveling down so many routes and carrying so many passengers, the given readjusted itself to absorb the bus within its domain until the bus was hardly even noticed and then, with an inevitability that comes with routines that make daily inscriptions within our common consciousness, buses one day were not noticed at all but were taken as part of the given.

And of course, along with the rise of this particular mode of transportation, bus-stops and schedules and benches for those waiting for buses were constructed; and, if it behooved us, we could (actually? possibly?) pin a date (exact? approximate?) to the manufacture of this bench. We could trace this particular aspect of the given back to its origin, inspect the bolts and nuts and grain of wood, and possibly discover which companies were responsible for the same, examine the payrolls of those firms and single out a worker for inquiry, discovering through personnel files or census data the address of said worker, his family situation, level of education, date of death (if deceased), and so
on. But would such an acute examination place us any deeper within the given? Would it further explicate the given? Isn’t the anonymity of the given a necessary part of the given? And isn’t it the lack of a need to examine the particulars of the given exactly what is so handy about the given? Its details do not need to be known and still it can be relied upon, utilized, and then conveniently forgotten (or, if all works properly, never even noticed). We can arrive at a airport, proceed to our gate, and then take off to our destination without acquainting ourselves with the biographies of every person we see, without inspecting the lengths of the screws or the size of the rivets in every piece of construction we pass, without reading and deciphering the meaning of every last word of every book, newspaper, magazine, or piece of signage we happen to pass. This lack of intrusion on the part of the given is what it gives to us. It is what gives the given and the everyday its form as background, its ambient tone as that which surrounds us but does not obtrude. But there’s more to it than that: for the given does not merely surround us, it carries us along. Not that it is active, but that it is so formed that its contours ease us from one place to another, allowing us to be in a place without an unnecessary focus on that which lies beyond what we need to know for the satisfaction of our immediate needs.

If I am waiting for the bus, I do not need to become intimate with the details of the person seated next to me. Therefore, the given supplies us with a reserve, a silence, a refuge, an excuse not to find it necessary to introduce ourselves to one another and swap the details or even the generalities of our respective life stories.

But wait! It’s the #12, coming around once again and this time I must board the Westwood & Palms Line, inserting myself into the everyday quality of the interior of the bus, the great gorged belly of Big Blue.
Chapter Three:

The SpaceTimePlace "Thing"

Prior to beginning the chapter proper, let me outline what we will be covering. First will be the consideration of time, ingress to which will be provided via an exegesis of Torsten Hägerstrand’s time-geography. We will then add space to time before bringing in place, ending with the postulation that space, time, and place are indivisible. While it may be analytically convenient and rhetorically conventional to regard them as distinct, such a separation is essentially delusional and, hence, categorically unscientific as well. At least that will be my argument. However, the main purpose of the chapter is to bail out “situation” from its deterritorialized, de-spatialized, and atemporal situation by giving it the aid of time, space, and place, or, as I will argue, by the insertion of the space-time-place continuum into our schema.

Hägerstrand and Time-Geography

“Of equal importance is the fact that time does not admit escape for the individual” (Hägerstrand 1970: 10; italics, mine).

I begin with this citation of the Swedish geographer Torsten Hägerstrand for two reasons. First, of course, its focus will be our focus in the present chapter, that is, time and its impact on the everyday. And, second, despite its rather awkward syntax, this citation retrieves a sense of Blanchot’s quotation with which we began our investigation: “Whatever its other aspects, the everyday has this essential trait. It escapes” (Blanchot 1987: 14). Perhaps what is intended here is the indication of the notion that what we must
concentrate on is that from which we cannot escape, whether it be time, the situation, place, bodily idiom and its continuous expression, space, and so on; and that this notion is counter-balanced on some sort of metaphysical fulcrum with that which we cannot pin down, that is, that which is always escaping, whether that be time, the situation, place, bodily idiom and its continuous expression, space, and so on. In other words, what we cannot escape is also always escaping. This bind seems to be a reciprocal operation: that which we cannot escape and that which is always escaping locked together in some mysterious embrace, centripetal and centrifugal forces unable to extricate themselves from one another. But perhaps I am pushing too far too quickly, abstruse folderol excreted before mastication has even begun, to give my false start a scatological hue.

Let me first attempt to delineate the basic outline as well as define the components of Hägerstrand’s time-geography prior to making some more general remarks about time itself and how it fits within the structural apparatus we are formulating here.

“Continuity and corporeality set limits on how and at what pace one situation can evolve into a following in a purely physical sense” (Hägerstrand 1982: 323). At least to a certain degree, this distills time-geography down to one succinct statement. Fortuitously, it can also serve as a way marker for us, as it contains references to the terms essential to this conjuncture of our examination: time, space, situation, and place, though the last may be a bit attenuated here. The rate of pace, or the velocity, at which one situation (that elusive and indeterminate term we bucked up against in our study of Goffman), can evolve into another of course references time. Space is included by the references to continuity, corporeality, and the ‘purely physical sense.’ This alludes to the physical
limitations imposed upon people qua human beings: we must move with our bodies in
tow, spaces are available to us only via the limited mobility as well as the required
spatiality of our corporeality, and spaces must be traversed serially through or across
contiguous places. Even if I fly in a supersonic jet from say, San Francisco to Tokyo, I
must move my body into that jet through a series of movements through and across
contiguous spaces, remain in the place that the airplane’s cabin temporarily catalyzes into
being for my body, and then, once disembarked from the jet, more spaces must be
traversed via contiguous places before I arrive at my final destination. Much as I may
want to shout out “Beam me up, Scotty!” and be swept in one fell swoop from Point A to
Point Z without having to move through intervening points, I cannot (as of yet) transport
my body anywhere without physical limitations “interrupting” my mobility. As
Hägerstrand puts it, “Jumps of non-existence are not permitted” (1970: 10).

Hägerstrand terms the routes through which and by which we move “paths,” and
the motivations which kick-start those paths into motion, projects; in turn, projects and
paths occur against settings or in places: perhaps unfortunately, Hägerstrand refers to this
last item as a diorama. Hägerstrand himself implies that this choice may not be entirely
successful:

To my knowledge, we have no entirely satisfactory word available for the
purpose. The closest approximation I have been able to find is `diorama’, the term
used for arrangements in museums which show animals and people suspended in
their normal environments. But when borrowing this term, it must be clearly
understood that the essential characteristic does not lie in the visual property, but
in the thereeness aspect. All sorts of entities are in touch with each other in a
mixture produced by history, whether visible or not. (1982: 326; italics,
Hägerstrand).
Putting aside the question of whether a diorama in a museum should be understood as a ‘normal environment’ in which to ‘show animals and people,’ the use of the term, whether felicitous or not, is Hägerstrand’s best attempt to capture activity as it is situated against a landscape.

“People are not paths, but they cannot avoid drawing them in space-time,” Hägerstrand states in “Diorama, Path and Project,” probably the most celebrated statement of the basic principles of time-geography (1982: 324). Stating that people cannot avoid drawing paths through space-time may seem so obvious as to be not worth stating. However, “it is Hägerstrand’s intention that

his time-geographic framework should uncover “structural patterns and outcomes of processes which can seldom be derived from the laws of science as they are formulated today.”¹ This is to be accomplished by focusing on the local connectedness of real-world phenomena as well as the connections between spatially separate configurations of locally connected phenomena. Hägerstrand is claiming, in other words, that existing scientific principles simply cannot get at certain process outcomes because they ignore the “collateral” nature of processes involving the actions and experiences of “individuals,” and because they fail to recognize that all such processes unfold in unbroken temporal and spatial continua. (Pred 1977: 211; italics, Pred).

So, according to this evaluation of time-geography by Alan Pred, what science ‘cannot get at’ are the ‘local connectedness’ of everyday actions as they are expressed spatially and temporally. “What I have in mind,” states Hägerstrand, “is the introduction of a time-space concept which could help us to develop a kind of socio-economic web model” (1970: 10). By tracing spatial paths through and between places and then inserting the element of time, Hägerstrand’s hope is to complement abstract socio-economic

conceptions with “actual” spatial and temporal components. This can only be accomplished through a concentration on what Pred refers to as ‘real-world phenomena,’ i.e. actual things happening to actual people in actual places. By doing this, general “constraints … and abstract rules of behavior” can be given “a ‘physical’ shape in terms of location in space, areal extension, and duration in time” (Hägerstrand 1970: 11).

Let us pause here to plug the components of Hägerstrand’s schema into the holes of Goffman’s analysis. What is missing from Goffman (or so we asserted) is history and geography, time and space. What Hägerstrand is proposing is ‘a time-space concept’ which can be developed into ‘a kind of socio-economic model’ prior to being applied to ‘real-life phenomena’ as they are manifested in paths, projects, and dioramas. Thus, it would seem (that is, if Hägerstrand’s warrant can be certified) that Hägerstrand’s schema could be nicely aligned with Goffman’s. Or at least that’s a possibility. For, as Giddens claims in The Constitution of Society, with the analytical and methodological tools provided by time-geography, “We are able to flesh out the time-space structuring of the settings of interaction which, however important Goffman’s writings may be, tend to appear in those writings as given milieux of social life;” in other words, they are given as given and not analyzed at all (1984: 116). That said, with the implicit blessing of Giddens for our project in hand, let us resume.

Hägerstrand imposes three sets of constraints on his model: those of capability, coupling, and authority. Capability constraints refer to the limitations imposed on “the

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2 A nice definition of “project” is supplied by Thrift and Pred in their “Time-Geography: A New Beginning”: “In time-geographic terms a project consists of the entire series of tasks necessary to the completion of any intention-inspired or goal-oriented behavior” (1981: 284, note 1). We can also note the alignment between Hägerstrand’s conception of project and Schutz’s conception of relevance, especially relevancies of the motivational kind, “accepted in order to pursue both imposed and chosen [intrinsic] objectives” (Wagner 1983: 16; italics, Wagner).
activities of the individual because of his biological construction and/or the tools he [sic] can command” (Hägerstrand 1970: 12). Notice here that the somatic has been brought into the schema: the constraint of the body, the imposition of indexical positionality, the limitations of the possibilities of physical accessibility, even with `the tools he can command,’ serves as a constraint upon the body as it is located in space and time.

“Some” of the capability constraints “have a predominant time orientation, and two circumstances are of overwhelming importance in this connection: the necessity of sleeping a minimum number of hours at regular intervals, and the necessity of eating, also with a rather high degree of regularity” (Hägerstrand 1970: 12). Adumbrated for us here is the everyday element of reproduction, an element we will revisit when we discuss Marx's notion of reproduction in Part Two of this study. “Both needs determine the bounds of other activities as continuous operations” (Hägerstrand 1970: 12). Consider that claim from a scientific perspective: sleeping and eating `determine the bounds,’ both spatially and temporally, of the performance of the continual operations of activities other than sleeping and eating. In other words, at some point in time and at some location in space, we must desist from whatever we are doing in order to sleep and eat. Now this may seem so clear that its overt enunciation may seem unnecessary, or even ludicrous, yet the practitioners of the “rigorous” methodology of locational analysis had, until Hägerstrand’s conception of time-geography, neglected precisely these factors.

As a brief side-bar, the foregoing is a perfect example of the neglect of the given: that which is everyday is so ingrained into the fabric of the everyday that it is not even noticed. How can any spatial analysis of human activity ignore such crucial components as the constraints imposed by the necessity of eating and sleeping? Because they are so
visible they are invisible: “The distinctiveness of the everyday lies in its lack of distinction” (Felski 2000: 17). And that which completely lacks distinction completely merges with its background. Which of course means that it is the background and it is treated as such: i.e., it is not treated at all!

“Other [capability] constraints,” Hägerstrand continues, “are predominantly distance oriented, and as a consequence, enable the time-space surrounding of an individual to be divided up into a series of ‘concentric’ tubes or rings of accessibility” (1970: 12). In other words, we can only go so far before we must return. “Assume that each person needs a regular minimum number of hours a day for sleep and for attending to business at his home base,” whether that base be an actual home, a hotel room, a friend’s couch, or a ditch on the side of the road (Hägerstrand 1970: 12). `Attending to business’ can be read as a euphemism for the maintenance of grooming norms and the requirements attendant to embodiment: “Everyone, from the most famous to the most humble, eats, sleeps, yawns, defecates; no one escapes the reach of the quotidian” (Felski 2000: 16). “When he moves away” from home base, Hägerstrand continues, “there exists a definite boundary line beyond which he cannot go if he has to return before a deadline” (Hägerstrand 1970: 12-13). In this construal, the spatial (`a definite boundary line’) and the temporal (the time required `to return before a deadline’) are invoked to denote the limits of one’s `concentric tubes or rings of accessibility.’ “In his daily life everybody has to exist spatially on an island. Of course, the actual size of the island depends on the available means of transportation, but this does not alter the principle” (Hägerstrand 1970: 13). Perhaps this can also be read as an attempt to bring the friction of distance into the realm of the quotidian.
Coupling constraints, the second set of constraining limitations of Hägerstrand’s schema, refer to the various locations, times, and durations by which “the individual has to join other individuals, tools, and materials in order to produce, consume, and transact,” as the individual fulfills the terms of (accomplishes) the project in which she is engaged (Hägerstrand 1970: 14). Since many activities require individuals to form conjunctions in time and space as they utilize tools and materials, and the actions of one another to complete projects, such constraints become necessary. We cannot work together at a location unless we are at that location on the same date and at the same time and: “Here, of course, the clock and the calendar are the supreme anti-order devices,” states Hägerstrand, neglecting to incorporate his spatial component into his analysis: that is, if workers show up at the same date and the same time but at places that are not coordinated (i.e. places that are different), they will not be working at the same location and therefore will not be working together (1970: 14). This stipulation may have to be modified somewhat, given the spatial and temporal flexibility made possible by working on computers. Still, even given the adjustments necessary to bring Hägerstrand’s schema into alignment with the so-called Information Age, if projects are not geared into time and coordinated with space, they will not occur. Deadlines, schedules, and work-sites remain, no matter how “virtual” we may imagine ourselves to be; and this is true even if these strictures are self-imposed and occur at home. But Hägerstrand is analyzing time and space at the latter stages of what we now call the Fordist era, and his conceptions seem more aligned with that era than with our own (as would have to be expected, since he was alive at that time and not now!).
“We may refer to a grouping of several paths as a ‘bundle’” (Hägerstrand 1970: 14). People’s paths converge to form “activity bundles” as they work on projects in dioramas.

In the factory, men, machines, and materials form bundles by which components are connected and disconnected. In the office, similar bundles connect and disconnect information and channel messages. In the shop, salesmen and the customer form a bundle to transfer articles and in the classroom, students and teachers form a bundle to transfer information and ideas. (Hägerstrand 1970: 14-15).

Though this may seem routine to the point of utter banality, its diction more aligned with the discourse of a simplistic primer than a sophisticated analysis, Hägerstrand recognizes that not all projects are constituted in such a mundane form. Though many activities do depend on near-absolute spatial and temporal coordinations – such as the situation of a factory or a classroom – many operate on a more flexible basis: “Shops, banks, doctors and barbers permit random access between given hours,” though here of course the datedness of this material betrays itself, as randomly accessing a doctor has become a quaint relic of a bygone era, and eshopping possesses a tangential as well as a tendentious relationship with both time and place (Hägerstrand 1970: 15). Yet and still, the general principle holds.

The last constraint that Hägerstrand applies to time-geography is that of authority. This form of constraint refers to “domains … the insides of which are either not accessible at all and are accessible only upon invitation or after some kind of payment, ceremony, or fight” (Hägerstrand 1970: 16). Here we can imagine many a setting, from a professional basketball game to MI5 headquarters to a frat party, all domains “within
which things are under the control of a given individual or a given group” (Hägerstrand 1970: 16). It does seem that there may be an overlap with coupling constraints here, as a factory floor, one of the sites “coupled” with the concept of coupling constraints, would also fall within those domains falling within the constraint of authority as well. But to do so would be committing a category mistake, as the constraint of coupling is oriented more towards projects the completion of which requires that linkages be made with other people, tools and/or materials, while the constraint of authority is oriented more towards places access to which is controlled by stipulated individuals or groups.

Oddly enough (or perhaps it’s not so odd), the outline of authority constraints given by Hägerstrand moves within close proximity of Goffman’s notions regarding possessional territory and the claiming of stalls. Hägerstrand states that “Some smaller domains,” which come under the spatial purview of an authority constraint, “are protected only through immediate power or custom, e.g., a favorite chair, a sand cave on the beach, or a place in a queue” (1970: 16). In Goffman’s Relations in Public there is an entire section specifically dealing with queues - The Turn in the chapter titled “The Territories of the Self” - in which Goffman makes a nice addition to the concept by incorporating the notion of a “negative” queue, “namely, an ordering of persons who are to receive something they do not want, such as a place in a gas chamber…. Naturally, here one would be allowed to take any turn ahead of one’s position but disallowed from stepping behind or giving up entirely one’s position” (1971: 36, f.n. 11).

Hägerstrand contrasts the constraints subtending smaller domains (’a favorite chair, a sand cave on the beach, or a place in a queue”) with authority constraints “of varying size,” having “a very strong legal status: the home, land property [sic], the
some of these constraints have their own constraints: `a very strong legal status’ is not
equivalent to an inviolable one: e.g., if one fails to pay property taxes, the authority
constraining access to a home may collapse; if a property is not properly maintained, it
may be declared a nuisance and its ownership nullified, and so on. Other constraints,
according to Hägerstrand, “are only temporary such as a seat in the theater or a telephone
booth at the roadside” (1970: 16). Once again, we have been brought into propinquity
with Goffman, as this nearly falls into perfect alignment with the latter’s construal of a
stall: “The well-bounded space to which individuals can lay temporary claim, possession
being on an all-or-none basis” (1971: 32). In fact, Goffman also utilizes the examples of a
theater seat and a telephone booth to illustrate the concept.3

“At this point, I find it difficult to proceed any further without support of a real-
world diorama with non-invented situations, paths and projects” states Hägerstrand
towards the beginning of his essay, “Diorama, Path and Project” (1982: 326) This
statement reflects our own situation, and so, following Hägerstrand’s off-stage cue, we
will turn to his exemplar of ‘a real-world diorama’ in order ‘to proceed any further’
(1982: 326). Hägerstrand makes the choice to “try to call forth a diorama of which I was
once an insider during my first formative years,” which happens to have occurred in a
small village in “the inner woodlands of southern Sweden” during the first two decades

The locality was a valley with wooded slopes. At the bottom of it ran three
parallel lines of communication. In the middle a small river took a breath on its

3 In no way do I intend to insinuate here that Hägerstrand has poached upon Goffman, committing an act of
plagiarism, that is. Once the concept is in hand, these two examples nearly jump out at one, given the time-
frames within which the two men were working.
way to the Baltic between little waterfalls every second kilometer. On one side
twisted a road, not a major one. On the other side the trunk line between
Stockholm and Malmo cut off the woods with a sharp edge. (Hägerstrand 1982:
327; italics, Hägerstrand).

It is perhaps a bit unfortunate (at least in terms of the long-term viability of time-
geography itself) that the details of Hägerstrand’s autobiography seem more attuned to a
nineteenth-century Scandinavian fairy tale than to a twentieth century scientific
hypothesis, but there they are nevertheless, seemingly dated before their exposure to the
light of day. However, this choice is meant to be purely contingent; that is, the ideas
Hägerstrand is attempting to articulate are not intended to be particular to this small
hamlet in southern Sweden, but are meant to be universal or perhaps they are intended to
conform to what he later called “a neutral system of concepts with the capacity to
mediate between different worlds of thought without questioning the applicability of
existing knowledge” (2004: 322). Or, as Solveig Martensson puts it in his On the
Formation of Biographies in Space-Time Environments:

Although the three case-studies [examined in Martensson’s study] do deal with
conditions in Sweden, my primary aim is not to procure and disseminate
information about the state of affairs in this country. The studies should be taken
instead as examples of general ideas about the relation between the action space
of individuals and the structure of society in terms of its rules and routines in
space and time. (1979: 30).

And there is a nice alignment between the details of Hägerstrand’s village in which he
spent his ‘first formative years’ and the details required for a suitable illustration of time-
geography, as if the theory manifested itself inside the mind of Hägerstrand as a simple

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4 The grammar of Martensson’s last sentence is a bit ambiguous: does the structure of society “have” rules
and relations in space and time or does the action space of individuals “have” these rules and relations? In
other words, what job is the possessive pronoun “its” doing?
reflection of the facts on the ground of this setting, this diorama, this little Swedish village. But maybe that’s the point: perhaps the suitability is too suitable or the picture too picaresque. One wishes, for Hägerstrand’s sake and the longevity of his theory, that he had grown up in industrial Manchester, smoke-stacked Pittsburgh, or a South Korean industrial park rather than in this throwback to a bygone era. But we’re moving ahead of ourselves and must return to a simpler narrative.

This town was scissioned, according to Hägerstrand, into three parts. On one end of town was a foundry and machine shop (the Bruk): “in the 1920s the chief products were locomobiles [sic], boilers and threshers” (Hägerstrand 1982: 327); a settlement of about 150 workers and their families lived in this area, and so this small factory does foreshadow the giganticism of a modern industrial scene, pulling it out of a strictly quaint setting. “About two and a half kilometers to the south-west, a farmers’ village spread out on a low drumlin,” with a settlement of about 150 living in this area. A school was situated halfway between these two outposts, one of workers and the other of farmers, with Hägerstrand’s father as the resident teacher, the family living upstairs from the classroom, thus giving the young Torsten a kind of ideal mid-point viewing platform from which to observe the two sides into which this particular part of the world was being split, the farm to the southwest as a vestige of the old, the factory to the north-east as a prefigurement of the new, the school in between, the woods all around, the river winding through.

Diorama in place, Hägerstrand applies his tools of analysis, instruments meant to depict the movement of people through various situations as their projects are manifested in space and time. “On most days the effective size of an individual’s” range of
movement “is much smaller than the potential size which is delineated by his ability to move.

The purposes of movement from the home base include going to work, collecting goods, meeting other people, etc. If we look closer at the time-space volume within reach, it turns out to be … a prism. It not only has a geographical boundary; it has time-space walls on all sides. Depending on where the stops are located and how long they last, the walls of the prism might change from day to day. However, it is impossible for the individual to appear outside the walls. Every stay at some station means that the remaining prism is shrinking in a certain proportion to the length of the stay. (Hägerstrand 1970: 13-14).

Plotted in congruence with the time(s) and space(s) of his native village, Hägerstrand’s time-geography can supply us with a certain graphic representation of everyday life as people move through time and across space. And it can, as Pred points out, lend a certain scientific basis to daily routines; at the least, it brings daily routines into focus as an object of spatial and temporal analysis. Yet it has not seemed to produce the results it promised, the fate of many a conception proclaiming paradigmatic status for itself.

Perhaps Hägerstrand and the early practitioners of time-geography made too many grandiose claims about both its efficacy and the potential effects of that efficacy: perhaps a certain hubris doomed the theory from the moment Hägerstrand stated that “A time-space web model … should, in principle, be applicable to all aspects of biology, from plants to animals to men” (1970: 20). Or perhaps that hubris was catalyzed when Pred proclaimed that “once one is deeply imbued with the time-geographic mode of thinking a whole new world of insights is apt to open itself up,” including insights leading to new and improved analyses of “the intellectual history of an entire discipline, an academic school of thought, or a school of artistic or musical creation;” the
reinterpretation of “certain large-scale, historical-development … in the context of knowledge about small-scale, time-geographic realities;” “the phenomenon of alienation, so widespread in modern urban-industrial societies and so complex in its origins;” and “fresh insights into the changing role and form of the family in Western societies from before the ‘Industrial Revolution’ to the present … how changes in the activity system affect the daily path and life path of individual family members, and how, in turn, the individual taking up new activity-system roles and tasks constrains the choreography of existence and other family members” (1977: 217-218). Even with the inserting of certain qualifiers such as “perhaps” and “possible,” Pred’s claims ring hollow, as their scope and range promises such a bounty that the inevitable failure to fulfill such promise leads to disappointment.

And lead to disappointment it did. Or at least that appears to be the case. Feminists, such as Karen Davies, have complained that “the social relations in which we are embedded,” particularly the gendered aspects of those relations, have not been properly reflected in the theoretical model of time-geography, and that, though time-geography certainly “suggests the potential of dealing with individuals’ activities in space and time so that complex interconnections become visible – and this indeed was Hägerstrand’s vision, the model continues to build on a somewhat limited and traditional understanding of time and space and this pitfall mars its possibility of making sense of the gendered nature of individuals’ lives in a satisfactory manner” (2001: 135, 134). However, in “New Landscapes of Urban Property Management,” Jennifer Wolch and Geoffrey DeVerteuil use time-geography as a method by which to understand “how the everyday time-space negotiations of marginalized and non-marginalized populations are
both products of and influence upon … [the] larger processes” involved in “new” forms of “urban poverty management” (2001: 151, 150). Moreover, Risa Palm and Allan Pred use time-geography as their primary method for their working paper, *A Time-Geographic Perspective on Problems of Inequality for Woman*, in which they assert that “once Hägerstrand’s ‘time-geography’ scheme is grasped, the perceptive reader will realize that most of the inequitable activity-choice options confronted daily by women of various marital and age classes need not be placed into separate categories such as job or educational discrimination, but instead can be placed within a general framework that relates to the ‘quality’ of their entire pattern of existence” 1974: 14). Perhaps the inherently limited nature of time-geography Davies refers to has more to do with the limited range of her own inquiry rather than the limits innate to time-geography itself.

However, in *Feminism and Geography*, Gillian Rose critiques time-geography at a much more fundamental level:

> Even though time-geography focuses on constraints, its language is untouched by the experiences of being constrained, by the feelings that come with the knowledge that spaces are not necessarily without constraint. Sexual attacks warn women every day that their bodies are not meant to be in certain spaces, and racist and homophobic violence delimits the spaces of black, lesbian and gay communities…. Time-geography speaks the feeling of spatial freedom which only white heterosexual men usually enjoy. (Rose 1993: 34).

This rings true, at least to a certain degree, for, despite their recognition of a range of constraints subtending a variety of spaces, the early practitioners of time-geography seem to assume that space is open, available, suffused with a kind of Newtonian universal easy accessibility; but, given the lack of access experienced by so many people in so many
places inaccessibility rather than its counterpart may be the more ubiquitous standard by which to judge the opportunity of smooth and easy ingress into spaces.

Others have complained about the underlying temporal and spatial metaphysics of time-geography itself: “In the notation system” time-geographers employ, the plethora of concrete embodied individual timespaces of everyday human life are transformed into an abstract timespace, where they are put in relation to a common external yardstick: one singular space with one time that varies within a dominant time’s arrow” (Gren 2001: 211). Martin Gren goes on to claim that such a spatial formulation leads to a situation in which “the end-product [of time-geography] in the form of a drawn trajectory in an abstract linguistic de-materialized notation system that is the representational timespace of an outside external Observer” (2001: 211; italics, Gren).

And Marxist geographers, most notably David Harvey, forward the complaint that time-geography “tells us nothing about how ‘stations’ and ‘domains’ are produced, or why the ‘friction of distance’ varies in the way it palpably does. It also leaves aside the question of how and why certain social projects and their characteristic ‘coupling constraints’ become hegemonic … and it makes no attempt to understand why certain social relations dominate others, or how meaning gets assigned to places, spaces, history, and time” (1989: 211-212). But perhaps Harvey has made a category mistake in his analysis, confusing an analytical tool with a theoretical discourse: agreed, time-geography does none of the things Harvey thinks it should; however, it could be utilized as one tool among many to prove or demonstrate exactly such things. In other words, time-geography is a hammer, not a manifesto on the necessity of the use of hammers. And, as a hammer, it could be used by Marxists (or Fascists or Flat-Earthers, for that
matter) for any number of purposes. But the category mistake could be laid at the feet of time-geography’s advocates as well, as they seem to have also conflated their tool with a discourse.

However, even given the possible viability of such complaints, this hiccup should not dissuade us from our main purpose: the conveyance of time into our equation. And here it doesn’t finally matter how we conceive of time, its possible dimensions or its probable aspects, just as long as we do conceive of it and allow its possible permutations to merge into our system. And so let us mount a brief exegesis of time itself, using Frederick James and Doreen Massey as our guides. “What is time?” Fredric Jameson asks. “A secret – insubstantial and omnipotent. A prerequisite of the eternal world, a motion intermingled and fused with bodies existing and moving in space” (2003: 695). As `a prerequisite of the eternal world,’ it must be included in any schema which hopes to capture the everyday, that is, if “this” world is part and parcel of the “eternal” world, a question that metaphysicians and theologians have struggled with over the centuries. But what definition of time do we need in order to properly batten down our system? Isn’t it a bit facetious to argue, as I have just done, that it matters not how we conceive of time, as long as it is there, when such a loose-limbed formulation of time leaves us with a formless and therefore timeless and therefore useless conception of time? But if time is a secret, as Jameson avers, at once insubstantial and omnipotent, both nowhere and everywhere, then what can we hope to make of it? Won’t its elusiveness simply “pile on” to the elusiveness already attending the inherent elusiveness of the everyday, transporting our entire schema into a heap of insubstantiability?
But let us not be deterred, especially as such a quixotic task comports snugly with the quixotic nature of our overall project.

“Over and over again, time is defined by such things as change, movement, history, dynamism” (Massey 1992: 72). Such a conception is typically aligned with a construal of time as entailed with progress, a primary aspect of the modern: “Time was the dominant of the modern” (Jameson 2003: 696). However, with the fall of the paradigm of the modern and the subsequent rise of the postmodern, space has replaced time as the paradigmatic element: time’s time was over, or so it seemed. It was the end of history and the dawn of a timeless era in which a conception of globalized space would reign. And thus we have the spatial turn, an attempt at a paradigm shift which retains the concepts of the temporal and the spatial as the reductive binaries that I believe they are not. And we also have the ubiquitous citation (mostly by geographers and other self-interested parties) of Foucault’s “confessions” of spatiality, musings that are assumed to be foundational for the creation of a new spatially inflected era. Foucault's rather offhand remark that he may have been practicing geography throughout his career has been hailed as a confession of filial devotion to the discipline, thus allowing geographers to anoint Foucault as one of their own, an act somewhat similar to the Mormon practice of converting Jews, atheists, and pagans to their faith centuries after the "converts" have been dead. In short, it's a bit of a reach. Far better, I think, I pay heed to Foucault's confessional admission in *The Courage of Truth* from a lecture delivered on February 29, 1984, just a few months prior to his death:

The emergence of the true life in the principle and form of truth-telling (telling the truth to others and to oneself, about oneself and about others), of the true life and
the game of truth-telling, is the theme, the problem that I would have liked to
study. This problem, this theme of the relations between truth-telling and
beautiful existence, or again, in a word, the problem of "the true life," would
obviously require a whole series of studies. But — … forgive me for complaining …
it is clear that these are things which I have not yet analyzed myself and which
it would be interesting to study in a group, a seminar. No, I am not able at present
to lecture to you properly on this theme of the true life; maybe it will happen one
day, maybe never. (2011: 163).

First, the poignancy of this passage should be remarked upon, a poignancy which I have
never seen in any of Foucault's other work. This sense is underscored by Frédéric Gros in
his notes on the course:

The 1984 course was the last Foucault gave at the Collège de France. He was very
weak at the beginning of the year and did not start the lectures until February,
ending them at the end of March. His last public words at the Collège were: "It is
too late. So, thank you." His death the following June [of 1984] threw a rather
particular light on the lectures, with the obvious temptation to read into them

But the point for us to notice is that, in a lecture for which he had spent a great deal of
time preparing, Foucault does not say: if only I had time to study geography and throw
my lot in with those developing the spatial turn. No, he wishes he had the time to delve
into the history of the quest for the true life in Western philosophy vis-à-vis its relation to
a parallel or at least related question for the life of beautiful existence. That brief side-bar
diatribe completed, let us return to Massey and Jameson.

"Modernism … ended some time ago and with it, presumably, time itself … it
was widely rumored that space was supposed to replace time in the general ontological
scheme of things" (Jameson 2003: 695). But both Jameson and Massey push back against
such a simplistic reduction. At a rather fundamental level, Massey argues that "if spatial
organization makes a difference to how society works and how it changes, then far from being the realm of stasis, space and the spatial are also implicated … in the production of history” (1992: 70). Here, to push Massey’s argument a bit further, the notion is that if space is paradigmatic and predominant, then it must be implicated, and implicated deeply, in change and process in general and in historical and political transformations in particular, all of which cannot be formulated or even imagined without the incorporation of some sort of construal of time. Jameson goes even further, pushing time back to a position of superiority: “Always and everywhere we have rather to do with something that happens to time; or perhaps, as space is mute and time loquacious, we are able to make an approach to spatiality only by way of what it does to time” (2003: ?).

Jameson’s notion of an interplay between two distinct entities, time and space, gives us the pivot-point upon which we can turn our argument, as I want to put forward the contention, which I assume to be extremely non-controversial, that there is no such thing as time without space or space without time and, furthermore, that the continual predilection to assume that there are leads us into theoretical incoherence, for while theorists of sundry stripes may pay lip service to “spacetime” or “timespace” and may also quickly acknowledge that Einstein’s theories have made the separation of time from space a notion tinctured with a quant sense of Newtonian antiquity, space and time are still theorized as if they can be separated and held up to the light as illuminated and luminous stand-alone entities.

But before tackling that subject, let us return to time-geography to garner what we can while casting aside what we should. First, it seems to me that the two-dimensional rendering typical of time-geography’s modeling methodology does the theory a fatal
disservice, as flat replications of the four dimensions of time and space robs time-geography of both space and time. Perhaps if time-geography had been formulated with the prosthetic aid of a program such as Auto-Cad, it would have been more cogent and long-lasting; as it is, the provenance of Hägerstrand’s theory in the diorama of early twentieth century village life in Sweden combined with its representation in two dimensions keeps the theory tethered to the two pillars of the past and the page. I am not certain, of course, that any sort of union with computer technology would have salvaged time-geography (and perhaps there are geographers working on such a model right now), as no conclusions can be drawn from counterfactuals, but I do think it would have had a better chance to gain a purchase on what it was trying to theorize and represent if such a combinatory methodology had been attempted. In “Matters of Interest: Artefacts, Spacing and Timing,” published in 2007, Tim Schwanen proposes an “alliance” between time-geography and Bruno Latour’s Actor-Network-Theory as just the thing to rescue this brand of “‘older’ geographical work … which might [still] be useful to recent material geographies” (2007: 9). In particular, since both the schemas of ANT and time-geography “are process-oriented and performative, highlighting actual practices, materiality and issues of transportation and transformation,” Schwanen believes their frameworks might prove to be compatible and might “benefit ANT and “(post) ANT” theorists in the consideration of “how objects come to hang together locally with other entities present and absent in the landscape and how local connections bear on the durability and reach of sociomaterial assemblages” (2007: 14, 19). The coupling of GIS technology and time-geography methodology has been attempted – “GIS provides an effective environment for implementing time-geographic constructs and for the future development of
operational methods in time-geographic research” - but doesn’t seem to have led to any sort of “promised land” in which GIS-inflected time-geography has come to predominance (Kwan 2004: 268). Whether any of these combinations would indeed be beneficial goes beyond the scope of both this enterprise and my expertise; I merely note the suggestion to indicate that the possibility of connecting time-geography to various other schemas and techniques is a notion still under consideration.

Though Giddens finds at least a limited use for time-geography, he sharply criticizes it for its inability to account for agency, motivation, and power. “He [Hägerstrand] tends to treat ‘individuals’ as constituted independently of the social settings which they confront in their day-to-day lives” (1984: 117). This limitation of Hägerstrand’s may have arisen from the naturalization of his native Swedish village as his “lab” – its social setting and the actions of agents within that setting may have been such a given to Hägerstrand that their givenness was never questioned by him. “Agents are regarded as purposive beings in the sense that their activities are guided by ‘projects’ which they pursue. But the nature and origin of projects is left unexplained” (Giddens 1984: 117). Again, I believe we can assume the same problematic to be at work here: why question that which is unquestionable, the ongoing activity of his particular village or of Sweden in general. Giddens then moves to a critique of the absence of any theory regarding power in time-geography:

Finally, time-geography involves only a weakly developed theory of power. Hägerstrand does talk of ‘authority constraints’, which he links to capability and coupling constraints. But these are both vaguely formulated and invoke a zero-sum conception of power as a source of limitations upon action. If power is conceived of as generative, on the other hand, the ‘constraints’ of which
Hägerstrand speaks are all modalities for the engendering and sustaining of structures of domination. (1984: 117).

How does power operate in the graphs representing time and space in time-geography?

To a degree, the graphs are empty of content: despite the constraints resulting from authority and the limitations due to temporal and spatial exigencies, the generation of power, its very reproduction and continuing domination within these structural constraints is left unexamined. This leads, not only to “very distinct shortcomings,” as Giddens puts it, but perhaps to fatal shortcomings for a theory whose proponents may have promised more than they could possibly deliver (1984: 116).

In *Innovation Diffusion as a Spatial Process*, Hägerstrand himself predicts the end of the utility of time-geography, given certain conditions:

In a society where there are no appreciable time or cost obstacles preventing one individual from coming into contact with any other individual, relations within “social space” cannot be appreciably modified by the constraints of geometrical space. If air travel and the ability to transmit as well as to receive television were within the reach of every individual, then we would approach the conditions of a “one-point society,” in which case the spatial interpretation of social phenomena would become quite uninteresting. So far, such conditions do not exist; therefore, spatial analysis has not completed the playing of its role. (1967: 7).

Yet even though we have come much closer to such conditions, what with the profusion of such technologies as the computer and the cell phone along with such applications as Youtube and Facebook, we do not seem that much closer to being a one-point society in which geometric space has become nugatory. People are still living in distinct places, no matter how “connected” they may be, not to mention the fact that millions are not engaged with the Information Super Highway in any way, shape, or form. If time-geography has not gained a purchase on the general intellectual imagination or if it has
not even become the primary methodology within the particular discipline of geography, this is not due to the devolution of separated “points” into one point.

Still, time-geography did manage to provide the service of at least making the attempt to orient space with time and time with space. It brought everyday routines into the ambit of geographical investigation: stores, banks, workshops and factories, coordinated with the time spent in such locations, became sites of investigation as the ordinary and the routine became foci of examination. Whether the practitioners of time-geography did this in the most complete or most cogent way is certainly debatable, but at least they made the attempt while others were doing geography as if space and place were outside of time, reifying them as scientific objects aloof from the erosion of time.

And so time is brought into our schema. But what time? Time as what? Are we discussing a progressive or a cyclical time? An incremental time or a time expansive beyond a measurement in degrees? Time as “(1) sacred, (2) profane, (3) micro scale, (4) synchronized, (5) personal, (6) biological, (7) physical” or time as “(8) metaphysical” (Crang 2005: 206)? A time bound to the eternal or a “temporary” time? Should we be scuttling to philosophers of time such as Bergson, Sartre, or Heidegger, the last of whom posits that “Temporality temporalizes itself as a future that makes present, in the process of having-been” (1996: 321 [350]), a knotty formulation the untangling of which may or may not clear the thicket that lies ahead of us? Sequential time? Time as timing? “Sicilian Time” (Morello 1997)? Rocky Mountain Time? Greenwich Mean Time? 6 a.m. Western Standard Diabolical Time? Physical time (whatever that is)? “Mundane or Typological Time?” (Fabian 1983: 30; italics, Fabian) Intersubjective time (Fabian 1983: 1)? Biographical time? Autobiographical time? Diachronic time? Synchronic time? A time to

*Add Space*

At one level of analysis time-geography deals with the time-space “choreography” of the individual’s existence at daily, yearly, or lifetime (biographical) scales of observation. Time and space are seen as inseparable. Each and every one of the actions and events which in sequence compose the individual’s existence has both temporal and spatial attributes – not merely one or the other (Pred 1977: 208; italics, Pred).

What I want to do in this section is extricate the merger of time and space from time-geography, supplement it with some elementary physics, buttress it with some theoretical work from geography and assorted other disciplines, and then reinsert our findings about times and space into our conceptual schema.

Referring to Pred’s remarks cited above, could it be possible that if space and time are seen as inseparable, they are inseparable? And, if this is granted, then could it be possible, or even plausible, that they are one and the same? Here, I am not merely postulating that any definition of “space is neither self-evident nor self-sufficient but is
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rather often mutually and problematically defined by and with problematic concepts of time” or that “definitions of time often lean, explicitly or implicitly, on definitions of time or vice versa” (Crang 2005: 200). Instead, I am claiming that time and space are so entwined in mutual dependency that thinking of them as distinct entities is a category mistake of the most basic kind. As Doreen Massey states, “Space must be conceptualized integrally with time,” as indeed it would have to be if space and time are inseparable; “indeed, the aim should be to think always in terms of space-time” (Massey 1994: 2).

What I want to suggest is that geographers and others who toss about the term “spacetime” as if it “actually” refers to one thing but still clings to two, reverse course and take the term literally, as if its conjunction as a singularity truly equates with its status as a unified entity. As Crang himself concludes by the end of his essay on time and space: the “inseparability” of time and space “is not just a matter of bolting two conceptually discrete elements together, but rather that the two are not separable conceptually” (2005: 217). This is a step further than Soja pushes the inseparability of the two, as Sojo writes that “we are just as much spatial as temporal beings …

our existential spatiality and temporality are essentially or ontologically coequal, equivalent in explanatory power and behavioral significance, interwoven in a mutually formative relation. Human life is in every sense spatio-temporal, geo-historical, without time or space, history or geography, being inherently privileged on its own. (2010:16; italics, Soja).

So, though Soja is willing to hyphenate our two protagonists, he doesn’t seem to be quite willing to take the final leap and tip the coequal status and equivalence of space and time into absolute unification, perhaps because it would mean the death of the spatial turn as spatiality would no longer be a stand-alone unit. Let us discard both Soja’s notion of the
explanatory equivalence of the spatial and the temporal, along with his strenuous but ultimately misguided effort to boost space into theoretical coequality with time; let us also discard Crang’s qualifier “conceptually” which he appends to the inseparability of time and space in order to make the assertion that time and space are not separable at all, neither conceptually nor actually, period, end of story, finis! And they cannot be equivalent, being identical. Or, to put it another way, of course they’re equivalent, being identical! The two are one, time and space a unified whole. If “space cannot be divorced from time,” as the philosopher Jeffrey Malpas claims, perhaps this is simply because they are not the types of things that can be either married or divorced, so that even these tropes in regards to time and space are category mistakes on the brink of tipping into incoherence once their possibilities are seriously considered (1999: 42).

“Time is not a quantity in itself … it cannot be separated from the motion of physical bodies” (Sambursky 1962: 13). Even the devices by which time has been measured cannot be separated from physical bodies as the very physicality of bodies necessarily invokes space: a sundial’s dependence on the movement of the sun, a watch’s reliance on the slippage of its escapement, an hour glass’s combination of its narrow portal with its grains of sand - the functionality of all these devices measures time by or through various modes of motion across or through space. For, as Leibniz writes in his third letter to Clarke: “Instants, consid’d without the things, are nothing at all … they consist only in the successive order of things” (27). Even internal time-keeping, as an embodied gauging of time, depends on the space of bodies to keep track of time’s flow. But the sheer radicalism of Sambursky’s statement that ´Time is not a quantity in itself,’ the metaphysical ramifications inherent in that statement, may not be properly understood
without a more incisive analysis of its conceptual core. For if this statement is true, then
the presupposition that somewhere, somehow, actual units of time are ticking away, is a
fantasy, pure and simple. The universe has no clock. “Time” itself has never been
discovered, “hours” excavated from pre-Cambrian depths, “minutes” discovered in
Meso-American middens, “seconds” unearthed amidst the ruins of Troy. We invented
time, in all its manifestations.

Such a realization does not mean that change and process are nugatory, or that
cyclical or even progressive events do not occur in some sort of circular or sequential
order; merely that quantitative units of a temporal kind only exist in our relationship to
them. We invented various methods of calculating time, have found these more or less
convenient, and then naturalized some and rejected others. In so doing, we have come to
think of time as somehow existing in a sort of non-spatial domain, as if there could be
such a thing as a domain without spatiality. Ignoring this colossal mistake, we have
continued on as if time marched on as well, in some receptacle without dimension: sans
shape, sans size, sans motion, a spaceless ticking hub counting down units in a distinctly
zero-sum game.

“All judgments concerning time,” writes William Lane Craig of Einstein’s special
theory of relativity, “are statements about simultaneous events” (2001: 28; italics, Craig).
Such events can only occur when time is coordinated with events occurring in places:
“To use his [Einstein’s] example: When I say ‘The train arrives here at 7 o’clock,’ I
mean, ‘The train’s arrival and my watch’s pointing to 7 are simultaneous events’” (Craig
2001: 28).⁵ So time, in Einstein’s conception, only exists as simultaneous events exist,
which leads us to our next query: what are events, at least as indicated by Einstein’s

⁵ Craig is here referencing Einstein’s “Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies.”
example? One is the arrival of a train at a station, a coordination of the motion of a body, the train, coming to a rest in a place, the station. But of course the train itself is also its own place, as experienced by those travelling inside its carapace. And the looking at the watch, the noting of the watch as indicating “7,” is also construed as an event; this event must also exist in a place situated in space as well.

So time is seen here as so enmeshed with space that it cannot be calibrated without a coordination to bodies moving through space. Here we might consider the “temporal” unit of a year. Obviously, a year is just as much of a spatial unit as a temporal unit, for what is a year except the completion (more or less) of the Earth’s ellipse about the sun, so that a movement in space (an event) is determining our notation of a calendar year. We want to say, or tend to think, that this is caused by the earth’s orbit and, in turn, if further explanation is needed, that the orbit of the earth is caused by the gravitational “pull” of the sun, but “gravitation, as understood by the theory of general relativity, is to be comprehended in the geometric structure of space-time” (Jammer 1954: 164), a slight detail of physics we tend to ignore as a by-product of our naturalization of time’s duration.

So in this construal, a hyphenated entity called space-time is invoked as having a geometric structure in which gravity is to be comprehended. Here, we should dispense with our exploration of ‘space-time,’ at least for a moment (or should I say “a moment” to keep within our frame of the incisive probing of temporal categories), while we turn our attention to the problematic syntax and the nettlesome semantics of a gravitation that is to be understood by a theory as well as the linguistic gap reified in Jammer’s sentence between space-time’s ‘geometric structure’ and ‘space-time’ itself. But rather than
criticize Jammer’s diction, ungainly as it may be, what I want to do instead is suggest that much of our difficulty with our conceptions of space and time (or space-time or time-space, or whatever else we wish to call “it”) has very much to do with language itself and its tendency to hypostasize that which it names. The creation and use of the two words “time” and “space” has implanted in our minds the resolutely obdurate notion that there are two distinct things replicating the distinctness of the two terms, a stubborn thickness conflating the name and the named, leading to a confusion between the metaphor of the linguistic with the actuality of the existent. Perhaps it is a case of what Milic Capek calls “sheer semantic inertia, a simple concession to our traditional and outdated linguistic habits” (1961: 190). But, even given such inertia, as Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin state in *Wittgenstein’s Vienna*:

No axiomatic system can by itself *say* anything about the world. If such a system is to perform a propositional – that is, a linguistic – function, something more is required: it is necessary to demonstrate, in addition, that the relations actually holding between language and the world make such a formulation possible. (1973: 188-189; italics, Janik and Toulmin).

So my contention is that ‘the relations actually holding between language and the world’ *do not make possible* the distinct formulation of the terms “space” and “time.” They are a vestige of an overturned world; yet, they linger, residue of a former epoch, persistent in their hold upon our brains, their presence habituated into the habits of our psyches and the uses of our everyday language. Of course, in our attempt to untie this linguistic knot, we are attempting to “fix” language through the use of language, a self-referential meta-operation of the hapless and hopeless variety.
“Time and space are not passive frames for action but part of the action itself” (Holt-Jensen 1999: 127). This seemingly simple and almost rustic formulation belies the extreme degree of difficulty of the realization of that which the sentence denotes. Time and space are not “sitting out there,” ready-to-wear, passively waiting in some off-stage metaphysical vestibule for our conceptual schemas to scoop them up and put them into action: they are the action, always and already, all the way down. Not only that, but they are mutually constituted, their “genealogies” so intertwined that to even suggest that they have distinct genealogies is not only fallacious metaphysics but sophomoric physics. It isn’t only, as John Agnew says, that the separation of space and time “is intellectually and politically untenable” and that “each requires the other to fulfill its potential,” but that there are no two distinct things able to harbor separate sets of potential to be fulfilled (2005: 92). However, Agnew does make the cogent point that the idea that space can be scissioned off from time is politically as well as intellectually untenable, as the abstraction of space and its reification onto coordinate systems has led to the loose-limbed logic of capitalism which mistakes actual places for localized (i.e. coordinated) spaces and then exchanges them as if they were eradicated from the soil in which they exist.

“Concentrated on looking for the hidden which we think is there, we have no attention to spare for what lies openly around us” (Paul 1956: 92). While we gaze deeper and deeper into space and calculate time down to the nth degree, we tend to ignore the fact that not one iota of space has ever been observed outside of time and that time and space have never been disarticulated, no matter how much their disarticulation assiduously resists articulation, that is, if the disarticulated can be loaned the necessary
agency to bequeath it the power to preempt articulation. In *Space, Place, and Gender*, Doreen Massey cites the physicist Hermann Minkowski as stating that “space by itself, and time by itself, are doomed to fade away into mere shadows, and only a kind of union of the two will preserve an independent reality” (1994: 3); whatever that ‘independent reality’ may or may not be, *it will not contain* independent entities called space and time.⁶

The means of measuring space and time also reflect, to a certain degree, if not the incipient doom Minkowski references, then at least the less-than-precise metaphysics and physics that such measurements seem to promise. The metrics used for the measurement of bodies, a spatial calculation, are susceptible to the same labile qualities as the metrics used for the measurement of time, a calculation of bodies in motion:

The old view that the metric relations of a body – the manner in which its size and length, the angle between its sides, and the curvature of its surfaces are calculated from the data of measurement – are independent of nature can no longer be maintained. These metric rules have become dependent upon the totality of the surrounding world of bodies. *The metric is no longer an axiom of coordination but has become an axiom of connection.* (Reichenbach 1965: 100; italics, Reichenbach).

Such an axiom not only connects time and space but interweaves them to such a degree that they become indiscernible. To test this, discern space without time or time without space: impossible! Though conceiving of space and time as a unity may seem “more difficult” as well as more “paradoxical” that maintaining their conceptual distance from one another, “we could say,” to quote Einstein and Infeld, “[that] modern physics is simpler than the old physics and seems, therefore, more difficult and more intricate. The

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simpler our picture of the external world and the more facts it embraces, the stronger it reflects in our minds the harmony of the universe” (1966: 213). Now, while we can postpone any final adjudication concerning the harmony of the universe and its (possible) relationship to our conception of space and time, what we cannot do, or perhaps what we should not do is maintain the pretence of the inviolable distinction of the spatial from the temporal, a pretence practiced in everyday usage as well as in academic discourse. For, as Michio Kaku states in *Einstein’s Cosmos*, what Minkowski’s “mathematical language” proved is that “space and time” form “a four-dimensional unity” (2004: 73).

Citing Poincare, William Lane Craig also probes the question of what it is we are exactly gauging when we measure time and space:

> If all objects, including our measuring instruments, are deformed according to some law, “we will not be able to notice this…. In reality space is therefore amorphous, a flaccid form, without rigidity, which is adaptable to everything; it has no properties of its own. To geometrize is to study the properties of our instruments, that is, of solid bodies.” The same thing holds for time: if everything went more slowly, we would not notice it. “The properties of time are therefore merely those of our clocks, just as the properties of space are merely those of the measuring instruments.” (2001: 32).  

But of course this similarity does not lead to the conclusion that space and time are identical or isomorphic; merely that our calculations of them refer to our instruments of measurement and not to what we refer to as space and time. The contingency of these measurements is reflected in the histories of both the adoptions of the calendar year as well as the prime meridian. In the case of the latter, some “of the first

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7 Craig cites Poincare’s “Space and Time,” in *Mathematics and Science: Last Essays*. Translated by John W. Bolduc (New York: Dover, 1963), 16, 18.
maps of the United States show the central meridian running through Philadelphia. The “Meridian of Philadelphia” gradually gave place to a Washington, D.C., zero meridian. On L’Enfant’s plan of Washington, the 0° 0’ line passes through "Congress House." Other contemporary projets put the line through the “President’s House” (Henrikson 1997: 101).\(^8\)

However, given that the Greenwich Mean Line was not adopted as the “‘common zero of longitude’” until 1884 (with the French holding out for Paris until 1911 when they finally acceded to the selection of the Royal Observatory as the Prime Meridian), it is little wonder that zero meridians sprouted up all across the globe (Pratt 1942: 234).\(^9\) Indeed, up to 1870, such meridians ran through numerous locations, including “Greenwich, Paris, Ferro, Naples, Christiania, Copenhagen, Brussels, Madrid, Cadiz, Pulkova, Rome, Stockholm, Lisbon, Amsterdam, Rio de Janeiro, and Washington” (Pratt 1942: 233-234). In 1932 Hendrik Willem Van Loon reported that “even today … there still are German, French and American maps which show” the prime meridian “running through Berlin, Paris and Washington” (1932: 64).

In *The Westernization of the World*, Serge Latouche recounts a parallel story in terms of the coordination of the first day of the year:

It was not until 1564, during the reign of Charles IX, that France and other countries fixed the beginning of the legal year at 1 January. Russia did not adopt this ‘new style’ until the reign of Peter the Great, in 1725; England followed suit only in 1752. It was Napoleon who overcame the final piecemeal resistance in the rest of Europe. In the Middle Ages the dating varied from one country to another. In Germany, Switzerland, Portugal and Spain the year began officially on

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Christmas Day; in Venice, on 1 March; in England, on 25 March. At Rome it was sometimes 25 January, sometimes 25 March. In Russia it was at the spring equinox. In France, the legal year began on Easter Day, which was a movable feast: thus ‘French-style’ years varied between 330 and 400 days! Some years had two springs. Russia did not switch from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar until the advent of the Soviet Union. (The October Revolution, incidentally, was celebrated in November!). Greece did not fall into line until 1923…. It is remarkable that [the remainder of] the world should have submitted to this reckoning in so much less time than Europe did herself. (1996: 23).

Of course such submission to the reckoning of the year was hurried along by the imposition of standardization by European empires and their requirement for “order.”

These are examples of what Bourdieu calls “arbitrary necessity,” a “collective belief” in contingent limitations that ignores its own ignorance of the arbitrary quality of that belief:

To bring order is to bring division, to divide the universe into opposing entities…. This magical act presupposes and produces collective belief, that is, ignorance of its own arbitrariness. It constitutes the separated things as separated, and by an absolute distinction, which can only be crossed by another magical act, a ritual transgression. (Bourdieu 1990: 210).

Here it is tempting to draw a parallel between Bourdieu’s absolute distinction and Newton’s absolute space and absolute time, with an absolute distinction between the spatial and the temporal; with Einstein’s “crossing” or “transgressing” of this by his “magical” postulation of special and general relativity and non-Euclidian geometry.

Indeed, new paradigms are often experienced as transgressions as they upend the assumptions of both the general public as well as scientists. When Einstein’s theory of the curvature space was proved during the solar eclipse of 1919, “many newspapers were caught off guard, scrambling to find anyone with a knowledge of physics” to report on
the story; “The New York Times hurriedly sent its golf expert, Henry Crouch, to cover this fast-breaking story, adding numerous errors in the process. The Manchester Guardian sent its music critic” (Kaku 2004: 116). Of course Einstein himself “suffered” from the same sense of “transgression” when quantum theory was hypothesized. But to adhere to our main line of argument: I cite Bourdieu to support my thesis of the arbitrariness of the general distinction between space and time and of the particular modes of distinction between them as well.

However, all this proves, or merely supports, is that the measurement of space and time are contingent; it does nothing to support the idea that these spatial and temporal systems of measurement are isometric, nor does it buttress the notion that space and time are identical. So, perhaps we should take a further step and draw the conclusion that the temporal and the spatial are distinct entities. And, besides, what do we gain or lose by adopting this cockeyed notion that they are the same? Haven’t we benefited by separating out time from space and space from time? What if the nations of the world were still starting their years on different days? What if prime meridians still ran through Ferro and Copenhagen, Cadiz and Pulkova, let alone Paris, Naples, Christiania, Brussels, Madrid, Rome, Stockholm, Lisbon, Amsterdam, Rio de Janeiro, and Washington? Nothing would be coordinated: spatial and temporal cockamamie would reign supreme. If we reckoned space and time to be the same, we would have no way of differentiating them; then we might end up conflating the time of day with a shape or a shape for the time of day. But isn’t that exactly what we do when we point to a shadow cast across a sundial or calculate the angles of a watch? We are conflating shapes and angles with times of day! “A time measurement … has meaning only in reference to a
reference frame having a specified state of motion,” states Einstein in his “Uber das Relativitatsprinzip und die Folgerungen.”\(^\text{10}\) So, I suppose all I am asking is that we recognize this conflation for what it is, a convention performed for the sake of convenience, which does not reflect that which cannot be separated on either a conceptual or a “realistic” basis. For, though “it seems difficult to conceive and is perhaps unimaginable … there is no reference frame ‘space’ or preferred frame coextensive with space;” indeed, “there is no such frame as space. All that exists is locally moving frames, and even these do not move relative to space, but only relative to each other” (Craig 2001: 38). What trips us up is our habitual adherence to Newtonian notions: Craig cites Milic Capek as admitting that “… we are all unconsciously Newtonians even when we profess to be relativists, and the classical idea of world-wide instants, containing simultaneously spatially separated events, still haunts the unconscious even of relativistic physicists; though verbally rejected, it manifests itself, like a Freudian symbol, in a certain conservatism of language” (2001: 38); here we are reminded of the linguistic aporia previously mentioned.\(^\text{11}\)

Before moving on to a consideration of place and its inclusion in this schema, I want to return to Soja and the spatial turn. First, let us notice that the term seems to reference time as much as space, for the turn is temporal as well as spatial: the spatial turn, according to Soja, occurs in a certain period, roughly towards the end of the twentieth century. For, as Soja states in 1979, he, along with his co-author, Costis Hadjimichalis, “hope to explain why the spatial problematic has attracted increasing attention in recent years and how spatiality fits within the continued development of

\(^{10}\) This is cited in Craig, 25, f.n. 14.

\(^{11}\) Craig is citing Capek’s *The Philosophical Impact of Contemporary Physics* (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand, 1961), 190-191.
dialectical materialism’’ (1979: 4; italics, mine). It’s occurring in time, this turn to the spatial, so the spatial turn is every bit as temporal as it is spatial. And, to his credit, Soja seems to recognize this, as he states in the same 1979 article that with “synchronic spatiality continually” intruding “upon the diachronic…. It becomes less possible to separate history and geography, time and space” (1979: 3).

But we should notice two things about this last statement, one a confusion and the other an inconsistency, both of which continue to compromise Soja’s conceptual schema. First, the confusion: we have a synchronic spatiality continually intruding upon the diachronic. It appears that this obtrusion is occurring temporally, not spatially. It is continuing through time, that is, and what kind of time is the spatial synchronic continually occurring in? Well, what else? Continual time. That is, diachronic time. So that these two terms, the synchronic and the diachronic, intended to be spatial antinomies, are instead from the very beginning intruding into one another, or so it seems, for if such intrusions are occurring continually, then they must be occurring all the time, from the very beginning to the very end. The inconsistency arises with Soja’s simultaneous effort to privilege space over time and to treat them as intertwined co-equals. If it is becoming less and less possible to separate history and geography, time and space, then why privilege one over the other? The mere switching of the privilege from the temporal to the spatial will simply continue what is essentially a metaphysical as well as a physical mistake. And, if one truly believes in and relies on dialectics, the privileging of the spatial over the temporal will only lead, with the passage of time (oddly enough), to the privileging of the temporal over the spatial. Why not end this see-saw battle altogether and call for a SpatialTemporal Turn?
However, for whatever reasons, Soja doesn’t take this route, and so the confusions and the inconsistencies are retained. In his *Seeking Spatial Justice*, published in 2010, Soja states that “as intrinsically spatial beings *from birth*, we are *at all times* engaged and enmeshed in shaping our socialized spatialities, and, *simultaneously*, being enmeshed by them” (2010: 18; italics, mine). This statement, intended (I presume) to highlight the intrinsic spatiality of human beings, is of course deeply implicated with temporal terminology. Yet how could it not be, for, exactly as Soja stated more than thirty years prior to the publication of *Seeking Spatial Justice*: “It becomes less possible to separate history and geography, time and space” (1979: 3)? Yet even though Soja states that the “achievement” of “a complementary rebalancing of historical and geographical thinking” requires “at least for the present moment … some degree of foregrounding if not a strategic but temporary privileging of the spatial perspective over all others,” he doesn’t seem to recognize this such a foregrounding, no matter how temporary, will lead, and is bound to lead, precisely to the kind of confusions and inconsistencies reflected in statements such as those cited above (2010: 17). Here we should also note that Soja deftly raises the stakes, for it is not that the spatial will only be privileged over the temporal but that it will be privileged `over all others,’ whatsoever they may be: this is a claim without limits, demanding a privilege for the spatial which will nullify any other contender, whether it be of a temporal, ideological, socio-political, psychological, or (I suppose, given that Soja does refer to `all others’) a biological, meteorological, scholastic, scatological, mythological, Marxist, Platonic, neo-Platonic, neo-Marxist, neo-Platonic-Marxist, or quasi-ecto-economic kind! It is one thing to say, as Massey does, that it “is now [1992] increasingly accepted widely … that the social and
the spatial are inseparable and that the spatial form of the social has causal effectivity,” a perfectly reasonable claim, and quite another to aver that the spatial should be privileged over all other comers, a claim which can only lead to an overbearing triumphing of the spatial (1992: 71). This becomes especially overbearing when the claim for the supreme privileging of the spatial is conjoined to a temporal qualifier: such favoritism should proceed only on a temporary basis!

Not that others do all that much better when discussing space. Edward Casey, for instance, takes space “to be the encompassing, volumetric void in which things (including human beings) are positioned” (2001: 683). Can a void have volume? I thought a void was empty, and empty necessarily, that is, by definition. But in Casey’s construal, it contains a certain volume and is also encompassing, meaning – what, that it vaults over us, arch-like? But then it’s not a void, as it would have shape and form. And once things, including humans, are positioned within it, this void is being oddly filled, and therefore has lost its spatial “nature” and become a place. It could not be otherwise, as no thing and no human has ever been positioned within anything without being positioned within a place. Deliver up an exception to this and I will readily concede, but until that unlikely (impossible) event, Casey’s conception is incoherent down to its most basic level (if incoherence can be said to have levels).

To retrieve the main line of my argument before the digressions and daviginations go beyond any hope of returning to said main line, “the point here, however, is not to argue for an upgrading of the status of space within the terms of the old dualism … but to argue that what must be overcome is the very formulation of space/time in terms of this kind of dichotomy” (Massey 1992: 75). Such an overcoming will not be aided by the
privileging of either the spatial or the temporal. Especially, if, as seems to be ceded even by such a spatial thinker as Soja, “space and time are inextricably interwoven” (Massey 1992: 77).

Perhaps I have pushed my argument too far. Perhaps in my attempt to collapse the time/space duality into a timespace singularity, I have simply succeeded in maintaining the distance between them. But I hope that at the very least I have demonstrated that the implications of relativity have not been fully “taken on board” by geographers as well as by others (Massey 1992: 77). And I also hope that I have clarified the idea that time and space cannot be construed or conceptualized as discrete entities. There is either a timespace continuum or there is not. There is either timespace or there is not. There also doesn’t seem to be room to believe that there is some portion of a continuum which is time and another which is space; either it’s a continual continuum or it is not: otherwise, let’s desist from using the term and return to time and space, two divisible entities, divisible absolutely.

However, time and space also cannot be construed or conceptualized without place. That will be the subject of our next section.

Add Place

“One might say that the concept `game’ is a concept with blurred edges. `But is a blurred concept a concept at all?’” (Wittgenstein 2003: 29, remark 71).

In The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History, Edward S. Casey makes much the same mistake as Soja, but from the opposite direction: Casey is so concerned that “place” claim its rightful position (place) in the metaphysical order that he privileges it
almost beyond recognition: “It is place that introduces spatial order into the world…. place provides the primary bridge in the movement from cosmogony to cosmology” (1997: 5). Here place is prior to space, for without it, space cannot even be conceptualized, or brought into being, as it were. Referencing various creation myths, Casey states that:

In all of these instances, place presents itself not just as a particular dramatis persona, an actor in the cosmic theater, but as the very scene of cosmogenesis, the material or spiritual medium of the eternal or evolving topocosm. Cosmogenesis is topogenesis – throughout and at every step. (Casey 1997: 5).

Such grandiose claims, especially when delivered in such grandiose language, can only backfire, doomed, as is Soja’s grandiosity regarding space, to fall short of its goals.

Let me try to be a bit more modest than Casey about any claims I make about place, but let me first note that Casey doesn’t always overshoot the mark. Even in the citation above, he is essentially correct: space cannot be catalyzed into existence, or at least into `spatial order,’ without the presence of a place (a medium, in Casey’s terminology) in which to do it.

But of course it cannot do this without the presence of time as well: otherwise, when would it be done? So, with the addition of place to our schema, what I want to do is suggest that spacetime be discarded in favor of spaceplacetime. Let me cite Hesiod’s *Works and Days* for my first “authority” on such a move:

When the Pleiades born of Atlas rise before the sun, begin the reaping; the ploughing, when they set.
For forty nights and days they are hidden, and again as the year goes round they make their first appearance at the time of iron-sharpening. This is the rule of the land, both for those who live near the sea and for those who live in the winding glens far from the swelling sea, a rich terrain: naked sow and naked drive the oxen, and naked reap, if you want to bring in Demeter's works all in due season, so that you have each crop grow in season. (Hesiod 48).

Here we have a nice configuration of space, place, and time formulated as an essentially connected physical and metaphysical concatenation. Movements in celestial space (‘When the Pleiades born of Atlas rise before the sun’) are coordinated with time (‘For forty nights and days they are hidden, and again as the year goes round they make their first appearance at the time of iron-sharpening’) and place (‘This is the rule of the land, both for those who live near the sea and for those who live in the winding glens far from the swelling sea, a rich terrain’), all of which are then re-oriented to a prescription of action (‘naked sow and naked drive the oxen, and naked reap’) and a proscription of normativity (‘if you want to bring in Demeter's works all in due season, so that you have each crop grow in season’). However, the simple relation or state of being connected, even in the most essential way, does not equate with identity or even equivalence. A mother may be essentially connected with her child, but they are neither identical nor equivalent, at least post-partum. However, what this citation does go some way to showing is that definitions and construals of space and time (or spacetime, or timespace) which leave out place are missing an essential item.

Vaulting ahead some two thousand years, and we can see that Descartes understood this as well. In the *Regulae*, Descartes states that:
For even though someone may convince himself, if we suppose every object in the universe annihilated, that this would not prevent extension per se existing, his conception would not use any corporeal image, but would be merely a false judgment of the intellect working alone. He will admit this himself if he reflects attentively on this image of extension of extension which he tries to form in his imagination. For he will notice that he does not perceive it in isolation from every subject, and that is imagination of it and his judgment of it are quite different. Consequently, whatever out intellect may believe as to the truth of the matter, these abstract entities are never formed in the imagination in isolation from subjects. (Descartes 1974-86: x, 44-443).

In other words, space as emptiness (i.e. the universe annihilated’) cannot be imagined without place (i.e. ‘subject’).

If there is not one thing, that is, a unified field of spaceplacetime, then it seems to me there is only one viable alternative, and that would be an infinite variety and number of the same. In other words, space and place and time conjoin over and over again, in an endless array of endless configurations. Massey suggests such a possibility in for space:

If time is to be open to a future of the new then space cannot be equated with the closures and horizontalities of representation. More generally, if time is to be open then space must be open too. Conceptualizing space as open, multiple and relational, unfinished and always becoming, is a prerequisite for history to be open and thus a prerequisite, too, for the possibility of politics. (2005: 59; italics, mine).

Without lingering to comment on every aspect of this passage (i.e. representation and its closures, open and multiple space vis-à-vis the possibility of politics), the veracity of which do not presently concern us, there is obviously a leaning here to a conception of space and time (and I would have to insert place as well) as multiple and multiplying. In a

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12 Cited in Gaukroger 1995: 170. He continues with this, which may be of interest: “It is important to note here that [in Descartes’ schema] both the contents of the intellect and the contents of the world must both be represented in the imagination” (1995: 171; italics, Gaukroger).
discussion of the ongoing extension of the global codification of universal measurements of time and space, Joseph Rouse makes much the same point but rather more bluntly than Massey: "Not just one space and one time exist, but many, and they are commensurable only to the extent that their commensuration is actively achieved and constantly policed" (1996: 105; italics, mine). Granted, Rouse is discussing the limits of calibration and the ever-encroaching range of its sphere of imposition, but he is still making a claim for a multitude of times and spaces, rather than one field uniting place, time, and space. In his *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans*, the biologist Jacob von Uexküll also makes case for a multitude of times and spaces:

> We comfort ourselves all too easily with the illusion that the relations of another kind of subject to the things of its environment play out in the same space and time as the relations that link us to the things of our human environment. This illusion is fed by the belief in the existence of one and only one world, in which all living things are encased. From this arises the widely held conviction that there must be one and only one space and time for all living beings. (2010: 54).

Uexküll goes on to argue for discrete umwelten for different species of flora and fauna, each umwelt with its own particular cosmos of space and time.

> And, though I will concede that a cogent argument can be made for such a multiplicity in which the multitude stretches asymptotically to infinity, even in such a construal every separate unit consists of a unitary combination of times, spaces, and places: they cannot be sundered, even when multiple.

> To demonstrate this, let us return to Einstein’s example of the watch, the station, and the train. Recall that, as Craig reformulates it, “When I say “The train arrives here at 7 o’clock,” I mean, “The train’s arrival and my watch’s pointing to 7 are simultaneous

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events.” Again, remember that we had only considered space and time, not place, when we took up this example in the previous section. But now notice that the train arrives here, the same here apparently in which `my watch’ shows that it is 7 o’clock. What is this "here" but a place? And even if the watch exists somewhere else, that somewhere else must also be a here, i.e. a place. Indeed, how could it be in anything else but a place? Here, indexical, coordinated with a somatic identifier (a body), having its own particular up, down, back, front, left and right, must be some place, otherwise it is no place and does not exist anywhere (i.e. nowhere).

Let us move to another example, this taken from Massey’s *Space, Place, and Gender*:

The geography of social relations forces us to recognize our interconnectedness, and underscores the fact that both personal identity and the identity of those envelopes of space-time in which and between which we live and move (and have our ‘Being’) are constructed precisely through that interconnectedness. (1994: 122).

What are ‘those envelopes of space-time in which and between which we live and move’ except places? Indeed, what could they be except places? In fact, “envelopes of space-time in which we live and move” goes some way to being a fairly successful and even cogent definition of place. Furthermore, where exactly could we recognize our interconnectedness except in places? And where do we become connected in the first place except in places, even if they are different places connected through telephonic or Internet links?

And, if Massey wants to construe space-time as what we should always “think in terms of,” then does not place have to be inserted in this conception as well, for where
else except in a place will we do such thinking? (1994: 2). As Michael Curry reminds us, even the most spatially-oriented thinker must deny the importance of place in a place!\(^\text{13}\)

However, much of the problem with fitting place into our schema is that “place” as a term lacks a certain coherence or a necessary rigor. Its amorphousness defeats it. With this concession, I am afraid it may be necessary to conduct a brief discursus on the meaning of place.

Place is famously wobbly concept. As a concept, it can be assumed to become attenuated if it can be associated with the driver’s seat of “uniquely personalized Range Rovers.” Print ads for the new 2010 Range Rover (“The luxury that’s more than a luxury”) inform us that the “Autobiography” includes seats that are “one of the most civilized places on earth.”\(^\text{14}\) On one hand, why can’t a car seat be a place? On the other, isn’t the world also a place? The very plasticity of the concept, its nondiscriminatory catholicity and its rubbery inclusiveness makes it almost implode into meaninglessness.

So perhaps there is a certain justification in the criticism of place as being too soft, too expansive, too fuzzy. In Volume Two of *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*, Giddens states that “I use ‘locale’ in deliberate preference to the notion of ‘place’ as ordinarily employed by geographers, because ‘place’ is often only a vaguely formulated notion and because it does not usually mean the co-ordination of time as well as space” (1985: 12). Place is too amorphous for Giddens’s purposes, it seems. Giddens also subtends ‘locale’ with ‘setting,’” which seems to be a necessary architectonic component to his conception of locale: “Locales refer to the settings of interaction, including the physical aspects of setting – their ‘architecture’ – within which systemic

\(^{13}\) Curry has communicated this idea to me on multiple occasions during the last five years.

aspects of interaction and social relations are concentrated” (1985: 12-13). The phrase ‘within which’ oddly maneuvers setting, and therefore locale, into conjunction with the term “container,” the very word Aristotle uses in his classic construal of place in *Physics, Book IV*: "Since place contains the body, it looks as it might be the *form*; for the extremities of container and contained coincide" (1955: 375; italics, Aristotle). Giddens' move is a strange one, especially for someone purporting to want to divest place of its “place.”

What must be acknowledged by geographers is that “place” is a term that has been left suspended in a kind of definitional limbo: this charge is quite accurate. Despite yeoman work on nailing down the definitional parameters of place by such thinkers as Doreen Massey, Yi-Fu Tuan, Robert Sack, Michael Curry, Edward Casey, and Nicholas Entrikin, the conceptual framework of place is still dangling from its hinges, screwed into a conceptual apparatus too flimsy to carry its own weight. Some of this conceptual amorphousness can be traced to a certain mushiness associated with construals of place. For instance, Tuan, in his *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, asserts that “Place is security” and “Places are centers of felt value” (1977: 3, 4). But what of places that are inherently insecure? Does the resident of a shantytown in Johannesburg make a linkage between place and security? Does the soldier on a battlefield connect the bloody field to security? Or the battered wife in her home, a site valorized by Tuan for its innate comfort and security? A brothel is a place, but is it a `center of felt value’? Only if “value” is taken as exchange value in the form of cash for sex, and only if “felt” references the temporary tactile linkage between the prostitute and the client. In a chapter titled “Intimate Experiences of Home,” Tuan privileges home as the place *par excellence,*
the primary signifier of place, the prototypical site in which “the sick and the injured can recover under solicitous care…. The lasting affection for home is at least partly a result of such intimate and nurturing experiences” (1977: 137-138). But what `lasting affection’ for home can an incest survivor have? And what if those who are injured and benefiting from the `solicitous care’ apparently innate to the very nature of home as well as the definitional qualities circumscribing it, also received their injuries at home, a condition all too common? Perhaps it is this kind of sentimental inscription of place which has exiled the term from usage amongst many theorists: the softness, the vague formulation, and the misconception of place have displaced it as the term of choice for what which can only refer to place. And so we get locale, setting, space, and situation instead, terms which finally can only be understood as stand-ins for place, and terms which also suffer from their own brands of definitional pulpiness.

Perhaps some of the softness supposedly endemic to “place” can be traced back to Gaston Bachelard’s *The Poetics of Space*. In this psychological and phenomenological study of the house as the paradigmatic place, Bachelard states that a “house is first and foremost a geometrical object, one which we are tempted to analyze rationally. Its prime reality is visible and tangible, made of well hewn solids and well fitted framework. It is dominated by straight lines, the plumbing having marked it with its discipline and balance. A geometrical object of this kind ought to resist metaphors that that welcome the human body and the human soul. But transposition to the human plane takes place immediately whenever a house is considered as a space for cheer and intimacy, space that is supposed to condense and defend intimacy. Independently of all rationality, the dream world beckons. (Bachelard 1964: 47-48).

Now while we should excuse some of the seeming anachronisms in this passage (houses constructed with `well hewn solids and well fitted framework[s]’ are few and far between
these days), it is more difficult to excuse the syrupy phraseology which foreshadows Tuan’s glowing praise of the home as place prima inter pares: a space for cheer and intimacy, space that is supposed to condense and defend intimacy.’ After composing this kind of stuff, it is no wonder that ‘the dream world beckons.’ And it also no wonder, given the conceptions of place (or of places such as home) offered by Tuan and Bachelard, that a certain hazy penumbra has been place’s constant companion, causing thinkers searching for rigorous geographic classifications to run from place as if from the latest outbreak of the swine flu.

Curry counters such an attack by first stating that authors such as Tuan, Relph, and Buttimer, all of whom focus on the conceptualization of place to one degree or another, ‘have been marginalized, dismissed as too concerned with the discussion of values; they have been termed ‘humanistic,’ where humanistic is only a thinly veiled euphemism for ‘soft,’ politically nostalgic, and elitist’ (1999: 95). Now while humanism does not necessarily entail softness, naivety, or elitism, when the vision the “humanistic” author presents reflects the comfort of a middle-class perspective with no acknowledgement that things may be very different not only around the globe but even around the corner, then the author as well as his or her ideas will tend to be dismissed and marginalized. Tuan, Bachelard, and other purveyors of place set themselves up for their own fall by ignoring the contingency of their perspective, assuming that their point of view must be the common point of view from which place is experienced: this, along with the assumption that place as configured as home, the place par excellence, is safe, sound, and secure, not only for them but for everyone else, is what makes their ideas soft, not their humanism. In fact, if we define humanism as an expansive understanding of the
perspectives of others and the concomitant self-acknowledgement of the limited span of one’s own point of view, then it is their very lack of humanism that is problematic.

In *for space*, Doreen Massey examines the conceptual framework of geographical terminology, and finds our understanding of the complexities of place to be sorely lacking. In a chapter aptly titled “the elusiveness of place,” she denies that “place” can be associated with a fixed entity, stating instead that places not only shift their identity with the passage of historical time but also shift *places* with the passage of the long *duree* of geological time. “We use … places to situate ourselves, to convince ourselves that there is indeed a grounding…. But in the end there is no ground, in the sense of a stable position” (2005: 131, 137). She tethers place to event, arguing for indexical qualities as stabilizing factors for place: “‘Here’ is where spatial narratives meet up or form configurations, conjunctures of trajectories which have their own temporalities” (Massey 2005: 139). Massey quickly points out that this hooking of temporality to spatiality doubles the indexical quality of place, adding a “now” to a “here.” But this may be the price to be paid to even begin to approach the problematic complexity attending place. In essence, she is arguing for place as understood within the status of the verb rather than the noun:

> This is the event of place in part of the simple sense of the coming together of the previously unrelated, a constellation of processes rather than a thing. This is place as open and as internally multiple. Not capturable as a slice through time in the sense of an essential selection. Not intrinsically coherent. (Massey 2005: 141).

But does this complicate place so much that it essentially becomes a cipher? I think not; instead, Massey’s schema of place challenges us to conceive of place in a much more transitive way, as trajectories of the animate and inanimate commingling in indexical
equipoise, as a receptacle in which narrative and spatial arcs converge, if only on a
temporary basis. “Another strand of resistance to any affirmation of the importance of
place” writes Massey in *Space, Place, and Gender*, comes from “the associations of `a
sense of place’ with memory, stasis, and nostalgia.

‘Place’ in this formulation was necessarily an essentialist concept which held
within it the temptation of relapsing into past traditions, of sinking back into
(what was interpreted as) the comfort of Being instead of forging ahead with the
(assumed progressive) project of Becoming. (Massey 1994 119).

Yet while this essentializing aspect of place certainly can be a danger, it can also be one
of the strengths of the term. “Place” does connote an affective connection to a site or a
location or a given areal territory. And though this connection can descend into stasis and
nostalgia, the effect of this affect is not necessarily reactionary. Memory of place can be
revolutionary as well, girding people into action as they move to restore the legitimacy of
place (whatever scale of place it may be) to its rightful place, a rightness kept alive
through the affective power of collective and/or individual memory.

There are those who think that, given the problems of “place” as a conceptual
term, we should simply discard it and use “territory” instead. However, territory does
not catch the affective or memorial aspects of place, nor is it reflected in everyday usage.
It is very difficult to imagine anyone but the most rigidified theorist saying something
like, “Ah, that was a great territory,” or “Isn’t this a fantastic territory!” I am forced to
conclude that, even given its labile qualities and its less than stellar record as a conceptual

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15 For a cogent “reading” of territory, see Jean Gottmann’s *The Significance of Territory* (Charlottesville,
place-holder, “place” it is and place it must be, at least until something better comes along.

Now, setting aside that rather lengthy definitional side-bar, let us return to our effort to combine space, time, and place, which I will attempt to accomplish through the use of two examples, one taken from a study of beach erosion in Malibu, the other from an experiment conducted at Harvard in 1959 which “confirmed Einstein’s prediction of gravitational red shift … that is, that clocks beat at different rates in a gravitational field” (Kaku 2004: 209). We will go from east to west, starting in Cambridge and moving to Malibu, as we utilize the confirmation of gravitational red shift and the study of the erosion of beaches to support our postulation of a space-time-place "thing."

In the 1959 Harvard University experiment, “Robert V. Pound and G.A. Rebka took radioactive cobalt and shot radiation from the basement of Lyman Laboratory at Harvard to the roof, 74 feet above. Using an extremely fine measuring device … they showed that photons lost energy (hence were reduced in frequency) as they made their journey to the top of the laboratory. (Kaku 2004: 209).

So here we have a place (the Lyman Lab at Harvard University located in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA, the Earth), a time (1959 plus the time implicated in the moment in which ‘they made their journey to the top of the laboratory’), and space (as reflected by both the seventy-four feet from the lab to its roof as well as by the spatial-gravitational-optical implications of the red shift measured in the experiment). If any one of the three components of space-time-place were subtracted from this experiment, the experiment could not be conducted. Divest the experiment of time and there is no 1959 nor are there any moments available for the radiation to travel from the lab to the roof. Strip the
experiment of space and there is no distance of seventy-four feet from the lab to its roof
nor are there spatial implications for the experiment: no sun in which the red shift occurs
and no distance from the sun to the Earth. Take out place and there’s no lab, no Harvard,
no Cambridge, no Massachusetts, no United States of America, no Earth, no solar system,
and, given the most expansive definition of place, no universe.

Kaku adds that in 1977, “astronomer Jesse Greenstein and his colleagues analyzed
the beating of time in a dozen white dwarf stars. As expected, they confirmed that time
slowed down in a large gravitational field” (2004: 209). Once again, we have a
conjunction of time, space, and place, as all three components are irretrievably
commingled, whether we consider the lab in which Greenstein and his colleagues
conducted the experiment or the gravitational fields of the twelve dwarf stars from which
was `analyzed the beating of time’ or the time in which it took to conduct the experiment
or the beating of time on those dozen white dwarves. In fact, the question of the
separation of place, time, and space in the operation of `the beating of time’ in the
gravitational fields of a dozen dwarf stars seems superfluous, if not downright ridiculous.
If time is beating in the gravitational fields of the dwarves and if these fields are
circumambient to these stars, then how does one separate them out? I am not denying that
their separate measurements can be taken, but the mere measurement of something is not
equivalent to its distinctness. In other words, to slide back into the broader question at
hand again, when does the “inextricable link” between space, time, and place transform
three “inseparable” entities into one entity with three aspects?

Kaku’s writings can be deployed to bolster an argument that space itself has
place-like characteristics: space is not the even, smooth, ubiquitously uniform surface
that we typically imagine it to be: the universe has “a rough texture; there are ripples and lumps in it: This lumpiness can possibly be explained as the ripples from the original big bang, which have been stretched as the universe expanded” (2004: 214), making these ripples a sort of combination of the after-effects of the big bang and the stretch marks of the universe as it expands. It now seems possible that in some parts of the universe, space is twisted, in torsion, anti-symmetrical, and, generally, “bizarre” (Kaku 2004: 229) In his *A Different Universe: Reinventing Physics from the Bottom Down*, Robert D. Laughlin concurs with Kaku's assessment: "The ostensibly empty vacuum of space … is not empty at all but full of 'stuff'" (2005: 17). Here, Laughlin bases this on the capacity of space to transform matter as space's "sympathetic motion when matter passes by changes the matter's properties slightly, just the way sympathetic motion of the electrons and atoms in a piece of window glass modifies the properties of light as it passes through, causing it to refract" (2005: 17). Our conception of space as a smooth, even surface that has no impact on anything whatsoever may simply be lingering vestiges of a congeries of misconceptions inherited from Newton’s notion of a universal and uniform space. In a series of radio lectures delivered in 1948, Maurice Merleau-Ponty comments on this variable aspect of space:

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Space is composed of a variety of regions and dimensions, which can no longer be thought of as interchangeable…. We can no longer draw an absolute distinction between space and the things which occupy it, nor between the pure idea of space and the concrete spectacle it presents to our senses…. In psychology as in geometry, the notion of a single unified space entirely open to a disembodied intellect has been replaced by the idea of a space which consists of different regions and has certain privileged directions. (2004: 50, 51, 56).
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We shall return to Merleau-Ponty and his conception of *embodied space* in Chapter Eight.

But for now let us turn to Zuma Beach and its Malibu sand. In their mellifluously-titled, “Multidecadal-Scale Beach Changes in the Zuma Littoral Cell, California,” co-authors James G. Zoulas and Antony R. Orme state that “Beach erosion [in the Zuma cell] is aggravated when storm waves are superimposed on super-elevated ocean levels and high tides, notably under El Nino conditions” (2007: 282). Deflecting any desire to delve into too many technical details, let us simply define the El Nino as a cyclical oceanic-atmospheric condition which has had major climatic effects upon the Pacific Ocean and the coastline of North and South America; a cell is a littoral area “with its own sediment sources and sinks” (Zoulas and Orme 2007: 282). The study undertaken by Zoulas and Orme, the results of which were published in *Physical Geography*, is an effort to examine “beach changes in a discrete southern California cell [Zuma] between 1928 and 2002” (2007: 277).

So let us parse this examination of Zuma cell beach erosion in terms of space, time, and place. Try an examination of the cell without using the factor of space as a primary component. Of course we have to omit tides, as the moon and its effects, operational at a distance of some 239,000 miles from the Earth, have been stripped out of our analysis. We may also have to divest our research project of a least a portion of the El Nino effects, as these are the result of an unusual admixture of oceanic and atmospheric conditions, the parsing of which into units strictly to do with either space or place is well nigh impossible. Furthermore, since the El Nino is cyclical, time and its relationship to spatial effects cannot be discounted as well, as the “prolonged erosion of California
beaches has been linked with winter storm seas generated during El Nino phases of the El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) system that recur at quasi-cyclical intervals of 3-7 years” (Zoulas and Orme 2007: 278). Time, then, abuts our analysis, not only on a daily basis, with the tidal ebb and flow, but also on a seasonal basis with those ‘winter storm seas,’ as well as on the basis of the 3-7 year ENSO intervals. So now we have already observed that time cannot be cancelled out either, especially when we recall that Zoulas and Orme are specifically attempting to examine the multidecadal-scale Zuma cell beach changes which occurred between 1928 and 2002. How can we strip out time when time is at the very core of this study? But perhaps place, the junior partner of the space-time-place triad, can be subtracted from the project. But then this is the Zuma cell our geographers are examining, “a 27-km long segment of coast between Point Magu and Point Dume whose sediment budget is supplied almost entirely from sources within the cell” (Zoulas and Orme 2007: 278). Without this place, or at least some place, studies of beach erosion will have a hard time. And so place, space, and time, have quickly become enmeshed to a point beyond delinkage.

The more one examines the “possibility” of thinking through the separation of place, space, and time, the more one realizes that such a possibility is a project riddled with the ludicrous and perforated with the ridiculous, amounting to mere “nonsense on silts,” to borrow Bentham’s famous phrase which he used to denigrate metaphysical blathering. In fact, in my estimation, such a separation is tantamount not only to metaphysical blathering but to blathering of a physical kind as well, as is exemplified by our infelicitous attempt to diagnosis beach erosion or the red shift without the combination of the three.
As explained by Giddens, the separation of space from place was a historical process and therefore quite contingent:

The development of “empty space” is linked above all to two sets of factors: those allowing for the representation of space without reference to a privileged locale which forms a distinct vantage-point; and those making possible the substitutability of different spatial units. The “discovery” of “remote” regions of the world by Western travelers and explorers was the necessary basis for both of these. The progressive charting of the globe that led to the creation of universal maps … established space as “independent” of any particular place or region. (1990: 19).

The parsing of place from space may then be perceived as part of the disenchantment of the world, a consequence of the move from the pre-modern to the modern: “In pre-modern societies, space and place largely coincide, since the spatial dimensions of social life are, for most of the population, and in most respects, dominated by ‘presence’ – by localized activities” (Giddens 1990: 18).

The pre-modern coincidence of space and place was ruptured by the ‘universal maps’ subsequent to imperial voyages and the tendency of such cartography to privilege space over place and indeed to render ‘space as “independent” of any particular place or region,’ as Giddens puts it. Yet Giddens states in the same passage that, following these acts of mapping and spatialization, “What structures the locale [or place or region] is not simply that which is present on the scene; the “visible form” of the locale conceals the distanciated relations which determine its nature” (1990: 19; italics, mine). There seem to me to be two points here in which to drive in a wedge in which place can still take its place. The first gap is created by the admission secreted in the first half of the sentence: if that which structures the locale is not simply that which is present on the scene, as it
were, then that which is present on the scene still has a part, and perhaps a very significant part, in the structuring of the locale. That is a logical point, but the point in which to push a wedge in the second half of Giddens’ statement is more ontological than logical. Here the question must be: do distanciated relations (i.e. spatial relations or, perhaps better, relations at a distance) completely determine the nature of the locale? This kind of all-or-nothing claim is hard to justify, as it can be undermined by any sort of capillary action subtending the locale which has any sort of determination on the locale’s condition. Without prolonging our investigation unnecessarily, the complete determination of the locale by distanciated relationships is a claim that cannot withstand analysis. But an argument could be made that even such a complete determination, unrealistic as it may or may not be, does not sunder space from place: it only entwines them more, one into another.\(^{16}\)

Though Giddens contends that time as well as place was sundered from space during the transformation from the pre-modern to the modern epoch, he only allows for time and space to be reconstituted anew, leaving place adrift:

The separation of time from space should not be seen as a unilinear development, in which there are no reversals, or which is all-encompassing…. The severing of time from space provides a basis for their recombination in relation to social activity. This is easily demonstrated by taking the example of the timetable. A timetable, such as a schedule of the times at which trains run, might seem at first sight to be merely a temporal chart. But actually it is a time-space ordering device, indicating both when and where trains arrive. As such, it permits the complex coordination of trains and their passengers and their freight across large tracts of time-space. (1990: 19-20.)

The omission of place seems quite odd, given this example, and especially if we consider that Giddens has just a page previously discussed the parsing of space from place in some detail. It is also odd, given that *where* trains arrive, if considered from the modern metaphysics of the distinct components of space, place, and time, are not strictly spaces, but places, especially if regarded in the light of the everyday idiom of the English language. And so it seems that, place has been relegated, once again, to the role of the poor cousin in a metaphysical triad the very existence of which, as we have been arguing, is problematic from the very get-go.

Perhaps I have not made a case formidable enough to turn the space-time thing into the unit I believe it to be. However, at the very least, I think I can rest assured that I have brought space, time, and place into our structural apparatus, whether as three distinct entities or as the combined entity for which I have been arguing.
Santa Anita reduces racing schedule

Santa Anita has switched to four-day racing, Thursday through Sunday, for three weeks this month as a result of a declining horse population that has created smaller fields. The California Horse Racing Board approved the request.

The Arcadia track did not have live racing Wednesday and also will be closed March 9 and March 16. The track will return to racing on a Wednesday-through-Sunday schedule March 22. The current meet concludes April 17.

- Eric Sondheimer

Cinema One: *A Night at the Opera*

The reversal of the everyday is the specialty of the Marx Brothers; it is their antic bread and butter, the madcap catalytic convertor of their comical hijinks: they take the quotidian, toss it wildly up in the air, and somersault with laughter as it splats against the faces of the stodgy, the befuddled, and the obtuse, those middle-class fools who dare to try and retain the everydayness of the everyday when Chico, Groucho, and Harpo are in their proximity. “A rather different kind of violation is that which could not, under any circumstances, have been anticipated according to any normative order, which cannot be described by the normative order even after it occurs, and for which the social system provides no label, response, or sanction” (McHugh 1968: 122; italics, McHugh). Does this diagnosis from Peter McHugh’s *Defining the Situation: The Organization of Meaning in Social Interaction* describe the ludic larceny that the Marx Brothers let loose? Don’t their antics rely on the normative order and thus reflect it? Andy Merrifield indicates that Lefebvre makes much the same point when writing of the anarchic reversal of order endemic to festivals, a reversal which ironically leads to the revivification of the established regime: “the celebration of order (terrestrial, thus social and cosmic) is equally the occasion of frenetic disorder” (2006: 18).

McHugh makes two distinctions in normative ruptures: “we must distinguish between discrepancies between original definition and act that result in ordinary and expected deviance, on the one hand, and discrepancies which result in terminal disintegration on the other” (1968: 122). Well and good, but do the surreal capers of Chico, Groucho, and Harpo fit within the constraints of these two options? After all, they are neither deviations of the ordinary and expected kind nor acts which result in terminal

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disintegration. For, if they resulted in the complete liquidation of the normative order, the story would end there; but their reversal of reality rejuvenates reality as it creates an alternative universe in which the maligned and the marginal triumph over the socially cosseted and the morally obtuse.

_Here from_ A Night at the Opera _is Groucho as Otis P. Driftwood with Mrs. Claypool, the wealthy matron he is doing his utmost to bamboozle:_

Driftwood: I’ve got another proposition. Let’s go to my room and talk the situation over.
Mrs. Claypool: What situation?
Driftwood: Well, what situation have you got?
(Kaufman and Ryskind).

_It is the insistence on the part of the Marx Brothers not to take everyday reality seriously, not to treat it as the one and only reality that propels the dialogue and the action along. They impose their nonsense on the “sense” of the everyday and therefore overthrow the constraints of the quotidian and its common sense, i.e., the sense common to everyone else except them! And, presto!, once such nonsense is imposed on common sense, nonsense ceases “to give sense to the surface,” as Deleuze says in The Logic of Sense, “it absorbs and engulfs all sense” (1990: 91). But wait: how could nonsense give sense to surface in the first instance? Does not sense, good old common sense, give sense to the everyday surface of life? Not according to Deleuze; he claims that it is nonsense rather than sense that supports the stability of the surface, for sense is always an effect. It is not an effect merely in the causal sense; it is also an effect in the sense of an “optical effect” or a “sound effect,” or, even better, a surface effect, a position effect and a language effect. Such an effect is not at all_
an appearance or an illusion. It is a product which spreads out over, or extends itself the length of, the surface. (1990: 70; italics, Deleuze).

*The Marx Brothers utilize all of the effects that Deleuze lists here. Groucho is a master of the language effect; Harpo a virtuoso of the sound effect, and on two fronts at that: mute, Harpo uses horns and whistles to convey “meaning,” but then also reverses nonsensical signification when he plays the harp, as its sound effects adhere to conventional standards of meaning and beauty. Chico’s specialty is the position effect; as a perpetual n'er-do-well, he is always where he never belongs (except when he is producing shenanigans with his brothers or when he is producing sounds on the piano); and all three brothers Marx practice the optical effect: regard their clothes!*

*By upending the normative order, the Marx Brothers reign in a regime of what we might call the ultra-possible as the usual rules of use are thrown overboard, upending the rules of probability and possibility. Does McHugh provide a viable description of this “disorder” in the following passage?*

When rules of use are inoperable, the world of probability with regard to expectation recedes behind the world of possibility, because the absence of rules would necessarily be accompanied by the absence of a delimited set of meanings. Under these circumstances, anything could be conceived to occur; nothing being differentiable from anything else, all things would be equipossible; everything being equipossible, fiat would become impossible. The texture of the world would be completely open, no one inference being more capable of verification than any other. There could be no such things as roles, subsuming reciprocal expectations, or the interdependent behavior that arises out of these expectations. Social life would have no systematic character, and could hardly be called social anymore. 1968: 45).
This does not quite seem applicable, as the Marx Brothers do operate within a system of rules, and on two fronts: first, they are agile masters of their own unruly set of rules, albeit these seem to be rules which only apply to them, and, furthermore, those rules are redefined situation to situation; and second, they are masters of the extant norms, as they immediately recognize the boundaries of the normative: that’s exactly how they know how to disrupt them. But what does align the Marx Brothers with McHugh’s diagnosis is that they do pry open the texture of the world, revealing new possibilities: as they render the operable inoperable they make the impossible possible and so set the operable/inoperable and impossible/possible in a reciprocal order of the equipossible.

In The Logic of Sense, Deleuze sets sense and nonsense in a relationship of reciprocity as well: “sense is produced by nonsense and its perpetual displacement” (1990: 71). We only know sense through the ever-present (perpetual) possibility of the displacement of sense. Such displacements, their imminent possibility, act as borders which serve as the parameters of sense: they create the sense of sense. “Nonsense is that which has no sense, and that which, as such and as it enacts the donation of sense, is opposed to the absence of sense.” (Deleuze 1990: 71). In Understanding Henri Lefebvre: Theory and the Possible, Stuart Elden points out something akin to this: “The peasant festival was orgiastic, and celebrated order through the momentary disorder created when the discipline of the community came undone” (2004a: 92).2 The Marx Brothers, perhaps unwittingly, are up to the same thing; consider the following exchange from The Night at the Opera:

Driftwood: Do they allow tipping on this boat?

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Driftwood’s nonsense frames the sense of what the porter expects: a tip. But by reversing everyday expectations Driftwood enacts his own sense, which is nonsense. Deployed here is what Deleuze calls humor as “the art of the surface,” for it is “by skirting the surface, or the border, that one passes to the other side,” this other side being the opposite side of the everyday, the everyday flipped upside-down, as it were (Deleuze 1990: 9, 11). Notice also Groucho’s fluency with tense: “Then you won’t need the ten cents I was going to give you.” From a cancelled sense of the anterior future, Groucho invites the porter to look back at an event that was never going to occur.

The movie climaxes with an evening performance at the opera. Harpo and Chico infiltrate the orchestra and turn the show into a parody of itself as they replace the score with sheet music for “Take Me Out to the Ballgame.” As the orchestra turns the fatal page and launches into that sportive song, Groucho tosses bags of peanuts around the theatre while Chico and Harpo toss a baseball back and forth over the startled musicians. Chased up into the wings, Harpo turns the guys and stays into a trapeze set, and as he swings through the air on various ropes he continually displaces the flats behind the singers, rearranging the scenery and thus changing the setting of the show. Destroying the given of the mock-world of the stage, Harpo reverses the unreality of the opera and raises the curtain on the reality of the romance between the two star-crossed lovers of the movie. And so every reversal of the everyday leads, ultimately, to an
unveiling of a different, more enlightened version of the everyday, one in which lovers are united by the smooth finesse and daring artistry of the zany. All ends well as Groucho announces a kind of reverse moral creed as the movie’s epithet: “Let joy be unconfined. Let there be dancing in the streets, drinking in the saloons and necking in the parlor.”

Here is an ode to debauchery, the comedian enunciating the terms of the Bacchanalia, and the invocation of an orgiastic alternative to the staid constrictions of the everyday. This is akin to what Deleuze dubs “a Dionysian sense-producing machine, in which nonsense and sense are no longer found in simple opposition, but are rather co-present to one another within a new discourse” (1990: 107). And so, the equation which leads to the triumph of love at the conclusion of A Night at the Opera is one in which sense and nonsense have cancelled each other out by conjoining and creating a new discourse. A new instantiation of the everyday is announced as the old one passes away, and so the reversal of the everyday has, in the final analysis, led to a brand new everyday.
Chapter Four

Time Goes Vertical: History and its Backhoe Tendencies

Lastly we should realise that dancing in a partner's arms is a product of modern European civilization. Which shows you that things we find natural are historical. Moreover, they horrify everyone in the world but ourselves.

Marcel Mauss, "Techniques of the Body"

Quite simply because historical contents alone allow us to see the dividing lines in the confrontations and struggles that functional arrangements or systematic organizations are designed to mask.

Michel Foucault, "Society Must Be Defended."

In this chapter, what I want to do is complicate the situation to a certain degree, attack and interrogate it, fragment and fill it, excavate and evacuate it, until we (hopefully) arrive at a more expansive appreciation of the multiple aspects of what we could call situational ontology, or, perhaps better, the situation as diced, spliced, and spiced with bits of de Certeau (the stubborn tactic of the ruse), Bourdieu (habitus and its possible or impossible transposition), and the lessons of the long duree as applied to Anglo-American analytic philosophy. Put more plainly, what I intend to do in the present chapter is to scoop out the situation to a certain extent and line its sides with the verticality of history and its tendency to backhoe time, scoop it out, carve it, rearrange it, probe it to the depths.

The Ruse of the Ruse

BULLINGER: Do you piss yellow or do you piss green?
SCHWEYK: Beg to report, Herr Platoon Leader, I piss yellowish-green.

“It is de Certeau’s theories, and especially his consideration of the potential for resistance within the tactical times of everyday life, that have provided the intellectual space for a more strident populism,” writes Roger Silverstone in *Television and Everyday Life* (1994: 162). Setting aside the question of the veracity of this claim, it is this matter which I wish to first consider here: ‘the potential for resistance within the tactical times of everyday life,’ especially as represented by the tactic of the ruse. We will first outline de Certeau’s notion of tactic and strategy, delineate the ruse as a primary instrument of the former, and then illustrate the ruse through the character of Schweyk, “arguably the outstanding fictional figure of our century,” as he appears in four manifestations: first, in the novel by Jaroslav Hasek, *The Good Soldier Svejk*, then in *Schweyk in the Second World War*, the play by Brecht, and then as that figure is embodied in Hasek’s bohemian existence as well as by Brecht in his testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee (Manheim and Willett 1975: xiv). We will then ask whether the ruse is an act of rebellion, revolution, or possibly both, before finally situating tactics within the set of everyday practices of everyday life.

De Certeau outlines his schema of strategy and practice in the introduction to *The Practice of Everyday Life*:

I call a “strategy” the calculus of force-relationships which becomes possible when a subject of will and power (a proprietor, an enterprise, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated from an “environment.” A strategy assumes a place that can be circumscribed as proper (propre) and thus serve as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it (competitors, adversaries,
“clienteles,” “targets,” or “objects” of research). Political, economic, and scientific rationality has been constructed with this strategic model.

I call a “tactic,” on the other hand, a calculus which cannot count on a “proper” (a spatial or an institutional localization), nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as a visible totality. The place of a tactic belongs to the other. A tactic … has as its disposal no base where it can capitalize on its advantages, prepare its expansions, and secure independence with respect to circumstances. The “proper” is a victory of space over time. On the contrary, because it does not have a place, a tactic depends on time – it is always on the watch for opportunities that must be seized “on the wing.” (1984: xix; italics, Certeau).

Perhaps I can best illuminate these two concepts by a return to our analysis of Goffman. As you may recall, Goffman’s “patient-friend” manages to wangle a plateful of eggs rather than canned salmon; he does this through a “special” relationship with one of the kitchen staff. This, to my way of thinking, is a tactic: it belongs to the other (a mental patient); it has no official place of its own; and it must be done in a timely way, i.e., when no “higher” hospital officials are observing the cafeteria line. On the other hand, shock therapy as well as plain old ordinary therapy are strategies embedded in the space of the hospital itself. Such forms of therapy are (or were, in the case of shock therapy) practiced on inmates, who can be perceived as a kind of amalgamation of a client, an adversary, as well as a target and an object of research. Therapy, even in its electric form, which may seem quite primitive and even barbaric to us now, typically operate under or within the aegis of scientific rationality – even lobotomies and blood-letting operated within this aegis during their allotted eras.

But do such tactics have any efficacy? How can they, when de Certeau admits that “whatever” a tactic “wins, it does not keep” (1984: xix)? In other words, none of the gains or victories seized by the use of a tactic can be permanent. For, whatever is garnered through the tactics of “clever tricks, knowing how to get away with things [cf.
Goffman’s “patient-friend” and his canned salmon], ‘hunter’s cunning,’ maneuvers, polymorphic simulations, [and] joyful discoveries, poetic as well as warlike,” evaporates, vanishes, making no dent in the armature of power. For such tactical “practices are exposed upon a field controlled by stronger force. They lack the fortifications [i.e. the space] and the assurances provided by multifarious kinds of capital” (Ahearne 1995: 162). “A tactic is an art of the weak,” says de Certeau (1984: 37). Referring to Clausewitz’s On War, Certeau claims that “The more a power grows, the less it can allow itself to mobilize part of its means in the service of deception” due to the fact that “power is bound by its very visibility,” whereas deception and trickery are “possible for the weak” and are frequently their “only possibility” (1984: 37).

But, clearly, this “seems mistaken,” as Ahearne kindly puts it (1995: 162): deception and trickery are not solely the instruments of the weak or the marginalized. One has only to consider what was probably the most adroit operation of the CIA - the overthrow of Guatemalan president Arbenz in 1954 - to demolish this thesis. Deft use of radio broadcasts originating from a station “deep in the jungle” (actually originating in the CIA station in Miami); fake obituaries of pro-government politicians repeatedly appearing in newspapers; and general rumor-mongering of an imminent US invasion were all used to fuse a panic which led to the collapse of a reformist government and the resignation of Arbenz. These operations resulted in a fairly bloodless coup, followed by an extremely bloody aftermath consisting of forty years of military dictatorship. That deception, especially the ruse, may be a favored instrument of the marginalized is of course quite true. For instance, during the Algerian War of Independence, Kabyle villagers acted “as if they supported the French (in order to receive arms and military
training) but in practice aligned with the nationalists” (Eickelman 2009: 263-264). The use of deception is not limited of course to military and political situations: they occur on an everyday basis, being deployed in numerous situations. Deception and its first cousin, deceit, are utilized by children trying to avoid punishment, hedge fund managers attempting to rake in bigger and better profits, and are the very gist of the craft of acting: “Alexandre Dumas fils saw her [Sarah Bernhardt’s] deceitfulness as an essential part of her genius: ‘You know,’ he said of the famously thin actress, ‘she’s such a liar, she may even be fat!’” (Robb 2010: 8).

But can acts of deception, ruses, and other tactics of the weak lead to a reversal and overthrow of the powerful and their strategies? Or do they instead serve as merely acts of a kind of rebellion manqué, a sort of feint to revolution which may satisfy the short-term goal of poking a finger in the eye of the powerful but, to keep with the metaphor, leave the eye intact?

Before attempting to answer those questions, let us consider the opposition of de Certeau’s “anti-discipline” with Foucault’s “discipline.”

In Foucault’s sense power is productive of subjects; it is a microphysics of discourse and practice, multiplied through social space, that evokes positions or configurations of subjectivity. But unlike, Foucault, de Certeau will focus on “anti-discipline,” on the moments or twisting of subject positions by consumers of technologies. He sees these as resistances that have been undertheorized and therefore marginalized … De Certeau’s gesture here is that of … rescuing from obscurity a moment of social domination. He reinscribes this moment as one of resistance “from the bottom up.” (Poster 1992: 102).

If we accept Poster’s analysis, this conforms with Hacking’s analysis, lining up de Certeau with Goffman’s side of the ledger, as working from the anti-disciplinary street-
level bottom-up position, while putting Foucault on the disciplinary side of the ledger in the penthouse, top-down position. This may turn out to be much too simplistic and should never be conflated with a notion that Foucault favored those who controlled the technologies of power and administered its regimes of discipline. However, de Certeau does seem to offer an egress from, or at least a movement away from the unyielding dominance of the disciplinary structures which Foucault seems to treat as if they are omnipotent, relentlessly colonizing everything in their omnivorous path. According to Ben Highmore, for de Certeau, “Everyday resistance is not seen as the confrontation or contestation of ‘discipline’, but simply as that which isn’t reducible to it. The everyday is both remainder and excess to such a ‘grid’…. The activities of everyday life stubbornly evade capture by discipline” (Highmore 2006: 108, 110). Or as de Certeau himself puts it:

Beneath what one might call the “monotheistic” privilege that panoptic apparatuses have won for themselves, a polytheism of scattered practices survives, dominated but not erased…. The apparatus thus privileged might well lose the effectiveness that it owed, according to Foucault, to its miniscule and silent technical advances. By leaving the obscure stratum in which Foucault locates the determining mechanisms of a society, it would be in the position of institutions slowly “colonized” by still silent procedures. Perhaps in fact … the system of discipline and control which took shape in the nineteenth century on the basis of earlier procedures, is today “vampirized” itself by other procedures [i.e. tactics]. (Certeau 1984: 49).

Or as the anthropologist Marshall Sahlins puts it, exploring another vein of this “monotheistic” privileging:

Some would even separate an unreachable realm of hegemony that, as a world-constituting ontology, is able to colonize the rest of the culture as much by
determining what people cannot think as prescribing what there is. It is a wonder that anthropologists believe this, since it makes their profession absurd. As victims (as much as anyone else) of such a hegemonic order, they would not be able to think what other people are thinking. In this and too many other ways of late, anthropologists seem hell-bent on demonstrating that anthropology is impossible. (2004: 146).

Or as Pierre Bourdieu puts it, in a statement which must have sent Frank and Lillian Gilbreth as well as Frederick Taylor rolling over in their scientifically-managed graves: “The most banal tasks always include actions which owe nothing to the pure and simple quest for efficiency” (1990b: 7).

But what are these ‘other procedures’ which, according to de Certeau, are sucking the very blood out of `the system of discipline and control’? Ben Highmore complains that as appropriated by post-modern followers of de Certeau as well as their antagonists, “de Certeau’s work seems to have been massively constrained and contained. Exegesis and employment of his work is often caught between a celebratory account of minor acts of `transgressive’ opposition (ripped jeans, fanzines, skateboarding, graffiti and so on) and the condemnation of such celebration in the name of a more pragmatic politics” (2006: 103). If de Certeau is posing a tactics of anti-discipline meant to match the power of Foucault’s regimes of discipline, they better consist of more than the “rebellious” procedures represented by ripped jeans and fanzines, as tactics of anti-consumption are vacuumed up by marketers and turned around as products at a dazzling speed of co-option. Yesterday’s anti-hero is today’s spokesperson.

However, the array of tactics available and/or invented by “everyday people” are of quite a higher order than the short-list provided by Highmore would suggest, as Highmore himself is quite well aware of: “The impulse behind de Certeau’s project is
unequivocal,” states Highmore before citing de Certeau: “If it is true that the grid of “discipline” is everywhere becoming clearer and more extensive, it is all the more urgent to discover how an entire society resists being reduced to it” (2006: 108). While many may claim that an entire society has already been reduced to a compliant congruence with such a grid, de Certeau “offers, not a counter-narrative, but a para-narrative (and a para-archive)” to such a view, “where everyday life … articulates moments of cunning and stubborn resistance” (Highmore 2006: 109).

In order to attempt to clarify what such a para-narrative may look like as well as to gauge whether such a “narrative” may be a worthy “adversary” to regimes of discipline and their discourses, let us examine the genealogy of Schweyk. And perhaps the best, as well as the most proper place to begin that genealogy is with a brief narrative of the life of Czech novelist Jaroslav Hasek, the founder and proprietor of The “Cynoloigcal” Institute (a dog-fancier’s shop), a Soviet apparatchik, an anarchist as well as the founder of The Party of Moderate and Peaceful Progress Within the Limits of the Law, a vagabond, the editor of Animal World, and a common drunk. Born in Prague in 1883, Hasek displayed a predilection for the ruse from an early age:

Not only was Hasek a true bohemian: he was a born mischief-maker and hoaxer as well. As a schoolboy he had taken part in the anti-German riots in Prague in 1887, tearing down proclamations of martial law, damaging emblems of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, breaking windows of government offices and joyfully helping to set fire to the yard of a Prague German. In 1906 he systematized these perverse proclivities by joining the anarchist movement, which naturally led to further conflicts with the police and short periods of arrest and imprisonment. (Parrott 1974: viii).

First off, let us unpack this a bit, as Cecil Parrott’s description of these acts as mere mischief and hoaxing does not seem to reflect their disparate quality. Participating in
riots, tearing down proclamations during regimes of martial law, and vandalizing the property of government officials are not necessarily simple schoolboy pranks; they could also be construed as revolutionary acts, particularly if the rebellion of which they were a part were successful, success in and of itself having the capacity to transform what could be perceived as the actions of a fool into the feats of a hero. The burning down of a yard of a Prague German could be viewed, of course, as an act of ethnically-inflamed prejudice, while `systematizing these perverse proclivities by joining the anarchist movement’ is so chock full of oxymoronic overtones that one wonders if Parrott’s diction is itself a ruse. Perhaps what may be best to garner from this brief exegesis is that it is not always easy to distinguish between acts of senseless violence, acts of rebellion, mischief-making, and feats of true political daring; furthermore, as those who are victorious are also those who write the history, much of the careful parsing required for such distinctions are obfuscated by legacies of triumphalist historical discourse.

A schoolboy ruse by Brecht illustrates trickery of a more cunning, intellectual variety. Having received “bad marks” on a French test, in a deception of an “oblique” and “‘dialectical’” kind, the young Eugen Berthold Friedrich Brecht

liberally inserted additional red marks in places where his translations had been quite correct, then went to his French master and very tactfully and humbly queried some of these corrections. The master was highly embarrassed at having absent-mindedly faulted some perfectly correct phrases, apologized, and hastened to give Brecht’s paper a much higher marking. (Esslin 1980: 6).³

This humble, tactful, oblique approach is suffused with the sly agility which we find embodied in both Hasek’s Svejk and Brecht’s Schweyk: it is a crafty tool of the weak, and when artfully employed, can lead to successful results such as the higher marks Brecht received following the “corrections” to his examination.

Before turning to Hasek’s novel, I cannot resist including the biographical detail that Hasek was fired as the editor of the journal, Animal World, for composing and publishing stories about completely fantasized animals. And I should also add that Hasek fought on the Galician front in World War One, was captured by the Russians and incarcerated in a prisoner-of-war camp, joined the Bolsheviks after the Revolution, rose to the rank of “Secretary of the Committee of Foreign Communists in the Russian town of Ufa,” then became “Secretary of the Party Cell of the printing office of the Red Arrow, and a year later [1920] Head of the International Section of the Soviet Communist Party School,” prior to returning to Prague to participate anew in “the orgies and excesses of his youth,” dying on “3 January 1923” at the age of 39 (Parrott 1974: xiii-xiv).

Hasek’s Svejk is a good-natured self-confessed “imbecile” who is perpetually seeing the sunniest side of even the most dire of circumstances. “I was discharged from the army for idiocy and officially certified by a special commission as an idiot. I’m an official idiot” (Hasek 1974: 20). Having once landed in “the lunatic asylum” after being diagnosed as being “a patent … idiot according to all the natural laws invented by the luminaries of psychiatry,” Svejk recalls his time there “in exceptionally eulogistic terms”:

“I really don’t know why those loonies get so angry when they’re kept there. You can crawl naked on the floor, howl like a jackal, rage and bite. If anyone did this anywhere on the promenade people would be astonished, but there it’s the most common or garden thing to do [sic]. There’s a freedom there that not even Socialists have ever dreamed of…. Everyone there could say exactly what he
pleased and what was on the tip of his tongue, just as if he was in parliament. Sometimes they used to tell each other fairy stories and started fighting when something very bad happened to the princess. The wildest of them all was a gentleman who pretended to be the sixteenth volume of *Otto’s Encyclopedia* and asked everyone to open him up and to find the entry: ‘Cardboard box stapling machine’, otherwise he would be done for…. There was one well brought-up inventor … who continually picked his nose and said only once a day: ‘I’ve just discovered electricity.’ As I say it was very pleasant there and those few days which I spent in the lunatic asylum are among the loveliest of my life.” (Hasek 1974: 31-32).

Well now, perhaps this doesn’t comport so neatly with our highly-developed sense of political correctness, but Svejk’s ability to toss a silver lining around the most foul of circumstances reflects something of a practice which, as Ben Highmore points out, has too often been ignored in the academic analyses of de Certeau’s work: the capacity to stubbornly endure through all and every variety of hardship. Highmore locates such practices primarily among the right.

Perhaps … ‘obscure, stubborn life’ is recognized as harboring something much more dangerous [to academics] than the playful subversion of subcultural rituals. Doesn’t the obstinate and stubborn also articulate those practices of cultural conservatism that resist, not just overmodernization, but all the liberal changes that have been made against social inequality? Doesn’t the everyday host another resistance that obstinately clings to xenophobic and racist ‘ways of operating’ in the face of multiculturalism? Isn’t the everyday home to a range of phobic fantasies that articulate a dominant heterosexism and misogyny? Resistance to capitalist globalization doesn’t always come in an emancipatory form: nationalism and religious intolerance are also the stubborn and daily practices of a resistance to modernization. (2006: 112-113).

However, such obduracy doesn’t necessarily exclusively adhere to those who are conservatives: such a tendency could just as well be manifested in those on the left who may cling to memories of a more communal era prior to the rigors of globalization,
whether such memories reflect a “true” state of affairs or not. As Michael Herzfeld puts it when enunciating a term he coined, “structural nostalgia,” the phrase is intended to denote “a collective representation of an edenic order – a time before time – in which the balanced perfection of social relations has not yet suffered the decay that affects everything human. Structural nostalgia characterizes the discourse of both the official state and its most lawless citizens,” as well as, I think we can safely presume, potentially everyone in between, whether of the left or the right, at least at certain times and in certain places (2005: 147).

But the main point I want to make here is that Svejk’s stubborn sunniness is a tactic of survival; it is a tool which he uses to combat any and every tight spot in which he finds himself: having landed in a jail cell, for instance, he affably states with all due appreciation and affability: “It’s not too bad here …. They’ve at least planed the wood on this plank-bed’’ (Hasek 1974: 37). This obdurate optimism can be conceived as an everyday practice, a survival technique, a tactic deployed to withstand the rigors of stretches in jail, nine-to-five jobs, military service, domestic chores, university seminars, family life, and so on. Svejk’s transformation of the degraded into the durable and even delightful is part of the necessary “wit” employed “in our continual reinvention of everyday life,” a wit required for perdurance through the disparate ordeals of life (Conley 1992: 47).

The officials and authorities are not always convinced of Svejk’s imbecility: some of them even suspect that it might be a wily ruse: when hauled before a commission of military doctors attempting to diagnose his suitability for service, they “were remarkably divided in their conclusions about Svejk. Half of them insisted that Svejk was a `half-
wit’, while the other half insisted he was a scoundrel who was trying to make fun of the war” (Hasek 1974: 76). This indecision may be perfectly understandable, given that Svejk seems to be tightrope-walking that fine line between idiocy and brilliance, a line played to perfection by many an “imbecile,” e.g. Lear’s Fool (“May not an ass know when the cart draws the horse? Whoop, Jug, I love thee!”), Harpo Marx (“!”), and Jacques Tati’s Hulot (see under Play Time). The commission’s confusion about Svejk’s mental status may also be understandable if they had had access to accounts of Svejk’s “treatment” prior to his appearance before the commission, a treatment including repeated stomach-pumping and twice-daily enemas, which Svejk manages to endure with “steadfastness,” even offering up words of encouragement to the medical corpsman who is administering said treatments:

“Don’t spare me,” he invited the myrmidon who was giving him the enema. “Remember your oath. Even if it was your father or your own brother who was lying here, give him an enema without batting an eyelid. Try hard to think that Austria rests on these enemas and victory is ours.” (Hasek 1974: 69).

That final line vaults past unreflective idiocy into intentional satire, no matter how innocent and imbecilic Svejk may have seemed before the delivery of these “encouraging words.”

Much of the nature of the tactical ruses employed by Svejk and his fellow “maligners” has to do with the tricks necessary to avoid military service, tactical devices familiar to any American male who came of draft age during the Vietnam War. The shamming of insanity or epilepsy, muteness or blindness, consumption or pneumonia, diabetes or typhus; the auto-dislocation of one’s own limbs, the self-
administration of various poisons, and the employment of “experts” to induce fevers and assorted other disabling maladies are all tactics considered and/or practiced by Svejk and his colleagues.

“I know a chimney-sweep in Brevnov,” remarked another patient. “For ten crowns he’ll give you such a fever that you’ll jump out of the window.”

“That’s nothing,” said another. “In Vrsovice there’s a midwife who for twenty crowns will dislocate your leg so well that you’ll be a cripple until your death.”

…. “The best thing to do,” explained somebody from the door, “is to inject paraffin under the skin of your arm. My cousin was so fortunate as to have his arm cut off under the elbow and today he has no trouble for the rest of the war.” (Hasek 1974: 64-65).

To claim that these are revolutionary tactics would be to make a claim that goes beyond the evidence, but to make a claim that such tactics serve as fillips for the undermining of regimes of discipline while also, and primarily, serving to increase the chances of one’s own survival, seems to fall well within the mark.

However, the narrator of *The Good Soldier Svejk* does occasionally make statements that could be interpreted as having a much more revolutionary overtone. For instance, chapter nine, entitled “Svejk in the Garrison Goal,” begins with the following:

For people who did not want to go to the front the last refuge was the garrison goal. I once knew a probationary teacher who was a mathematician and did not want to serve in the artillery and shoot people. So he stole a lieutenant’s watch to get himself into the garrison goal. He did this deliberately. War neither impressed nor enchanted him. Shooting the enemy and killing with shrapnel and shells equally unhappy probationary teachers of mathematics on the other side seemed sheer idiocy. (Hasek 1974: 79).
Too much thinking along these lines and warmongers would have no fodder! Now that would be an outcome with revolutionary implications, fraught with peril for those determined to “protect the homeland,” “civilize the natives,” “spread democracy,” or “advance the universal blessings of civilization.”

Malingering as a tactical device to sabotage the order of the everyday carries within it an alternative version of that order. The malingerer as con artist must give the impression of at least appearing to submit to the set of dominant norms while also simultaneously sustaining the alternative set of norms within the subordinate order, a double-hinged ruse calling for extreme acuity: as a student of con artists, this is something that Goffman acknowledged, as he recognized that besides mastering their own set of norms, “successful con artists understood the interaction order as well as any sociologist” (Fernandez 2001: 209).

Moving from Hasek to Brecht, The Good Soldier Svejk to Schweyk in the Second World War, first it should be noted that Brecht’s adaptation was written in the United States, while Brecht was on a global run from the Nazis, travelling from Berlin to Copenhagen to Stockholm to Helsinki to Moscow to Vladivostok before sailing to the USA where he split his time between New York City and Los Angeles, with the majority of time spent in the latter amidst the famous German exile community which included the film director Fritz Lang and the actor Peter Lorre, the philosophers Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer (both of whom Brecht loathed for their “salon Marxism”; they, in turn, loathed him for his “vulgar” and “undialectical” Marxism), and the novelists Lion Feuchtwanger, Alfred Doblin, and Thomas Mann (Lyon 1980: 295, 257-258). Brecht had long been interested in dramatizing The Good Soldier Svejk “so [that] people can see the
ruling forces up top with the private soldier down below surviving all their vast plans;” in fact, he had served as a dramaturge on an adaptation of the play by Max Brod and Hans Reimann which had been produced under the direction of Erwin Piscator in Berlin in 1928; Brecht set to work on his own version in 1943: on April 3 of that year “a mixed program at Hunter Collège” was produced by “Ernst-Josef Aufrichr, the former Berlin impresario who had first staged The Threepenny Opera in 1928 and was now in New York after escaping from Unoccupied France” (Mannheim and Willett 1975: xv). During this `mixed program,’ Kurt Weill and Lotte Lenya performed some of Brecht’s songs, “including ‘Und was bekam das Soldaten Weib?’ which Weill had recently set; this finished with a turn by the Czech clowns George Voskovec and Jan Werich entitled ‘Schweyk’s spirit lives on,’” which seems to have been a kind of herald or harbinger of the final form of the play (Mannheim and Willett 1975: xv).

The title, “Schweyk’s spirit lives on,” orients us once again to an emphasis on survivability as the prime element of those such as Schweyk who utilize the ruse and indeed are masters of this tactic. The ruse is a tool to ensure that “one lives another day,” as it were: clearly this is the case with Hasek’s depiction of the Czech malingerers and is also the case with Brecht’s Schweyk. However, before jumping into any further analysis of Schweyk in the Second World War, I’d like to briefly cross swords with Highmore’s analysis and disagree with his sharp distinction between the ruse and the kind of stubborn perdurance which can also be viewed as a tactical device of resistance.

Alongside an inventive creativity, de Certeau describes an unhurried culture, ‘thick’ with the residues of past practices…. I want to privilege this ‘opaque, stubborn’ everyday life, partly as a corrective to an insistence on minor transgressions, and partly because I believe it offers a better perspective for understanding the nature of de Certeau’s project (Highmore 2006: 104)
The ruse, it seems to me, can be conceived as part of such stubbornness while obdurate endurance can manifest itself in a ruse. The cunning of a fox and a kind of doughty mule-headedness are not necessarily mutually exclusive: in fact, either one can be thought of as part and parcel of the other, a kind of fantastical two-headed creature “keeping us keeping on,” as it were. Such a dual operation can be perceived in the examples of “malingering” noted above: cunning is certainly required to pull off such a tactic, but also an unmitigated and redoubtable sense of stubbornness as well, especially if the ruse needs to be maintained for weeks and months or even years at a stretch.

Brecht’s Schweyk also reflects this kind of dual nature, exhibiting both the cunning of the fox and the endurance of the mule while also being quite willing to be as subservient as a whipped dog, if that is what is needed to survive another day: a three-headed creature, he! In contradistinction to the clever ploy of answering that he “pisses yellowish-green,” which is simultaneously an obsequious response and an artful ruse, when asked by an SS man if he shits thin or if he shits thick, Schweyk replies, “Beg to report, Herr Platoon Leader, I shit the way you want me to” (Brecht 1975: 77). He uses the same tactic of complete and utter compliance when an SS man is attempting to force him to confess to making seditious remarks: “If you want me to confess, Your Excellency, I’ll confess, it can’t hurt me. But if you say, ‘Schweyk, don’t confess,’ I’ll talk myself out of it till they tear me to pieces” (Brecht 1975: 78). There are two points to be made in regards to these remarks: one is that nothing can destroy Schweyk: ‘it can’t hurt me.’ His “imbecilic” near-preternatural vitality and his sense of survival can withstand anything, even a deployment to the Russian front where he meets a disoriented Hitler, lost in the snow outside of Stalingrad. It is this capacity to survive through any and
every hardship which at least partially explains Schweyk’s odd heroic quality while also
giving him his status as the quintessential Czech, the dog “hustler” the greatest of
underdogs. Secondly, this citation points out the essential irrationality of torture or its
latest manifestation, “enhanced” interrogation techniques: Schweyk is simultaneously
willing to confess to anything and not willing to confess to anything, whatever “Your
Excellency” desires, a double-edged sword which obviously is very likely to lead to
information of no value whatsoever, i.e. misinformation.

When discussing a recent assassination attempt on Hitler, Schweyk manages to
get one in edgewise by stating that Hitler could not be replaced “with any old idiot,”
implying of course that an uber idiot would be needed to replace the idiocy par
excellence of Der Fuhrer (Brecht 1975: 75). When accused of being a black-marketer,
Schweyk remarks that “There’s got to be order. Black-marketing is an evil and it won’t
stop until there’s nothing left. Then we’ll have order right away, am I right?” which, on
the face of it, is a statement of compliance while its thinly-disguised subtext can be read
as being a simple statement of fact as well as a dire prediction (Brecht 1975: 109).
Schweyk as everyman, as working-class hero, also serves as a moral prop for those
around him who do not share his unmitigated “idiotic” optimism: “Don’t ask too much of
yourselves,” he advises his fellow Czechs, “It’s quite a job just being around nowadays.
Keeps you so busy just staying alive, you haven’t much time for anything else” (Brecht
1975: 90).

This focus on survival and the compassion Schweyk manifests for others as they
do their utmost to live to see another day, must have struck a mighty chord with Brecht:
the very fact of the war itself, the journey with his family nearly halfway round the world
to the alien environment of the United States in one of its most alienating environments, Hollywood; the death of his mistress and collaborator, Margarete Steffin, who died of tuberculosis in Moscow in 1941 while also in flight from Nazi Germany; the suicide of his close friend, Walter Benjamin, in 1940; and his own difficulties making a living while suffering the indignities of hustling scripts in Hollywood, all must have contributed to his sense that in the character of Schweyk was embodied the very nub of the sense of survival which was needed in these, the darkest and most desperate of times.

Though it seems that Brecht himself did not typically manifest the ploys and ruses which we might call Schweykian, as the playwright was more noted for his brutal candor than for the ambiguous slyness of the Prague dog-hustler, there did come a time when Brecht seems to have deployed a sort of Schweykian discourse and for much the same reason, survival, to live to see another day, and hopefully, not behind bars.

In October of 1947, Brecht, along with a small legion of Hollywood screenwriters, producers, directors, and one “lone actor” who came to be known collectively as the “Hollywood Nineteen,” received a summons to appear before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) (Lyon 1980: 318). Desperate at the time to return to Europe, with visas for himself and his family and transportation already arranged, Brecht was not about to delay his departure by making foolhardy statements before the Committee. Though the rest of the Nineteen planned to confront the Committee head-on, no holds barred, Brecht insisted on a different strategy, as he thought “that their tactics were wrong” (Lyon 1980 319; italics, mine).

Certainly Brecht recognized the Committee as a threat to individual freedom. He himself planned to oppose it through an outward show of cooperation that was really a brand of cunning. Outsmarting a powerful enemy was to him a valid form
of opposition. He considered martyrdom to be folly in any political struggle, and the eighteen [of the rest of the Hollywood Nineteen] had adopted a course that smacked to him of precisely that. (Lyon 1980: 39).

In other words, Brecht was planning to take a Schweykian stance in front of the Committee: “in Schweyk” he had signaled an approval for “an unheroic brand of behavior designed to do nothing more than save one’s own skin,” an end which Brecht accomplished without risking anyone else’s reputation; this matches Brecht’s tactics when dealing with the Communist apparachitniks in East Germany in the 1950s: “cheerful compliance, even subservience, in his dealings with the authorities on the one hand, stubborn persistence in his own essential convictions on the other” (Esslin 1980: 164).

Brecht rehearsed for his appearance in front of the Committee with his attorneys, Bartley Crum and Robert W. Crum; the political journalist Hermann Budzislawski, and Joseph Losey, the film director. While prepping with Budzisawski, “they devised an answer to whether Brecht had written a given poem.

He would reply that he had not written this poem, among other reasons because it was in English, and was quite different from the German poem on which it was based. He … used this ploy effectively… (Lyon 1980: 323; italics, mine).

While rehearsing with Losey, the director “advised Brecht to smoke a cigar during the hearings.

J. Parnell Thomas [Chairman of HUAC and a Republican congressman from New Jersey] was an avid cigar smoker, and Losey felt that Brecht might be treated more sympathetically by a fellow cigar smoker. The dramatist added this to a routine he was still rehearsing. (Lyon 1980: 328).
None of this will be surprising to anyone with even the slightest knowledge of the workings of the justice system, as attorneys rehearse with their clients and will frequently employ ploys and ruses for the benefit of a “fair” outcome. However, this is precisely the point: ploys, ruses, and the development of a routine are all everyday methods, if not of determining the outcome of events, at least of influencing them. That they can be Schweykian in character does not of course mean that only those with a knowledge of Hasek’s Svejk or Brecht’s Schweyk have access to their performance: the performance of this type of routine is, well, routine.

Brecht’s intensive preparation served him well. He was even given the ultimate compliment by theHUAC Chairman, J. Parnell Thomas, at the conclusion of his testimony: “Thank you very much, Mr. Brecht. You are a good example to the witnesses of Mr. Kenny and Mr. Crum” (Bentley1971: 220), which of course is more than a tad Schweykian as well, as Brecht may have been the most revolutionary of all the “Hollywood” witnesses to appear before the Committee and yet was being held up as an example to the remaining eighteen of the Hollywood Nineteen. One of Brecht’s ploys was to screen himself off from the more confrontational tactics of the other witnesses by claiming that as a mere guest in the United States he was compelled to be compliant in his testimony. Instead of defying the Committee in the manner of the actor Lionel Stander or the writer John Howard Lawson, Brecht would be fully cooperative and totally elusive, a difficult trick to pull off, requiring a certain facile agility which Brecht clearly displays in his testimony. “Brecht himself was only too eager to put his impertinence and Schweykian servility against what he considered the darkest and most evil forces in the country. He had always enjoyed such encounters and delighted in misleading pompous
representatives of authority by ‘sticking strictly to the untruth’,” (Esslin 1980: 70). Only in this way could he avoid both the martyrdom of a Lawson, who was blacklisted and spent a year in prison for contempt, and the surrender of a Elia Kazan, who dealt out names to the Committee like a drunken faro dealer and quickly thereafter signed a $500,000 contract with one of the Hollywood studios.

In the following exchange between Brecht and Robert Stripling, Chief Investigator for the Committee, Brecht manages to conflate his work, which is clearly meant as an indictment of capitalism and its corollary, liberal democracy, as merely intended to aid in the overthrow of Nazism.

MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Brecht, is it true that you have written a number of very revolutionary poems, plays, and other writings?

MR. BRECHT: I have written a number of poems and songs and plays in the fight against Hitler and, of course, they can be considered, therefore, as revolutionary because I, of course, was for the overthrow of the that government. (Bentley 1971: 209-210).

And when Stripling pressed further and asked, "How many of your writings been [sic] based upon the philosophy of Lenin and Marx?” Brecht, who “since 1930 … had openly based all his writings on a Marxist viewpoint … replied with complete confidence in the ignorance of the Committee,”:

No. I don’t think that is quite correct. But of course I studied; I had to study as a playwright who wrote historical plays; I, of course, had to study Marx’s ideas about history. I do not think intelligent plays today can be written without such study. Also history now, written now, is vitally influenced by the studies of Marx about history. (Esslin 1980: 72).
When questioned about *The Measures Taken*, one of Brecht’s early plays in which a revolutionary worker is executed after mangling a political assignment, Brecht fends off Stripling’s line of attack by claiming that the play is merely an “adaptation of an old religious Japanese play, called [a] Noh play, and follows quite closely this old story which shows the devotion for an ideal until death” (Bentley 1971: 211). When pressed by Stripling if the play is “pro-Communist” and “whether or not one of the characters in this play was murdered by his comrade because it was in the best interest of the Communist Party,” Brecht deflects this with an approach that can be classified as both insistent and compliant.

MR. BRECHT: No, it is not quite according to the story.

MR. STRIPLING: Because he would not bow to discipline he was murdered by his comrades, isn’t that true?

MR. BRECHT: No, it is not really in it. You will find, when you read it carefully, like in the old Japanese play where other ideas are at stake, this young man who died was convinced that he had done damage to the mission he believed in and he agreed to that and he was ready to die., in order not to make greater such damage. So he asks his comrades to help him and all of them together help him to die. He jumps into an abyss and they lead him tenderly to that abyss. And that is the story.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I gather from your remarks, from your answer, that he was just killed, he was not murdered.

MR. BRECHT: He wanted to die.

THE CHAIRMAN: So they kill him.

MR. BRECHT: No, they did not kill him - not in this story. He killed himself. They supported him, but of course they had told him that it were better when he disappeared, for him and them and the cause he also believed in. (Bentley 1971: 212).
This parsing of the “measures taken” is a careful transformation of the rigorously lethal discipline of Soviet-style Communism into a tender neo-communal leap into the abyss. Such a parsing does not quite align with Hannah Arendt’s gloss of the play: “For the measure taken is the killing of a Party member by his comrades, and the play leaves no doubt that he was the best of them, humanly speaking. Precisely because of his goodness, it turns out, he had become an obstacle to the revolution” (1983: 241). When placed against his apologias for Stalin’s reign of terror, Brecht’s hermeneutics can be read as a feat of legerdemain, the misdirection of a wily conjurer diverting his audience from the “trick” behind the trick, which is hidden in plain sight; James Lyon in Bertolt Brecht in America cites conversations with Hans Viertel and Egon Breiner, close friends of Brecht’s, to show that Brecht’s support of Stalin extended to a justification of the show trials:

By the time he [Brecht] reached America, he had developed a battery of sophisticated arguments to show that these trials were necessary, and they made him sound like an apologist for Stalinist terror. Viertel and Breiner … recall that their most violent disagreements centered on this topic. Viertel remembers Brecht’s statement that Stalin had no way of making ninety million illiterate muzhiks understand why Bukharin and others were ideologically wrong; he had to treat these men as criminals to make his point clear. (Lyon 1980: 295-296).

That Brecht’s sympathy, and even empathy, with the measures taken by Stalin may have extended to executions on a massive scale can be viewed as possible (and even probable) if we take the cue from a disagreement Brecht had with Viertel, who was a follower of Trotsky, Stalin’s arch-enemy: Viertel “asked what would happen to those who refused to accept his [Brecht’s] views. Brecht’s answer was simple: They have to be shot” (Lyon 1980: 294).
But there’s more to this exchange than meets the eye, as Brecht, having become convinced that the Committee’s “investigators” knew next to nothing about his work, was not only deflecting and diverting Stripling’s attack: he was also lying through his teeth, as the playwright “intentionally confused” *The Measures Taken* “with the earlier play *Der Jasager*, which *was* based on a Japanese legend and had been a kind of preliminary study for” *The Measures Taken* (Esslin 1980: 71; italics, Esslin). Of course, if Brecht had been caught in the lie, he had a way out of the tangle he had deliberately created: “If challenged, Brecht could always have excused himself with having simply confused two of his plays that have much in common. But the Committee, of course, did not know the facts” (Esslin 1980: 71). The deft lie, along with its essential backup, the robust explication, should be added to our catalogue of ruses. But of course total and complete ignorance on the part of one's opponents also helps in such situations.

Another ploy that Brecht used while testifying was to deflect criticism by throwing the blame to the translation, or rather, the mistranslation of his work.

MR. STRIPLING: Did you collaborate with Hans Eisler on the song “In Praise of Learning”? 

MR. BRECHT: Yes, I collaborated. I wrote that song, and he only the music. 

MR. STRIPLING: Would you recite to the Committee the words of that song? 

MR. BRECHT: Yes, I would. May I point out, that song comes in another adaptation I made, of Gorky’s play, *Mother*. In this song a Russian worker woman addresses all the poor people. (Bentley 1971: 217).

Having deployed the same ploy used while defending *The Measures Taken*, that the work in question should be viewed as a mere adaptation instead of an original composition,
Stripling recites the lyrics of “In Praise of Learning” and then Brecht sets his next ruse into action:

MR. STRIPLING:

Learning now the simple truth.
You, for whom the time has come at last.
It is not too late.
Learn now the A, B, C,
It is not enough, but learn it still.
Fear not, be not downhearted.
Begin, you must learn the lesson
You must be ready to take over.

MR. BRECHT: No, excuse me, that is the wrong translation. That is not right. (Laughter.) Just one second, and I will give you the correct text. (Bentley 1971: 94, 217).

So here Brecht uses humor, one of the most effective tactics of the underdog, to undermine the line of questioning being pursued by Stripling. The source of humor is a bit obscure, and may have had something to do with Brecht’s manner or perhaps his tone of voice; whatever its source, the ploy apparently hit the mark, as laughter ensues. The “correct” text is then offered up by Brecht’s interpreter, a Mr. Baumgardt, on loan to the Committee from the Library of Congress: according to Baumgardt, the last line should read “taking the lead” instead of “to take over.” The interpreter’s intervention is followed by a comment from Chairman Thomas: “I cannot understand the interpreter any more than I can the witness” (Bentley 1971: 218). Obfuscation through garbled speech or the use of a thick accent, whether that accent be “real” or exaggerated for effect, are ruses manipulated here to Brecht’s benefit: commended for the candor of his testimony, even though members of the Committee (or at least its Chairman) evidently had some
difficulty even comprehending what was being uttered by the witness, the Committee released the playwright without reproach. Brecht left the next week for Europe, never to return to the United States.

Let me make a lateral move here to the infamous Army-McCarthy hearings and their undoing by the attorney for the United States Army, Joseph Welch, in order to illustrate what I understand as the difference between the tactical and the strategic in de Certeau’s schema. “Strategies,” writes de Certeau in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, “are actions which, thanks to the establishment of a place of power…. pin their hopes on the resistance that the establishment of a place offers to the erosion of time,” while tactics “depend on a clever utilization of time” (1984: 38-39; italics, de Certeau). Tactics, then, rely on a sense of timeliness, not a control of place or space: Brecht, for instance, occupies a tactical position in front of HUAC and effectively utilizes his comic sense of timing to divert the Committee’s examination whereas Stripling occupies a place of power with all its strategic legal resources: the power of subpoena, the right to indict, and so on. Strategies “require an accumulated financial, symbolic and/or scientific capital’, together with a corresponding measure of security and stability” while tactical “practices are exposed upon a field controlled by a stronger force, “ a description certainly aligning with the tactics practiced by Svejk, Schweyk, and Brecht; tactics “lack the fortifications and the assurances provided by multifarious kinds of capital” (Ahearne 1995: 162).

When Welch lambastes Senator Joseph McCarthy with the famous words, “You've done enough. Have you no sense of decency, sir? At long last, have you left no sense of decency?” the words do their work not only because they are delivered with passion, conviction, intelligence, and daring but also because they are invoked by an
attorney for the United States Army, certainly an entity which has the ‘accumulated financial, symbolic and/or scientific ‘capital,’ together with a corresponding measure of security and stability’ required for a strategy to succeed. Imagine Brecht suddenly proclaiming sentiments of a similar nature in front of HUAC and what one has imagined is precisely the strategy utilized by the rest of the Hollywood Nineteen; for example, the screenwriter John Howard Lawson roared at Thomas: “I am not on trial here, Mister Chairman. This Committee is on trial here before the American people” (Bentley 1971: 154). This is all well and good, and I, for one, hardily agree with Lawson’s sentiments; however, he is making a strategic maneuver instead of a tactical one: he is not in the position (or the place) to put the Committee on trial, neither does he have the accumulated financial and/or scientific capital nor the corresponding measure of security and stability to make such a charge stick even if he were in the position to make the charge. Notice that the symbolic has been omitted from this list, as this seems to be what Lawson is banking on with his intrepid frontal assault: that the symbolic weight of what he is invoking will somehow overwhelm the legal (or extra-legal) capital subtending the Committee. On the other hand, Brecht knew he was in a tactical, not a strategic position, and so he deployed the tactical tools of the powerless: the ruse, the prank, the ploy, the fabrication, the diversion, the joke, the deliberate act of misdirection, the “Rabelaisian fart in a ceremony commemorating history” (de Certeau 1988: 314). In its most contemporary form, there is also the psych or the punk, as in “the psych-out,” or “being punked” by someone.

We should also include the acts of pilfering described by James C. Scott in “Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance.” Ass Scott elucidates the situation of the
Malaysian peasant, “such forms of resistance [such as pilfering and evading taxes] are the nearly permanent, continuous, daily strategies of subordinate rural classes under difficult conditions” (1986: 22). Akin to Schweyk, when these peasants perform acts of everyday resistance, they are just as concerned with long- and/or short-term survival as they are of performing acts of outright rebellion: “The South-east Asian peasant who hid his rice and possessions from the tax collector may have been protesting high taxes, but he was just as surely seeing to it that his family would have enough rice until the next harvest” (Scott 1986: 23). And Christine Pelzer White adds that many of the acts of everyday resistance among Vietnamese peasants, such as “instances of literal and figurative footdragging … seem to have actually functioned primarily as delaying tactics in an inexorable process of peasant loss of land” (1986: 54).

Let me make a few more remarks about tactics and the everyday before turning to Bourdieu. First, though I have used what might be termed a mini-genealogy of Schweykian qualities to explicate this term, I do not want to give the impression that such tactics are unusual or confined to idiosyncratic situations. They are deployed every day in a plethora of everyday situations, from high school students shamming sickness to workers fudging time-cards to wives and husbands covering their tracks during love affairs to power brokers engaging in hyperbole of all kinds to advertisers transforming superfluous wants into requisite needs. Though not essentially instruments of revolution or even of rebellion, they can certainly be employed for such ends. They can be also be used to puncture and perforate norms girding everyday situations, allowing some “breathing room” into disciplinary regimes which otherwise would be suffocating. But, as we have witnessed through our examination of Schweykian practices, they can also be
used to evade and elude authority while doubling as a kind of reproductive instrument to ensure survival. Let us now turn to Bourdieu and *transposition*, which can be conceived as a kind of supplementary counterpart to the ruse.

*Transposition: The One into the Other*

What I want to focus on in this section is the transposition, which can be viewed as a complement to the ruse: typically, the ruse is used as a cover for actions which disconnect one from normative regimes: Berthold the Schoolboy tricks his French teacher into giving him higher marks; by perceiving a silver lining in the planed wood of the plank bed of his jail cell, Schweyk the Dog-Catcher covers the grimness of his situation with his sunny sense of optimism. The transposition or, perhaps better, the analogical transfer, does not cover one thing *with* another, it connects one thing *to* another, and, though that connection can serve to undermine normative regimes, it is still an act of cathexis. So what I wish to suggest here is that the ruse is an act of disconnection while the transposition is an act of connection, the latter a stitching, the former a de-stitching.

In order to support this, first let us examine some of Bourdieu’s transpositional practices as an ethnographer; following that, we will we trace the genealogy of his primary conceptual term, habitus. In both of these operations, we will continue our vertical approach to time, using history as a tool of excavation to scoop out the present and line it with the residue of the findings from our investigation into what can whimsically be dubbed a diachronic bathypelagic domain.

“Bourdieu expressed his understandings of peasant life and its emotional implications for the individual in Algeria in ways that might also have been based upon
his own life experience growing up in a French village” (Reed-Danahay 2009: 140). This transposition is in effect the formation of an analogy between two sets of experiences, one set consisting of “peasant” life in Algeria during the late 1950s and early 1960s, as filtered through Bourdieu’s observations, and the other of “peasant” life in Bourdieu’s “native” village in Bearn in the southwest of France during the 1930s and ’40s, as filtered through Bourdieu’s memories. Such a transposition is indicative of multiple operations undertaken on an everyday basis by multitudes of people. Put crudely, this particular analogy can be stated as, “One village equates with any other.” And, though this can easily result in mis-cataloguing of the grossest variety, it is also one of the most fundamental methods by which we traverse across the topography of social life. The “work of categorization, i.e., of making-explicit and of classification, is performed incessantly, at every moment of ordinary existence” (Bourdieu 1985: 729).

Such work consists of navigation performed by the recognition (or the mis-recognition, as the case may be) of ideal types. “But why form … ideal types at all? Why not simply collect empirical facts?” asks Alfred Schutz in his paper, “The Problem of Rationality in the Social World,” first published in 1943. The answer, says Schutz, is that ideal types are “generalizations and idealizations on a high level of abstraction” and “nothing but a kind of intellectual shorthand” (1943: 146). If we only operated through the immediate accumulation of empirical facts and the conclusions to which they led, we would have to begin completely anew with every situation. Every village, for instance, would be perceived *ex nihilo* and *sui generis*, and would therefore have to be formulated and conceived from scratch every time it was encountered. The shorthand provided by ideal types allows for shorthand of the mind: here is a village just like, or at least similar
to, any other village. However, such forms of intellectual shorthand frequently short-circuit, as they fail to properly convey and/or comprehend that which has been placed under the aegis of the ideal type under which it has been classified, and so can lead to category mistakes and mis-assumptions.4

For any transposition to occur, however, there must first be a background against which such a transposition can occur: ergo, habitus. So allow me to first briefly explicate this term made famous by Bourdieu before retrieving our examination of transposition. Rogers Brubaker states that habitus can be “defined abstractly as the system of internalized dispositions that mediates between social structures and practical activity, being shaped by the former and regulating the latter” (1985: 758). As described by Abdellah Hammoudi, habitus can perhaps be best conceived of as a “system of internalized structures … formed through education and socialization, both in the memorization of explicit wisdom that reinforces the group’s ethos, and in the education of the body in behavioral schemes” (Hammoudi 2009: 216). And so habitus performs at both a collective and an individual scale, through socialization into the group and through the education of the body. Prior to adding to this, let us note that there are obvious parallels between a process whose end is ‘the education of the body in behavioral schemes’ and a Foucauldian disciplinary regime whose end is the transformation of unformed or resistant bodies into formed, docile ones. Bourdieu also conceives of habitus as a vehicle for bridging the gap between the objective and the subjective, between

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4 For more on analogy per se, see chapter 3, “Representing,” in Foucault’s in The Order of Things, and also Visual Analogy: Consciousness as the Art of Connecting by Barbara Maris Stafford (MIT Press, Cambridge Massachusetts; London, England; 1999), especially where she traces two strands of analogy back to the Greeks: the proportionate kind, which she ties to mathematics and Aristotle, and the participatory kind, which she traces to metaphysics and Plato; or, to put it more plainly, analogies of a quantitative and analogies of a qualitative kind, respectively (1999: 2).
structuralism and phenomenology: “objective or material conditions of existence” are “mediated through subjective dispositions, which themselves reflected a specific relationship to ‘traditional’ social and cultural forms” (Lane 2000: 27). In addition, habitus has a tri-partite relationship to time vis-à-vis the group and the individual: based on the practices of the past, it provides methods by which to respond to the present and anticipate a future which will not be rocked by the unexpected:

Actions and reactions regulated by habitus are … made up of tested formulae that respond to the immediacy of the moment. It is not a matter of a future conceived of as an open-ended interval of time in which foreseeable events will happen, and whose nature and risks one will try to anticipate. Rather it is a coming future, proximate and performed by a shared past. For habitus is impersonal…. It belongs to no one. It is both mine and also belongs to everyone…. Moreover, given its formation, habitus is at the basis of behaviors that tend to reproduce observed regularities, insofar as it presided over the generation of such behaviors over time. (Hammoudi 2009: 214-215).

With this last remark of Hammoudi’s, we can begin to understand why habitus can be thought of as the counterpart and opposite of the ruse, for if habitus provides ‘the basis of behaviors that tend to reproduce observed regularities,’ the ruse disrupts that tendency, typically by parading in the garments of that very tendency while undermining it. Ergo, the deception, the trick, and the ploy, which upset regularities as they disguise themselves as regularities. The ruse can be conceived as that which passes under and through the surface of the everyday, sometimes poking out through the other side of normative orders; analogical transfers travel over and across the surface of the everyday: the ruse is the warp, the transposition the woof.

Even though Bourdieu himself describes habitus as “necessity internalized,” this does not categorically lead to an understanding of habitus as something merely static,
fixed, immobile, tethered to tradition with no allowance for movement (1984: 170). The various practices constituted by habitus can also be understood as that which “allows one to resolve new problems by means of an analogical ‘transfer’ (transfert analogique) of schemata of judgment and action.

Practice, moreover, not only unfolds in concrete conjunctures, but also and above all by the mastered exercise of these analogical transfers. In this way it both conserves its autonomy and shows itself to be simultaneously ready to deal with the difficulties brought about by new situations. (Hammoudi 2009: 215).

This comports nicely with Bourdieu’s description of habitus as “a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which … makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks, thanks to analogical transfers of schemes permitting the solution of similarly shaped problems” (1977: 82-83; italics, mine). Transpositions can take on an “aggressive” as well as a “submissive” form. For instance, prior to the Algerian War, Bourdieu contends that “resistance to the French had largely taken the form of retrenchment, of a conscious adherence to tradition and a refusal of Western styles of dress, of Western medicines, and of cultural and social forms perceived to be tools of the colonizer. However, as the war progressed, the Algerians were appropriating these tools of domination to turn them against the French” (Lane 2000: 18). Following this model, transposition can be thought of as a sort of switching of the tables: the tools of domination are copied and then reversed when used by the oppressed against their oppressors.

To a certain extent, transposition can simply be thought of as exchange. When we barter in commodities, or when we exchange money for commodities or trade one form
of currency for another (money for money), we are analogically transposing one value for another. For instance, when we trade twenty dollars for a hammer, we are making the transpositional judgment that twenty dollars is an analogical value for one hammer. This movement of analogical exchange is akin to the *kula* or “grand potlatch” of the Trobianders described by Malinowski and then glossed by Mauss:

> It [the *kula*] is the vehicle of a great inter-tribal trade extending over all the Trobiands, past of the d’Entrecasteaux group and part of the Amphletts. It has indirect influence on all the tribes and immediate influence on some: Dobu in the Amphletts; Kiriwina, Sinaketa and Kitava in the Trobriands; and Vakuta on Woodlark Island. Malinowski does not translate the word [*kula*], which probably, however, means ‘ring’; and in fact it seems as if all these tribes, the sea journeys, the precious objects, the food and feasts, the economic, ritual and sexual services, the men and the women, were caught in a ring around which they kept up a regular movement in time and space. (Mauss 1967: 20).

Of course such rings of exchange need not be redolent of the exotic: they can be as ordinary (to middle-class Western sensibilities, that is) as cash exchanged for washing detergent; but the take-away for our purposes is that exchange can work as an analogical transposition for transposition itself! And of course analogical breakdowns run rampant in regimes of economic exchange: consider the South Sea Bubble, Enron, the Ponzi scheme of Bernie Madoff or the car dealer turning back the mileage on used vehicles: these are all examples of analogical transfers gone awry and are based on our old friends, the ruse and the ploy, deception and deceit. For, as Deleuze says, “Analogy is the essence of judgment,” but judgment does not preclude *mis*judgments in terms of analogical exchanges: thus, the proverb, *caveat emptor* (1994: 33).
When introducing the concept of commodity exchange in *Capital*, Marx posits it as a kind of analogical transport:

Let us take two commodities, e.g., corn and iron. The proportions in which they are exchangeable, whatever these proportions may be, can always be represented by an equation in which a given quantity of corn is equated to some quantity of iron: e.g., 1 quarter corn = x cwt. iron. What does this equation tell us? It tells us that in two different things – in 1 quarter of corn and x cwt. of iron, there exists in equal quantities something common to both. The two things must therefore be equal to a third, which in itself is neither the one nor the other. Each of them, so far as it is exchange value, must be reducible to a third. (1996: 47).

In a capitalistic society, this third thing is typically money, a place-holder for abstract value. And perhaps the place that money takes in the exchange of two commodities, as the reduction common to both things, is analogous to the place that judgment takes when transposing two things analogically, the third thing (the value judgment, the cash equivalent) common to the two things brought together in a kind of reduction.

Marxists, of course, would aver that there is a fundamental misrecognition at the core of systems of capitalistic exchanges: that labor and its value are lost as they are fetishized within the commodification of the objects being exchanged. So, from a Marxian perspective, any transposition within this realm is a mis-transposition, as what is being exchanged is disguised through the fetish of the commodity and the effacement of labor. “Marx recognized that, although commodities as material `things’ are produced through a labour process that involved specific social relations, the thing character … tends to mask the underlying social processes once these commodities enter daily life via the market” (Merrifield 1993: 519-520). Or as ex-steelworker Frank Curtis puts it in the docu-drama, *Lady Beth: The Steelworkers’ Play*:
What’s interesting is, if you took a bunch of, let’s say a bunch of kids from a grammar school and just drove them around: I mean – who made that car? Lee Iacocca. You know. I mean that’s what everybody sees – things by the titles on a building. You say – oh, you think that’s a beautiful building; and it says maybe – Bank of America. Who made that? A kid would say – Oh, Bank of America. And there’s a total, there’s just a total ignorance about who really makes things. And it’s taken for granted. I mean the average person takes for granted that you go down, you buy a car and you drive it. You forget that there were assembly workers making that car. You drive over a bridge and you forget that there were ironworkers making that bridge. (Sullivan et al. 1986: 1).

This “forgetting” is perhaps not a forgetting at all, but an a priori condition of capitalism, an essential assumption that disguises labor in the product that is labored upon. The forgetting is based on something that was never recalled in the first place, as the fetish masks the ignorance upon which the market slides forward as if its products are built from nothingness and by nobody. This is mis-transposition, all the way down. Which is not to say that Marx did not understand the ostensible mutuality of exchange; of course he did: “It is your object, the equivalent of my object, that gives your want for my object value, dignity, and efficacy for me. Our mutual product, therefore, is the means, the intermediary, the instrument, the acknowledged power of our mutual needs” (1994: 51; italics, Marx). However, this mutuality of exchange disguises labor power as it valorizes the objects exchanged to the extent that the power of property trumps ownership; the object only “appeared to be our property, but actually we are its property” (Marx 1994: 52).

Two more points should be made before proceeding. The first is that Bourdieu recognizes that one’s habitus can be sundered, split, or ruptured, transforming what had seemed to be the very fundament of existence, the core of the given, the suppositions undergirding the presuppositions of the everyday, into a contingent set of contingencies.
For instance. “colonial Algerians” were placed “in the untenable position of being ‘between two worlds,’ of suffering from a *habitus clive*, condemning them to the realization that the world that they had previously taken to be axiomatic (or *doxic*) was merely contingent, one of many possible configurations” (Silverstein and Goodman 2009: 19). Given the millions of exiles and émigrés migrating across the world today as well as the proliferation of economic refugees, primarily traveling from the Global South to the Global North in a search for work, it would seem to now be the case that existence within dual or even multiple-pronged regimes of *habitus clive* are nearly as predominant as existence within only one primary habitus. The second point is that, as already noted, not all transpositions are performed correctly. In fact, as we shall see, analogical transfers can easily become tangled up in their own adroit mobility: the facile agility with which they operate is deceptive, leading to *transmutations* instead of *transpositions*. Category mistakes and misrecognitions are frequent; for instance, as mentioned previously, Reed-Danahay contends that Bourdieu “might” have “understood” Algerian village life as analogical to life in a French village. However, the Algerian villages in which Bourdieu conducted his ethnographic studies in the late 1950s and early 1960s were not villages at all (and they certainly weren’t *French* villages); they “were all resettlement centers, or villages to which hundreds (and in the case of Djemaa Saharidj) thousands of Algerians were forcibly relocated during the war” (Goodman 2009: 103-104).

These camps had been constructed and administered by the French army for resettled villagers from areas the army had declared ‘forbidden zones’ in an effort to dismantle supply chains for the National Liberation Army (ALN). The metropolitan press had quickly denounced these centers as veritable concentration camps, an accusation the government sought to counter with the ARDES
Bourdieu was hired by Alain Darbel, the head of ARDES, “to provide sociological interpretation of the statistics gathered” by the ARDES researchers (Silverstein and Goodman 2009: 13); this work became the basis for Bourdieu’s ethnographic studies of the village life of Kabylia. It is not too difficult to see that the “villagers” of Algeria who had “settled” in the resettlement centers are not transposable with Algerian villagers dwelling in their own villages, let alone villagers of France dwelling in their villages. However, such mistakes have not been performed solely by Bourdieu: history is littered with them, and why wouldn’t it be, when, at least to a certain degree, we must base perceptions and judgments on things we have already perceived and judged, making clumsy and even egregiously faulty transpositions a near necessity. Much of the problem lies in the fact that “analogy tends almost inevitably toward substitution” (Read 2005: 13). We lose the difference of the two things being compared as their similarities tend to fuse them together in asymptotic fashion.

Let us now turn to the main focus of this section, a brief analysis of the transposition of habitus as employed by Bourdieu. In Pierre Bourdieu: A Critical Introduction, Jeremy F. Lane seems to lay out a fairly clear genealogy for Bourdieu’s appropriation of “habitus”:

The Greek term ‘hexis’ is originally derived from Aristotle and means simply ‘habit’. ‘Habitus’ is its Latin equivalent and derives from the writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas. However, as Bourdieu made clear in two footnotes, he had borrowed the terms from Marcel Mauss’s essay ‘Techniques du corps’, where they had been used to describe the way agents and groups incorporate social imperatives into their deportment and dispositions. (Lane 2000: 41-42).
But in the same book Lane suggests that Bourdieu has appropriated the term from Husserl; referencing Husserl’s *Ideas II* as the source of Bourdieu’s transposition, Lane states that

Husserl argues that time is not experienced as so many discrete moments in a linear causal series, but rather in a ‘field’ or ‘network of intentionalities’, of past experiences, ‘retentions’, which are incorporated into a structure of ‘intuitive expectations’ or ‘practical anticipations’ as so many ‘protentions’, a ‘practical sense’ of what does or does not constitute an ‘objective potentiality’. He terms this structure of dispositions a ‘habitus’. Habitually, in an action such as taking a spoon and placing it in the mouth, agents will have only a ‘practical’ sense of what they are doing; they will intuitively anticipate the position of their own mouth, for example, based on practical aptitudes they have picked up through past experience. Such a sense requires no reflections on their part on the complex range of physiological and mental capacities involved. (2000: 24).

Yet in *Pascalian Meditations*, Bourdieu seems to reject Husserl’s use of habitus (*Habitualitat*) because it “endlessly” oscillates “between a transcendental theory of the pure ego … and an anthropological theory of the empirical Ego” (2000: 82, f.n. 26).

Now, whether Mauss’s use of habitus to denote the incorporation of ‘social imperatives’ into the ‘deportment and dispositions’ of groups and individuals is proximate in meaning to Husserl’s sense of habitus as a structure of dispositions which provides agents with a ‘practical sense’ of their objective potentialities, might be a question worth pursuing; however, it is not particularly germane to what we are in pursuit of at this moment, and, besides, it is a question which may require an entire book (or a series of books) for its proper unraveling. What we should focus on instead is that there seems to be a tangle of transpositions in Lane’s somewhat mangled genealogy. However, for our purposes, such

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a mess is all to the good. For let us willy-nilly stipulate that Lane is correct on all counts: Bourdieu derived his use of habitus by way of Aristotle and Aquinas and Mauss and Husserl.

What does this mean for us? It means that we are not quite done, as we need to add the art historian Erwin Panofsky into this mish-mashed mix as well, for, according to the anthropologist William H. Hanks, he was the source of Bourdieu’s adaptation of the term. “Panofsky adapted the scholastic concept of habitus to cultural production in medieval France …. Panofsky defined habitus in terms of ‘habits of mind’ that lay behind Gothic architecture and scholastic philosophy, arguing in effect that cultural production is profoundly shaped by the ways of thinking of its time” (Hanks 2005: 70). Here, Gothic architecture and scholastic philosophy are reflecting a modus operandi back and forth between one another, as a transposable mode of transparency suffuses the operations of both domains: “The principle of transparency governed architectural design, as clarification governed scholastic thought. Cathedrals were designed with an eye to totality, symmetry, and replication of homologous parts, as arguments were based on distinctiveness, deductive cogency, the mutual inferability among parts, and explicitness” (Hanks 2005: 70). Hanks provides evidence to bolster his claim that the descent of habitus went straight from Panofsky to Bourdieu:
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Panofsky developed a concept of habitus that is the immediate mental counterpart of Bourdieu’s use of the term. Bourdieu translated Panofsky’s book [*Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism: An Inquiry into the Analogy of the Arts, Philosophy and Religion in the Middle Ages*] into French in 1967, and wrote a postface to the French edition, in which he comments on the importance of the art historian’s notion of habitus. To my knowledge, this is the first usage of the term in Bourdieu’s published writing. (Hanks 2005: 70).

And so let us add an ad hoc codicil to our stipulation and toss Panofsky into our mangle of a genealogical mix while also noting that Panofsky provides a bridge between scholastic philosophy, Gothic architecture, and the concept of habitus as used by Bourdieu.

My hunch is that, despite the testimony of Hanks, Mauss may be the correct “culprit” here; first of all, due to the fact that Bourdieu explicitly references his debt to Mauss in the two footnotes cited by Lane; secondly, there is a disciplinary connection, being that they both were anthropologically-oriented sociologists; and, third, because a reading of Mauss’s “Techniques of the Body” offers up a definition of habitus that comports snugly with Bourdieu’s use of the term but also leaves a clue dangling which I am afraid we have neither the time nor the resources to solve:

I have had this notion of the social nature of the ‘habitus’ for many years [Mauss is stating this in 1934]. Please note that I use the Latin word – *it should be understood in France* – habitus. The word translated infinitely better than ‘habitude’ (habit or custom), the ‘exis’ [sic]⁶, the ‘acquired ability’ and ‘faculty’ of Aristotle (who was a psychologist). It does not designate these metaphysical *habitudes*, that mysterious ‘memory’, the subjects of volumes or short and famous theses. These ‘habits’ do not just vary with individuals and their imitations, they vary especially between societies, educations, properties and fashions, prestige. In them we should see the techniques and work of collective and individual practical reason rather than, in the ordinary way, merely the soul and its repetitive faculties. (Mauss 2006: 80; italics, mine).

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⁶ This word is also spelled “hexis.”
First let us note that this definitional gloss could not only be referenced as a lineage for Bourdieu’s usage of “habitus,” but also for his usage of the distinction of taste, as Mauss’s citation of habitus in reference to ‘properties and fashions, prestige’ leaves a whiff of this distinction of Bourdieu’s in its wake. Second, note the clue, pendant with possibilities, but annoyingly not filled in: ‘Please note that I use the Latin word – *it should be understood in France* – habitus.’ So, apparently, the term was well known, or at least understood, in the France of Mauss’s era. The whereof and the whereabouts of this we will have to leave as a nexus of investigation for someone else. Finally, we should turn to a few of Mauss’s exemplars of habitus, as they will further illuminate habitus in general and Mauss’s conception of them in particular.

Referencing his own experience, Mauss tells his audience (he is addressing a meeting of the *Societe de Psychologie Francaise*) that during World War One he “had many opportunities to note the differences between the various armies.

An anecdote about *marching*. You all know that the British infantry marches with a different step from our own: a different frequency and a different stride…. The Worcester Regiment, having achieved considerable glory alongside French Infantry in the Battle of the Aisne, requested Royal permission to have French trumpets and drums, a band of French buglers and drummers. The result was not very encouraging. For nearly six months, in the streets of Bailleul, long after the Battle of the Aisne, I often saw the following sight: the regiment had preserved its English march but had set it to a French rhythm. It even had at the head of its band a little French light infantry regimental sergeant major who could blow the bugle and sound the march even better than his men. The unfortunate regiment of tall Englishmen could not march. Their gait was completely at odds. When they tried to march in step, the music would be out of step. With the result that the Worcester Regiment was forced to give up its French buglers. (2006: 79; italics, Mauss).
Now what is remarkable about this passage is not only its sense of humor as well as its alarming notation of a singular instance of Englishmen openly displaying a preference for things French of a martial kind, but also that this is such a perfect exemplar of all things “habitus.” Here is habitus deeply ingrained in the body, to the point where stride and a change of music cannot be aligned. In other words, it is habitus embodied, and embodied to the degree that it cannot be eradicated: ’The unfortunate regiment of tall Englishmen could not march. Their gait was completely at odds. When they tried to march in step, the music would be out of step. With the result that the Worcester Regiment was forced to give up its French buglers.’ Those French buglers just had to go! Otherwise, the Englishmen simply could not march! Such is the power of habitus.

Mauss is very clever in the selection of examples by which he displays the range of habitus. Besides evidence collected through personal observation, such as the French-English musical-marching mashup, Mauss also cites evidence gathered from ethnographic investigations, e.g. on the wide variety of the habitus of sleeping:

One thing is very simple: it is possible to distinguish between those societies that have nothing to sleep on except the ’floor’, and those that have instrumental assistance…. There are people with mats and people without (Asia, Oceania, part of America). There are people with pillows and people without. There are populations which lie very close together in a ring to sleep round a fire, or even without a fire…. The Fuegians, who live in a very cold region, cannot warm their feet while they are asleep having only one blanket of skin (guanaco). Finally there is sleep standing up. The Masai can sleep on their feet. (2006: 88).

He also relies on personal experience for evidence. For instance, insofar as Mauss is French and insofar as he is also a swimmer, Mauss notes the alterations in the aquatic habitus of the French that have transpired over his lifetime:
Our generation has witnessed a complete change in [swimming] technique: we have seen the breaststroke with the head out of the water replaced by the different sorts of crawl. Moreover, the habit of swallowing water and spitting it out again has gone. In my day swimmers thought of themselves as a kind of steamboat. It was stupid, but in fact I still do this: I cannot get rid of my technique. (2006: 79).

Why can he not divest himself of this technique? The pedagogy of the body instilled in him from the first moment he jumped in the water. The teaching of the techniques of the body is “essential”; there exists in every society “education of the vision, education in walking – ascending, descending, running…. education in composure (Mauss 2006: 85, 93). Plainly, here we can note the parallel between such techniques of the body and Foucault’s discourse on the disciplining of the body.

Mauss also marshals evidence from the site in which he finds himself, i.e. addressing the meeting of the Societe de Psychologie Francaise in May of 1934:

Here let us look for a moment at ourselves. Everything in us all is under command. I am a lecturer for you; you can tell it from my … posture and my voice, and you are listening to me seated and in silence. We have a set of permissible or impermissible, natural or unnatural attitudes. Thus we should attribute different values to the act of staring fixedly: a symbol of politeness in the army, and of rudeness in everyday life. (2006: 83).

Here, the assumptions and presuppositions, the givenness and the everydayness, of the situation-at-hand are cited as examples of habitus: in a lecture hall, the audience will be `seated and in silence,’ the lecturer will assume a solitary post, facing his or her audience, there will be a general hush of concentration, and so on. But note how much of this is contingent (well, in fact, all of it is contingent, as the lecture hall and lecturing itself have been instantiated over the course of time in a particular cultural nexus, and are only accepted via custom and tradition, i.e. habitus), as Mauss assumes that his audience is
listening, yet why could they not be preoccupied with a million other things: what must I accomplish tomorrow; look at that young fellow over there: isn’t he handsome!; my oh my, I certainly wish I could control this flatulence; why am I not the lucky one up there at the lectern; and so on.

Now that we have made a partial survey of Mauss’s use of habitus, it seems, at least to me, that Marcel Mauss rather than Pierre Bourdieu, should receive credit (if such credit is due) for bringing habitus into the forefront of the academia. Yet this would not be the first time, nor the last, when terms and schemas have been mobilized and transported from one scholar to another without proper citation. But it isn’t our business nor does it fall within our range of expertise to make any final adjudication on this matter; and so we move on.

Perhaps it may be helpful to trace out, at least to a certain degree, what has occurred during this disjointed series of transfers regarding habitus. Have these appropriations of habitus transposed the term beyond recognition? In other words, has this process of analogical transfer destroyed the analogical integrity upon which the transfers are based? If the term no longer means what Aristotle conceived of it as meaning, has a “crime of lexical transport” been committed? Has the essential probity of analogical transfer been undermined? Is there such a thing as ‘the essential probity of analogical transfer’ which could be undermined? And, if there is, has it come undone by the series of transpositions that brought habitus down through the centuries? Has it been subjected to an act of deceit? Is the use of habitus by Bourdieu deceptive? Did the term become a parody of itself? Granting the term the modicum of agency necessary to
perform acts of deception, did it, in fact, become something of a self-perpetuated semantical prank, a lexical ruse, a denotative misdirection?

In *Politics of Piety: the Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*, Saba Mahmood makes a strong case that, at the least, Bourdieu did not fully understand Aristotle’s conception of habitus while also neglecting a strand of the term’s genealogy which passed through a congeries of Arabic thinkers. Mahmood claims that in her own usage of habitus she “draws upon a longer and richer history” than Bourdieu, one that she derives from “an older Aristotelian tradition” in which *habitus* is “understood to be an acquired excellence at either a moral or a practical craft, learned through repeated practice until that practice leaves a permanent mark on the character of the person” (2005: 136). But wait, didn’t Lane say that Bourdieu had also acquired the term through a lineage which could be traced to Aristotle? And, in fact, Mahmood also accedes that Bourdieu traces his use of the term to Aristotle: does this mean that there is a “younger” and an “older” Aristotelian tradition of habitus, with Mahmood claiming a lineage from the former while assigning Bourdieu a lineage from the latter? Or does this mean that one or the other has mis-transposed and mis-analogized the term? Has there been a fundamental mistake made somewhere along the line here, somewhat akin to Bourdieu (mis)representing resettlement centers as villages?

Mahmood traces habitus to Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, in which she reads habitus as denoting a “tradition of moral cultivation” and implying “a quality that is acquired through human industry, assiduous practice, and discipline, such that it becomes a permanent feature of a person’s character” (2005: 136). This would mean that, at least as Mahmood understands the term, the practice of habitus is a moral one prior to being a
socio-economic one (if those domains can be parsed away from one another, a delicate operation the doing of which I am not certain is even possible) and that such a practice requires *practice*: it is acquired, not automatically received upon birth through the conjunction of family lineage, cultural form, and/or social status, as would seem to be the case in Bourdieu’s construal of the term. I should note here that in my reading of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, habitus can be *imposed* as well developed through practice. For some, “it is not enough if they get the correct upbringing and attention when they are young; rather, they must continue the same practices and be habituated to them when they become men…. That is why legislators must … impose corrective treatments and penalties on anyone who disobeys or lacks the right nature, and must completely expel an incurable” (Aristotle 1999: 168 [1180a]). Ergo, habit and habitude are embedded in “rehabilitation.” This reading brings the *Ethics* closer to a Foucauldian rather than a Bourdieuen understanding of habitus.

What Mahmood is claiming is that Bourdieu ignores “the pedagogical aspect of the Aristotelian notion” of habitus (2005: 139). But then she goes even further and implies that Bourdieu’s understanding of habitus is one thing and the Aristotelian notion of habitus quite another:

One result of Bourdieu’s neglect of the manner and process by which a person comes to acquire a habitus is that we lose a sense of how specific conceptions of the self (there ay be different ones that inhabit the space of a single culture) require different kinds of bodily capacities. *In contrast, the Aristotelian notion of habitus* forces us to problematize how specific kinds of bodily practice come to articulate different conceptions of the ethical subject, and how bodily form does not simply express the social structure but also endows the self with particular capacities through which the subject comes to enact the world. (Mahmood 2005: 139; italics, mine).
So here what she seems to be saying is that Bourdieu has not simply mis-transposed habitus from Aristotle, but rather that he has not transposed it at all from Aristotle, as his “neglect” has led to a usage falling completely outside the Aristotelian tradition.

Mahmood also draws our attention to the Arabic engagement with the term: the “Aristotelian understanding of moral formation [i.e., her understanding of Aristotle’s understanding of habitus] influenced a number of Islamic thinkers, foremost among them the eleventh-century theologian Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 1111), but also al-Miskawayh (d. 1030), Ibn Rushd (d. 1198), and Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406)” (2005: 137).

To counter Mahmood’s claims, we can cite Bourdieu from *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, in which he states that “the transubstantiation” of the “made body” is “achieved by the hidden persuasion of an implicit pedagogy, capable of instilling a whole cosmology, an ethic, a metaphysics, a political philosophy, through injunctions as insignificant as ‘stand up straight’ or ‘don’t hold your knife in your left hand’” (1977: 94; italics, Bourdieu). Here, it seems that Mahmood is indicating a more or less explicit pedagogy while Bourdieu is indicating one that is implicit and brokered by forms of hidden persuasion. Howsoever that may be, the main point I wish to draw out of this excursion into Mahmood’s investigation is that transpositions, transfers, and transubstantiations (with its Catholic and thaumaturgic overtones), are contestable, problematic, tangled. And, as “signs are set in various and contingent relationships according to people’s instrumental purposes,” the integrity of those signs becomes tested as their meanings alters, sometimes to the point where whatever meaning the terms may have encompassed becomes disentangled and disappears (Sahlins 1981: 5).
But is such a process even possible? Can a term possess integrity? Aren’t terms pliable in the hands and mouths of those who use them as well as liable to the contingencies of use? Meanings change over time: there is nothing startling about that. To claim a kind of essential probity for a term and tether it to a univocal denotation seems a little nuts; on the other hand, terms are misused and misapplied, which, of course, also constitutes part of their lexical history. Still, if someone says something like, “My habitus itches,” we would think that we have either encountered an idiosyncratic academic with an overly developed sense of metaphorical whimsy, or, more likely, that the speaker simply does not understand the meaning of the word. But this line of reasoning can also become problematic. When African-Americans first transposed “dope” into a term meaning “cool” or “incredibly hip,” any given member of the Modern Language Association may have reckoned that they (the African-American uttering “dope,” that is) did not know the definition of the word. It would then take our hypothetical MLA member a number of years along with a wider acceptance of the “wrong” usage of the term for he or she to (perhaps) accept that dope could mean something quite different than “dope.” Here we might align ourselves with Shalins when he states that language “exists as a perfect semiotic system only in the community of speakers” (1981: 5).

“Habitus” may be a perfect case of the problematic complexity of the herky-jerky process of the analogical transfer of a term, along with all the confusion which such a process is heir to, as it were.

First, we should perhaps ask if Bourdieu violated the essential meaning of the term by not incorporating the pedagogical aspect to a proper degree, as Mahmood asserts.
In other words, did he not *use* the term but *mis*-use it? Is this a case of an analogical *mis*-transfer? But if that was the case, it never could have stuck. Meaning what? That its very success ensures its veracity? This doesn’t quite seem right. But given that Bourdieu’s (possible) mis-use of the word has become at least somewhat the standard for usage, does it matter that it may have been a mis-transfer? Perhaps it was one of the happy accidents of history, akin to the discovery of the curative powers of penicillin. And perhaps, in the lexical domain (as in the military domain), to the victor goes the spoils.

One of the problems with habitus is that, much like the everyday, it “is everywhere and nowhere, haunting the social scene like the memory of an old war” (Cantwell 1999: 219). And transpositions of the term into disciplines other than anthropology and sociology have frequently been fraught with peril. For instance, when Edward S. Casey used “habitus” in his 2001 essay, “‘Between Geography and Philosophy: What Does it Mean to be in the Place-World?,’” he came afoul of a number of thinkers in terms of the “correct” use of the term. Casey wants to deploy habitus as a kind of polymer and polymorphous mediator “between body and place,” and he wants to make the claim that it “plays a role exactly parallel to that of Kant’s transcendental schemata, which intercedes between human sensibility and the categories of the understanding” (2001b: 716). Here, Casey is attempting to recruit (or shanghai) Kant and align the old master with Casey’s deployment of habitus, thereby invoking Kant’s authority to certify his own transposition of Bourdieu’s term. In effect, he has transposed Kant to authorize his transposition of habitus (which of course has been constituted through its own series of transpositions).
Casey’s construal of habitus, the work he is assigning to the term, the task the conception is meant to carry out, is quite expansive:

I take this term [habitus] … as a figure of the between: above all, between nature and culture, but also between consciousness and body, self and other, mechanism and teleology, determinism and freedom, even memory and imagination. Habitus is not mere routine but something improvisational and open to innovation. It is an ‘immanent law, lex insita, laid down in each agent by his earliest upbringing.’ A given habitus qua settled disposition or ‘habitude’ is thus the basis for action in any given sphere – indeed, in any given place. Here I want to propose that habitus is a middle term between place and self – and, in particular, between lived place and geographical self. This self is constituted by a core of habitudes that incorporate and continue, at both psychical and physical levels, what one has experienced in particular places. (Casey 2001a: 686).

There are many questions we could raise about this passage: for instance, what exactly is a `geographical self”? Or we could draw up an whole itinerary of interrogations about the seemingly facile manner in which Casey discards the `core of habitudes’ constituting a particular instantiation of habitus when stating that habitus is `not mere routine by something improvisational and open to innovation.’ This to me seems completely wrong (e.g., a particular mode of table manners, in Bourdieu’s understanding of habitus (as I understand it) is not open to improvisation and innovation), but – never mind. What I want to draw attention to is the enormous work Casey is loading on to this one term: one begins to wonder if habitus can also clean windows and take out the trash. This seems to be a case of over- or uber-transposition, transposition in extremis, with the “betweenness” of habitus serving as mediator for all and everything.

Casey is taken to task explicitly by the geographer J. Nicholas Entrikin and implicitly by the philosopher Theodore R. Schatzki in their respective responses to his

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7 Casey cites Bourdieu’s *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 81.
essay. Entrikin objects to Casey’s transposition because habitus, according to him, is a concept “notably hostile to the geographical understanding of place” (2001: 695). But it turns out, again according to Entrikin as he continues in his response, that this hostility is so intense it has been distilled down to a cold indifference: “Place has no theoretical import for Bourdieu, and space lies inert…” (2001: 695). So the charge is that Casey has transposed a concept into the geographical realm that, due to its “inert hostility” to that realm, has no “place” being there. This seems persnickety as well as presumptuous and preemptory, as if terms can be banned from a discipline by a decretal delivered by the nuncio of an academic pope. However, the point to be made here is that Entrikin is claiming that the transposition Casey has attempted to carry out is *a priori* nugatory. A transposition dead-on-arrival, as it were.

Schatzki’s rejection of Casey’s transfer is much more indifferent, if you will, or at least less hostile, as he wonders what function habitus fulfills that could not be as easily performed by “Giddens’ practical consciousness, Dreyfus’s skills, and Wittgensteinian know-how.

Admittedly, such practical understandings are close kin to Bourdieu’s habitus – but significant differences do exist between them, and Casey offers no reason to favor Bourdieu’s version over the others. The latter mediate self and place just as plausibly as habitus does. (2001: 699).  

So what Schatzki’s question boils down to is, why *this* transposition instead of *that* one? Again, we do not need to make any sort of final adjudication on this matter; the thing to

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notice instead is that the logistics of transpositions, which at first glance seem to be fairly simple (isn’t it merely a question of moving something from *here* to *there*?), are frequently tessellated with all kinds of disturbances.

What needs to be remembered is that as transpositions transpose, they are transposed; as the realms into which they are transposed – in the case of habitus, Aristotelian ethics, Islamic thought, Gothic architecture, scholastic philosophy, Mauss’s ethnography, Husserlian phenomenology, Bourdieu’s analytical schema, the discourse of geography – shape and form the term as it traverses through the uses to which it being put. Here we should also note that Bourdieu’s conception of habitus is not static; as Hanks points out, “by 1972, Bourdieu had explicitly rejected mentalism and proposed that the body, not the mind, was the `site’ of habitus” (2005: 71). And in his *Pascalian Meditations*, published in French in 1997 and in English in 2000, Bourdieu again amends his construal of habitus, allowing for a much less deterministic interpretation of the term:

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Habitus is not necessarily adapted to this situation nor necessarily coherent. It has degrees of integration – which correspond in particular to degrees of ‘crystallization’ of the status occupied. Thus it can be observed that to contradictory positions, which tend to exert structural `double binds’ on their occupants, there often correspond destabilized habitus, torn by contradiction and internal division, generating suffering. (2000: 160).
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This, at least to me, reads like a major reconceptualization of habitus; so when people claim to be utilizing Bourdieu’s conception of habitus, a fair question might be: *which* conception? And, as it is fair to assume that Bourdieu was more or less continually transposing the term as he reconceived it, it is fair to claim that he was more or less
continually transposing his own transposition throughout the forty or so years that he was utilizing the term, making the stability of Bourdieu’s habitus more rumor than fact.

Whenever we engage in discourses circumambient to history, anthropology, geography, and sociology, we are always engaged in acts which operate through transposition. But even in the so-called hard sciences, such transpositions abound, e.g.: “Now, having thus seen this picture of the eye of a dead animal, and having considered its causes,” states Descartes in the Fifth Discourse: Of the Images that Form in the Back of the Eye, “you cannot doubt that an entirely similar one is formed in the eye of a live man” (1965: 97). In his introduction to Marcel Mauss’s The Gift, E.E. Evans-Pritchard states that “in Mauss’s Essays [sic] there is always implicit a comparison, or contrast, between the archaic institutions he is writing about and our own” (1967: ix). Such comparisons and contrasts, be they implicit or explicit, operate through acts of transposition. For instance, if we read Michael Mann on the origins of social power in Sumerian civilization or Foucault on France in the 17th century or Nietzsche on the genealogy of Christian morality, we are being implicitly or explicitly invited to compare the entities being described with contemporaneous entities.

As already mentioned, the analogical transport is also one of the basic tools by which people traverse through the various byways and thoroughfares of everyday life. We might want to insert here that there is a relationship, howsoever tenuous, between the analogical transfer and what Freud calls “the reactive shifting of cathexis” (1947: 61). This is not the same thing as the famous patient-doctor transference (though that operation could possibly be inserted here as well). Rather, Freud is here (i.e., The Ego
and The Id) discussing how “hate is frequently a forerunner of love, but also that in many circumstances hate changes into love and love into hate” (1947: 59).

It appears … that by including in our calculations this other mechanism by means of which love can be changed into hate, we have tacitly made another assumption which deserves to be formulated explicitly. We have reckoned as though there existed in the mind – whether in the ego or the id – a displaceable energy, which is it itself neutral, but is able to join forces either with an erotic or with a destructive impulse, differing qualitatively as they do, and augment its total cathexis. Without assuming a displaceable energy of this kind we can make no headway. (Freud 1947: 61-62; italics, mine).

It seems that this 'displaceable energy' is at least a close cousin to the analogical transport. We have neither the time nor the expertise to fully investigate Freud’s 'displaceable energy’ at present; we merely notate it here as a bearer of an intriguing family resemblance to the analogical transport, both conceptually and terminologically.

We will have the opportunity to investigate this further when we turn to Schutz. After this rather zigzagging, herky-jerky perambulation through habitus and Bourdieu, we now turn to an historicized exegesis of an allegedly ahistorical discipline, Anglo-American analytic philosophy.

The Time of Logic

In this section, we will examine four conjunctions in the history of modern philosophy as we attempt to append the historical to analytic philosophy, a brand of thinking presented by its practitioners as if it stands outside time, space, and place in an abstract logical zone. First, we will sketch out Stephen Toulmin’s attempt to situate the

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9 Tyler Burge would prefer the label “‘mainstream’” philosophy, as, according to him, it “is the approach that had dominated the English-speaking world for most of the last century” (2005: 2). In fact, the only
thought of Descartes within the contours of his era; then we flesh out Frege’s quest for
the *identity* of identity with the suggestion that this was also a query of much pertinence
to his era;\(^\text{10}\) then we shift to Wittgenstein and situate his concerns within the intellectual
ambience of his era; and, finally, we will take up John McCumber’s examination of the
“flourishing” of analytic philosophy during the McCarthy era.

We will not make any attempt to prove that the findings of analytic philosophy
are rendered fatally problematic by their exigent connection to historical nexuses; what
we do hope to demonstrate is that those practicing analytic philosophy were not somehow
standing outside history on some island of ahistorical inquiry and that their findings are
objects of *historical* as much as *logical* concern. In the process of this demonstration, we
also will continue to add the verticality of history to our schema, widening the situation
out as we show that any and every situation contains within it not only its immediate
presence but also an absence which, at least partially, can be reckoned as the long slope
of history upon which it rides.

In this, I tread obliquely from the path of Fernand Braudel and other social
historians of the everyday, for, while they investigate quotidian aspects of social life and,
in so doing, enlarge the scope of historical investigation, I will use history to collapse
ahistorical claims. But I at least want to tack in the direction of social historians such as
Braudel and Carlo Ginzburg, amongst many others, if only to acknowledge their

\[\text{10 The idea of linking Frege’s hunt for identity relations with the “crisis” of identity of the nineteenth}
\text{century was first suggested to me by Michael Curry via personal conversation in June of 2008.}\]
contributions to the study of the everyday, as they legitimated the investigation of “ordinary” people engaged in “ordinary” deeds. Braudel’s credo: “Material life, consisting of very old routines, inheritances and successes, is there at the root of everything” underlies a method by which everything from the creation and standardization of weights and measures to the patterns of practices of hygiene have not only become legitimate queries of research agendas but are now seen as primary objects of scholarship as well, thus helping to transport the study of the everyday into the heart of the academy (1973: xii; italics, Braudel).

Incidentally, Giddens draws a qualified comparison between Braudel and Goffman, stating:

Who could seem further apart, at first sight, than Braudel and Goffman? Wholly incompatible figures, one might think, and even to mention them in the same breath seems fairly ludicrous. Braudel studies history over several centuries, while Goffman resolutely avoids any analysis of the institutional contexts in which social activity occurs. Yet both anchor their studies in the events of daily life. (1984: 362).

With that bird in hand, let us turn to Descartes and his times.

Descartes in his Times

In Cosmopolis, one of Stephen Toulmin’s main concerns is to figure out why a sudden turn in tone as well as in content occurred in philosophical discourse at the dawn of the seventeenth century:

Before 1600, theoretical inquiries were balanced against discussions of concrete practical issues…. From 1600 on, by contrast, most philosophers are committed to questions of abstract, universal theory, to the exclusion of such concrete issues.
There is a shift from a style of philosophy that keeps equally in view issues of local, timebound practice, and universal, timeless theory, to one that accepts matters of universal, timeless theory as being entitled to an exclusive place on the agenda of “philosophy”. (Toulmin 1990: 24).

Let me emphasize something that Toulmin himself underscores in this passage: this is not a switch from an idiographic to a nomographic approach, from an approach that only concerns itself with particular instantiations to one that only concerns itself with general laws; this is a switch from an approach which combined the idiographic and the nomographic to an approach that is strictly nomographic.

Toulmin contends that the typical understanding of the biographical details and historical circumstances of Descartes’ life is that “these are merely incidentals…. Faced with questions about Descartes’ life and times, most historians of philosophy look the other way” (1990: 46). In particular, Toulmin wants to know why the humanism of the sixteenth century, symbolized for him by Montaigne, Bacon, Shakespeare, Erasmus, and Rabelais, was abandoned by Anglo-American philosophers in favor of the rationalism of Descartes and Newton? Toulmin thinks there is a an answer to this query:

One event in fact presents itself as an answer to such a query, whose impact across the whole of the European scene is well-documented, and whose relevance to our present problem is not hard to establish. It is the assassination [in 1610] of King Henry IV of France, better known in English as Henry of Navarre. To suggest that this event caused the shift from humanism to more rigorous, dogmatic modes of thought would be an exaggeration: it will be enough to see it as emblematic of changes that were ready to begin, or had already begun. Henry’s murder may or may not have been “epoch-making”; but, at least, we can take it as “epoch-marking.”…. Like the murder of President John Kennedy in November, 1963, the assassination of Henry IV was immediately seen as a historical turning point. (1990: 46, 47-48; italics, Toulmin).
The assassination of Henry of Navarre was but one culminating point in the long bloody conflict between Protestants and Catholics sweeping across Europe during this period. A Protestant who renounced his faith and converted to Catholicism in 1593, four years after succeeding to the throne, Henry IV “soon showed his determination to reduce the role of religion in politics; and with the Edict of Nantes (1598) he codified and regularized the position of his Protestant citizens…. At a time when the European monarchs were picking sides in the name of religious loyalty, Henry tried to show that one might govern a large kingdom while accepting the loyalty of citizens of different religions” (Toulmin 1990: 49, 51). Not only did Henry’s life end with his assassination (obviously!), his attempt at a policy of toleration was nullified as well. “Henry’s murder carried to people in France and Europe the simple message, ‘A policy of religious toleration was tried, and failed’” (Toulmin 1990: 53). Until 1648 and the Treaty of Westphalia, Europe would be rocked to its foundations by the Thirty Years War with its “series of brutal and destructive campaigns” (Toulmin 1990: 53). It was a time of uncertainty which cohered almost exactly with the duration of Descartes’ life, as he was born in France on March 31, 1596, and died in Stockholm on February 11, 1650.

To those who may think that Descartes, with his emphasis on the pure rationality of the cogito, may have been unaffected by such “details” as the assassination of Henry IV, they should know that following the regicide on May 10, 1610, “His heart [i.e. Henry IV’s] was displayed in Paris until June 1, and then it was taken on the three-day journey to La Fleche, accompanied by royalty, nobility, the clergy, and other notables, all in mourning regalia” (Gaukroger 1995: 43). La Fleche, the Jesuit college where the fifteen-year-old Descartes was a student at the time, had been the residence of Henry’s mother
and, indeed, was Henry’s birthplace; Henry the Fourth was the benefactor of the college and “his attachment to it was such that he left instructions that his heart and that of his wife be laid to rest in the College chapel” (Gaukroger 1995: 41). When the “royal” heart arrived at La Fleche, “one entered via a 27-foot triumphal arch covered in mourning cloth and illuminated by candles.

The central courtyard was decorated with coats of arms, death masks of the king, and various tableaux of the king being carried to heaven by angels. A herald received the heart from one of the royal party on a stage in front of the altar, placing it in a gilded urn. The heart was then buried in a further elaborate ceremony, in which Descartes himself participated, being one of the twenty-four pupils selected for this task. The event was subsequently commemorated annually in three-day celebrations that were even more elaborate than the original. (Gaukroger 1995: 43; italics, mine).

This may have made an impression on the boy, to say the least!  

Descartes’ response to the regicide, colored by his direct participation in the post-funereal ceremonies, as well as his entire education at the hands of the Jesuits, must have deeply affected him, and in turn may have laid the foundation for his quest for a clear and distinct certitude so as to fend off the wave of uncertainty concerning religious truth during this period, and the doubts of the skeptical humanists such as Montaigne.

Descartes was not alone in his concern with this “crisis pyrrhonienne” (Popkin 1979: 176); many others, including Herbert of Cherbury, Marin Mersenne, Jean de Silhon, and Cardinal Bagni, were doing their utmost to beat back the tide of ambiguity and the lack of true faith they believed to be a fatal by-product of skepticism (Popkin 1979: passim).

That many others were also beating back the skeptics underlines the fact that Descartes

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11 In his “General Introduction” to Meditations on First Philosophy, John Cottingham gives a very different account of Descartes (non) involvement in these ceremonies: “We do not know what part if any Descartes played in these ceremonies” (1996: xx).
was not working in an historical vacuum; he did not appear *ex nihilo*, as if somehow “distinct” and apart from the context in which he lived. Indeed, his life and thought are better understood if they are bracketed within his times “as a man who tried to reinstate the medieval outlook in the face of Renaissance novelty, and a thinker who sought to discover a philosophy adequate for the Christian world view in the light of the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century” (Popkin 1979: 172).

Even Descartes search for "truth" needs to be placed within a context. Heidegger delves into this problem in his *Introduction to Phenomenological Research*, first by stating that "a genuine examination of being … does not mean that history has disappeared … it is there in a subterranean way" (2005: 85). Ignoring historical context does not remove it, it simply displaces it, and history will have its effect on any examination of being, even if that effect is only felt in a subcutaneous, subterranean way. Heidegger also turns our attention to the entire contextual apparatus subtending and surrounding Descartes' search for truth, a search that does not arise of nothingness: "Descartes' examination must be oriented from the outset to the question: *What concept of truth and being-true* is placed in the center for Descartes?" (2005: 87; italics, Heidegger). Once that question is posed, it is rather a simple next step to locate its matrix: of course, the entire "problem" of truth is a Western one, descending from the Greeks with inflections from Christianity, especially under its impact from St. Augustine. Descartes' project "will only be intelligible by returning to the ontology in which the entire Cartesian investigation is conducted" (Heidegger 2005: 95). But of course! For how could it be otherwise? "The interpretation must be lead [sic] back to the contexts of its origins …. Thomas, Anselm, Augustine … Aristotle" (Heidegger 2005: 95).
Yet many thinkers analyze Descartes as if he worked in a vacuum, sans history, sans geography, sans any context whatsoever. For instance, in *Cogito? – Descartes and Thinking the World*, Joseph Almog states that “In laying out to students what I take Descartes’ thinking-man project to be,” the question arises “about the very purpose of skeptical cases – what is he trying to accomplish by wheeling in the trio of maybe-I-am-dreaming, maybe-I-am-mad, and maybe-an-evil-demon-is-manipulating-me?” (Almog 2008: 8; italics, Almog). This question (i.e. “What is the point of the skeptical stories of Meditation I?”), a question the students “have been waiting for all this time,” is evidently answered by Professor Almog with nary a nod to historical context: it seems that, according to Almog, skepticism makes “a splash appearance right in Meditation I because … if our project is to re-found our knowledge, what could be more poignant than the display of the threat of skepticism…?” (2008: 10; italics, Almog). Skepticism is, in such a circumscribed reading, merely a textual device for Descartes, a rhetorical strategy, a “poignant” foil for the re-founding of our knowledge.

Yet Almog can be forgiven his “crime” of de-contextualization, as he is merely following Descartes’ lead, as an essential component of the strategy of *Meditations on First Philosophy* is an utter and thoroughgoing decontextualization, to the extent that the *Meditations* are deemed *First*, that is, that to the results of the *Meditations* are bestowed a priority beyond space, outside of time, and apart from the contingencies of such historical events as St. Bartholomew’s Massacre, the regicide of King Henry IV, the Thirty Years War, and so on. “So today I have expressly rid my mind of all worries and arranged for myself a clear stretch of free time. I am here quite alone,” states Descartes in the very first paragraph of the *First Meditation* (1996: 12 [18]). He is quite alone, divested of
history and geography, a thinking man in the void of thought. So alone that his very corporeal existence is in doubt: “Perhaps, indeed, I do not even have such hands or such a body at all” (1996: 13 [19]), his only certainty that “nothing is certain,” a paradox to which he doesn’t devote the slightest bit of attention (1996: 16 [24]).

Yet it is difficult to put much stock in Descartes’ claim that he believes himself to be there quite alone as he sits “by the fire, wearing a winter dressing-gown, holding this piece of paper in my hands, and so on,” just as it is difficult to believe his other claim that he believes, or comes to believe, that the senses are untrustworthy witnesses of events (Descartes 1996: 13 [18]). On the first score, if he is quite alone and has been driven to such solitude by the task at hand, that is, “the general demolition of my opinions” in order to reformulate the foundations of the sciences, why does Descartes dedicate the Meditations to “those most learned and distinguished men, the Dean and Doctors of the Sacred Faculty of Theology at Paris,” whose “careful attention to this book, if you deigned to give it” would rectify whatever may be “defective, or insufficiently developed or requiring further explanation” in the Meditations, and thus bring them “to such a pitch of clarity that they are fit to be regarded as very exact demonstrations” of certitude (1996: 3 [1], 5 [5], 6 [5-6]; italics, Descartes)?

12 Why is the second section of the preface addressed to “the reader”? Why does Descartes refer in the preface to “Archimedes, Apollonius, Pappus and others” (1996: 5 [4])? Why in the First Meditation does he refer to madmen, paupers, and kings (1996: 13 [19])? Why in the Third Meditation does he refer to his parents (1996: 35 [50])? Why in the Fourth Meditation does he refer to “man” (1996: 43 [62])? Why in the Sixth Meditation does he refer to “the clockmaker,” “a sick

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12 Cottingham informs us that this effort came to naught: “Descartes never in fact obtained the endorsement from the Sorbonne which he sought” (1996: 5, f.n. 1).
man” and “a healthy one” (1996: 58 [84])? For if he is truly quite alone, he has no recourse to these assorted others; is he not constituting a subject sui generis, a subject untethered to others, the subject individium, the modern subject par excellence, defined solely by its relation to its own cogitation and its comportment with God? So why any concern for or even awareness of what the ‘learned and distinguished men’ of the Sorbonne may think of his treatise? Or, indeed, of anything whatsoever that Descartes may think, do, doubt, write, or say?

Furthermore, “the very starting point of Cartesian metaphysics, with its focus on the private reflections of the isolated thinker, has been attacked as incoherent:

In the aftermath of Wittgenstein, it has become a ruling orthodoxy that language and thought are inescapably public, socially mediated phenomena, and hence that there is something deeply wrong with the very idea of ‘Cartesian privacy’ – of solitary, introspective access to the truth. (Cottingham 1996: xxxvii-xxxviii).

Let us add to the warrant of Wittgenstein for the necessity of “public” thought three extremely disparate thinkers: Martin Buber’s construal of the centrality of I and Thou, Donna Haraway’s construal of knowledge gained through the bundling of partial knowledges, and Gottlob Frege’s rejection of the Cartesian "I" (“Frege affirms … that thoughts about … the Cartesian I, are by their nature incommunicable” (Geach 1977: viii; italics, Geach)). So here the contention is that this entire effort to be quite alone in order that true thinking can think is ‘deeply wrong,’ as no truth can be gained through such a solitary venture. Here we could posit the dialogues of Socrates as oppositional to the monologue of Descartes. But, as I have already pointed out, such a monologue is not performed quite alone, as there is an audience present, at least via the extensional powers
of the imagination: the reader, Descartes' parents, and the learned faculty of the Sorbonne, among others.

Secondly, if the senses are not to be trusted, if, to revert to the *Discourse* for a moment, the subject (in this case, Descartes himself) is a “substance whose whole essence or nature is only to think, and which does not require any place, or depend on any material thing;” then why is Descartes writing at all (1965: 28)? Does he not notice that he is writing? What does he think the words are that he places on his parchment? It is odd in the extreme that the act of composition, its very fact, that is, the fact that Descartes is doing such a thing, i.e., writing up his meditations, is never mentioned in the *Meditations*. For, if it is indeed the case that the senses are dubitable and dubitable in an essential way, and if there is no material thing upon which the self can depend, and if no *place* is required, then how and why and where are these *Meditations* being produced? Of course, God is brought in during the course of the *Meditations* to undergird the senses as well as to guarantee the certainty of certainty (as long as it’s based on clear and distinct perceptions) as well as to warrant Descartes’ existence as a thinking thing, but, even given all that, how could the *Meditations* be composed up to the very brink of God’s proof if the senses are nugatory to the point that Descartes doesn’t even know if he exists and is not apparently aware of the fact that he is writing? This is especially so if it is true, as John McCumber points out in *Time in the Ditch*, that for Descartes

language is a sort of subrepository into which drip cognitive evils, already several times distilled. It is not merely an impediment to thought but its deepest enemy, for it refines prejudice and permits the weight of the past to bear, prejudicially, on the present. Always present to us as a medium for our thought, language for
Descartes is – like his famous evil demon – a continuous deceiver. (McCumber 2001: 69).

If language is such an evil, if Descartes truly believes it to be dripping with ‘cognitive evils,’ all the more reason to acknowledge its use. However, Descartes never stoops to this, perhaps because to do so would be to taint his project with an instrument of deception.

To retrieve our original line of questioning, how do we justify Descartes’ appeal to the learned men of the Sorbonne if he is framing all his efforts within an ahistorical and ageographical universalism? However, this question is moot if we accept, as Toulmin encourages us to do, that Descartes was not asserting his ideas as if they had no bearing whatsoever on the intellectual and theological issues of his day; if Toulmin's claim is accepted, Descartes is grounded in history as well as geography and the appeal to the faculty of the Sorbonne is entirely justified. The philosophical historian of skepticism, Richard H. Popkin, contends that Descartes was quite alert to the historical circumstances of his time:

One finds that Descartes himself expressed great concern with the skepticism of the time; that he indicated a good deal of acquaintance with the Pyrrhonian writings, ancient and modern; that he apparently developed his philosophy as a result of being confronted with the full significance of the crise pyrrhonienne in 1628-29, and that Descartes proclaimed that his system was the only intellectual fortress capable of withstanding the assaults of the skeptics. (Popkin 1979: 173).

It is against the background of the “conditions of the time,” including the assassination of Henry IV and the Thirty Years War, “in which Protestant and Catholic armies sought to

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prove theological supremacy by force of arms," that “we can understand why the Quest for Certainty developed the appeal it did,” and it is within this historical nexus that Descartes operated (Toulmin 1995: 69). With the skeptics on one hand and the dogmatists on the other, “the only thing thinking people could do was to look for a new way of establishing their central truths and ideas: one that was independent of, and neutral between, particular religious loyalties” (Toulmin 1990: 70). Yet the only way to elude both the dogged challenge of the skeptics and the passionate certitude of the dogmatists was to construct a formidable redoubt for rationality, and such a project required “the idiom of certainty,” the very idiom of the dogmatists and the counter-idiom of the skeptics (Toulmin 1990: 70; italics, Toulmin). Descartes’ quest for a certain basis for science cannot be understood as ahistorical:

The 17th-century philosophers’ “Quest for Certainty” was no mere proposal to construct abstract and timeless intellectual schemas, dreamed up as objects of pure, detached intellectual study. Instead, it was a timely response to a specific historical challenge – the political, social, and theological chaos embodied in the Thirty Years’ War. Read in this way, the projects of Descartes and his successors [e.g. Newton] are no longer arbitrary creations of lonely individuals in separate ivory towers, as the orthodox texts in the history of philosophy suggest. (Toulmin 1990: 70-71).

I should add here that Toulmin's thesis was not met with anything approaching uniform approval. For instance, even though Quentin Skinner in The New York Review of Books concedes that Toulmin makes "a general point of great importance" by his insistence on an historical contextualization of philosophical works, Cosmopolis itself is found wanting; indeed, it is, in Skinner's assessment, "woefully sentimental and inaccurate," at least in certain aspects (1990: 2, 1). In The New York Times, Toulmin fared even worse, as Wendy Steiner condemns the book as "surprisingly naïve" as she finds his "claim that
the 16th century comfortably tolerated diversity whereas the 17th century did not" to be "unfounded" (1990). Still, the main point holds: interpretation of texts of any kind need to be read with at least some attention paid to their historical conjunctures and geographical coordinates.

That Descartes’ method appears to be decontextualized is precisely the point: he was attempting to create a basis for science that would transcend the complexities and divisions of his and/or any time: it was an attempt to cordon off “the operations of human reason … from the details of particular historical and cultural situations” (Toulmin 1990: 104). In order to do this, Descartes mounted a two-pronged offensive:

First of all … he tried to prove that the principles of science could be derived either by deduction from the self-evident principles of his theistic metaphysics, which principles are themselves reached through the particular sort of analysis used in the Meditations, or else by deriving axioms or generalizations from the experiments performed within the particular sciences, and intended within those sciences to confirm or disconfirm the propositions deduced from the principles qua hypotheses. (Olscamp 1965: xxxiii).

All I am suggesting is that Descartes’ effort to lift thought out of the contingency of history through the exigency of either ‘the self-evident principles of his theistic metaphysics’ or what could be derived from the ‘axioms or generalizations from the experiments performed within the particular sciences’ needs to be itself framed within history in order to comprehend its full import.

While Toulmin wants us to understand Descartes in relationship to skeptics such as Montaigne and the religious and political conflicts of the period: “Rather than see Descartes’ works as the creations of a man on whose genius the events of his time throw little light, let us ‘recontextualize’ the intellectual ideas and methods that the standard
account of modern philosophy takes such care to ‘decontextualize’” (1990: 62),

Gaukroger wants us to contextualize Descartes in relationship to the status of the scientific domain in the seventeenth century:

We must consider this question [that the corporeal world “yields certainty” when it is “grasped” with the clarity and distinctiveness provided by “mathematical terms”] against the background of the controversy over Copernicanism. A core issue in dispute in both the 1616 and 1633 condemnations of Copernicanism was whether the heliocentric theory was ‘a matter of faith and morals’, which the second decree of the Council of Trent had given the Church the sole power to decide…. Descartes is prepared to defend the Church orthodoxy on God and the soul, but natural philosophy is an area to be guided by the natural light of reason, not the Church. (1995: 337).

Mechanism in and of itself being “intimately tied’ by Descartes to Copernicanism, “a defense of mechanism is therefore by extension a defense of Copernicanism” (Gaukroger 1995: 338). The Meditations, according to Gaukroger, is therefore contextualized within the struggle to defend heliocentrism by providing a foundation for reason which can stand independently of the Church. Gaukroger's claim is fully supported if we consider the evidence of an excerpt of a letter from Descartes to Mersenne written subsequent to the recantation of heliocentrism made by Galileo on June 22, 1633:

When I inquired at Leiden and Amsterdam whether Galileo’s System of the World was available yet, because I thought I had heard that it had been published last year in Italy, I was told it was true that it had been published, but that all the copies were burned in Rome at the same time and that [Galileo] himself was sentenced to some kind of punishment. I was so astonished that I almost decided to burn all my papers, or at least not to let anyone see them. (Rabb 1965: 241).

In contradistinction, in *Between Two Worlds: A Reading of Descartes’s Meditations*, a 488-page analysis of Descartes’ signature piece, John Carriero makes nary a mention of heliocentrism, Galileo or Copernicus. Neither does he mention the most influential skeptic of Descartes’ era, Montaigne; instead, tacking away from what he calls the “standard view” that places the *Meditations* as a direct response to the arguments of the Skeptics, Carriero makes the claim that Descartes is doing battle against Thomism and its off-shoot, scholastic Aristotlelism. This is fine, but wouldn’t a consequence of this approach have to be the mounting of some sort of argument, no matter how feeble, against those (such as Gaukroger) who maintain that contemporary scientific concerns as well as a response to the Skeptics are at the core of Descartes' concerns in the *Meditations*? Apparently, Carriero doesn’t think so. This seems odd in a book in which the first sentence of the preface reads: “Can someone take up a work of philosophy written over 350 years ago and engage with it on its own terms?” (Carriero 2009: ix). To answer that query, or rather to avoid or defray it, when casting aside the “standard reading” of the *Meditations*, Carriero states that “I have not found that the familiar view is something that emerges from a patient consideration of the text” (2009: 22). Well, of course it doesn’t emerge from the text! The only thing that will emerge from the text if it is read as if it exists in some sort of timeless placeless vacuum is the text itself. But if it is read in tandem with even the most cursory perusal of Descartes’ letters or in conjunction with the most superficial of readings of the history of the first half of the seventeenth century, such a reading not only emerges, it explodes!

Let me add one more note here, and that is my own skepticism about Carriero’s use of “her” as his third-person pronoun identifier, e.g. when speaking of Descartes’
reader, or mediator, as Carriero calls *her*, we read that “it is important for the mediator, already in *her* current position, to be able to see *her* beliefs as having a foundation, because if what Descartes is asking *her* to do is to work, *she* must think that there are basic principles such that if they were ‘undetermined,’ everything would fall with them” (2009: 30; italics, mine). Now, I am all in favor of ceding the anonymous third-person pronoun to women: after 2500 years of written discourse with “he” and “him” solely in the ascension, it’s more than due time for “her” to have priority, to say the least. But in this instance, it’s an anachronism which only adds to the historical myopia of Carriero’s study, for, as we have seen, Descartes has dedicated his work to the faculty of the Sorbonne, all of whom were men; besides the idiosyncratic princess such as Elizabeth of Bohemia or the erudite queen such as Descartes’ benefactress, Christina, Queen of Sweden, females were not allowed to play even a supportive role in the intellectual interchange of that epoch. The use of “her” in this instance casts a false light on history. Still, despite all these objections, Carriero at least places Descartes in relationship to the thinking of his scholastic predecessors and therefore doesn’t leave him hanging in the void of a completely timeless world. However, he never fills out even that limited contextual insertion, and so his historical nexus for Descartes remains an indicated yet empty slot.

And so, from both an historical and a scientific perspective, we can place Descartes within his times and, in the process, verticalize part of the fundament of analytic philosophy or at least suggest that its fundament has a vertical (temporal, historical) component.
Frege and the Question of Identity

A very different kind of quest came to a head during the nineteenth century: the quest for identity or, as it could also be phrased, the search for a method by which to identify identity. This took on a number of forms, two of which we will briefly examine: Frege’s exploration of the operations of identity and equality, and governmental efforts to formulate a method by which to identify criminals as well as subjects. What I want to suggest (merely to suggest, not to prove) is that these two quests for a proper “reading” of identity may be linked through their congruence in history and geography, i.e., through their historical and geographical context.

“An illegible society … is a hindrance to any effective intervention by the state, whether the purpose of that intervention is plunder or public welfare,” writes James C. Scott in Seeing Like A State, while “a thoroughly legible society eliminates local monopolies of information and creates a kind of national transparency through the uniformity of codes, identities, statistics, regulations, and measures” (1998: 78). The population explosion following the First Industrial Revolution coupled with the statist requirements of the French Revolution for soldiers and funds combined to impress upon authorities the need for a system to locate and identify their population.\(^\text{16}\) Such processes also gave the authorities new powers as such a system “is likely to create new positional advantages for those at the apex who have the knowledge and access to easily decipher the new state-created format” (Scott 1998: 78; or, as Foucault puts it in Discipline and Punish, “by arranging objects … disciplinary power manifests its potency” (1995: 187); so that as information is collected, collated, and used, these very processes as well as the

\(^{16}\) In The Old Regime, Tocqueville places this governmental centralizing impulse at a pre-Revolutionary date.
information itself, simultaneously constitutes, displays, and informs power. In *The Archeology of Knowledge*, Foucault catalogues some of these processes, which he claims began to be "redefined at the beginning of the nineteenth century … with the establishment of new systems of registration, notation, description, classification, integration in numerical series and statistics, with the introduction of new forms of teaching, the circulation of information …" (1972: 53). In turn, these newly constituted powers also led to the situation which Proudhon adroitly catalogues in his “*Idea generale de la revolution au XIX siècle*”:

To be governed is to be under surveillance, inspected, spied on, superintended, legislated, regulated, restrained, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, appraised, assessed, censored, commanded…. To be governed is to be noted, registered, enumerated, accounted for, stamped, measured, classified, audited, patented, licensed, authorized, endorsed, reprimanded, prevented, reformed, rectified, and corrected, in every operation, every transaction, every movement.17

Such is the confluence of the anarchist and the libertarian when they consider governance.

The double-hinged movement of the state constituting itself as it constitutes its subjects is reflected in Zygmunt Bauman’s description of the processes involved:

The state sought the obedience of its subjects by representing itself as the fulfillment of the nation’s destiny and a guarantee of its continuation. On the other hand, a nation without a state would be bound to be unsure of its past, insecure in its present and uncertain of its future, and so doomed to a precarious existence. Were it not for the state’s power to define, classify, segregate, separate and select, the aggregate of local traditions, dialects, customary laws and ways of life would hardly be recast into anything like the postulated unity and cohesion of a national community. (2004: 21).

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The subjects making up this community took their cue from the nation-state and formulated their identities largely around national types; yet and still, it was a process of collective identification not accomplished without a significant effort on the part of the state:

`National identity’ was from the start, and remained for a long time, an agonistic notion and a battle cry. A cohesive national community overlapping with the aggregate of state subjects was destined to remain not just perpetually unaccomplished, but forever precarious; a project calling for continuous vigilance, gigantic effort and the application of a lot of force to make sure that the call is heard and obeyed. (Bauman 2004: 21; italics, Bauman).

Such a project done at such a scale necessitated a reliable tracking system to collate subjects as well as to identify criminals. Regarding criminality, it was also during this period that Foucault claims that "penal practice replaced the question: `What have you done?' with the question: `Who are you?'" (2004: 34), substituting the identity of the actor rather than the identity of her act as the primary interrogatory in a criminal investigation.

Many methods of identification were tried during the eighteenth and nineteenth century prior to the general acceptance of fingerprinting as the most efficacious method: the French introduced the precursor to the passport in 1792 when the revolutionary government “issued regulations requiring both foreign and domestic travelers to carry state-issued identity documents.

The goal was to stymie the assembly of anti-government forces, prevent infiltration by foreign agents, and suppress vagrancy and crime. Other European states, while not sharing France’s conception of an equal citizenry, did embrace the passport as a way of suppressing dissent and controlling crime. (Cole 2001: 10).
But in an era before the photographic image was universally available as a means to correlate documents to appearance, how could identity be corroborated? In *Suspect Identities: A History of Fingerprinting and Criminal Identification*, Simon A. Cole catalogues some of the attempts to achieve a certainty of identification: “In addition to names, place of origin, date of birth, complexion, hair, stature,” many other characteristics and markings were utilized as a means of “positive” identification, ranging from the commonplace [“blue eyes,” “freckled,” “pockmarked,” “bald”] to the detailed [“small mole in left cheek,” “scar over left eye”] to the imprecise [“small eyes,” “large head,” “long nose,” “very broad nose,” “round head,” “corpulent,” “very corpulent”] to the vague [“high forehead”] to the impermanent [“broken foot,” “long hair”] to the ethnically stereotyped [“aquiline nose,” “Indian”] to the judgmental [“bad forehead”] to the oddly distinctive [“long neck,” “red nose,” “cross eyed,” “stammers”] to the slightly gory [“lost one eye,” “pitted with small pox,” “rupture in the groin”] to the colorful [“shot in the right arm,” “purple spots in face”] to the easily disguised [“speaks low”] to the oblique [“very gross habit”] to the downright poetic [“tender eyed”]. (Cole 2001: 11).

This list reflects a growing interest in the somatopography of the criminal body, a kind of “criminal anthropology” (Cole 2001: 23). Cesare Lombroso, “a professor of psychiatry at the University of Turin,” and his followers, “Enrico Ferri and Raffaele Garofalo….” sought the explanation for criminality in the criminal body itself rather than in the criminal’s environment. The original cause of the vast majority of criminal acts, they believed, could be discovered through the scientific study of the criminal – perhaps his or her past history, but more likely his or her body” (Cole 2001: 23). Lombroso’s group, which came to be known as the Italian School, analyzed “skull size and shape, body proportions, physiognomy, tattoos, and other physical attributes” and “drew explicit links between the savage and the criminal” in their effort to not only identify known criminals
but to preempt criminal acts by arresting criminal types “fingered” by correlation to such devices as composite photographs created by layering “multiple exposures of a group of criminals into a single photographic plate” (Cole 2001: 23, 24).

Incidentally, in 1889 Cesare Lombroso was one of a group of international craniologists and criminal anthropologists who examined the exhumed skull of Charlotte Corday, the assassin of Marat, during the Universal Exhibition in Paris. Corday's skull conformed to a criminal typology already developed by Lombroso, as her cranial measurements and a shape "that is slightly dolichocephalic (77.7)," with zygomatic arch … visible only on the left - a clear instance of asymmetry" demonstrated "that Corday, despite the pure passion and noble motive of her crime, was herself a born criminal, and therefore in some sense destined to be a murder" (Dick 1993: 188).

I mention this not only for its idiosyncratic charm, but also as an instance of the general trend during the nineteenth century to classify and identify, especially "criminal types."

In the 1870s Alphonse Bertillon, a French police official, devised a system of anthropometry to identify criminals and track recidivists:

A prisoner being Bertillonaged was first subjected to eleven different anthropometric measurement taken with specially designed calipers, gauges, and rulers by one of Bertillon’s rigorously trained clerks, or “Bertillon operators.” Each measurement was a meticulously choreographed set of gestures in which the exact positioning and movement of both bodies – prisoner and operator – were dictated by Bertillon’s precise instructions. (Cole 2001: 34).

Bertillon was especially skilled at the calibration and classification of ears:

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The jewel of Bertillon’s morphological vocabulary was the ear. Bertillon cards devoted a large section for the detailed description of the ear, with separate entries for four aspects: border, lobe, antiragus, and folds. Each of these areas included four specific features, for which there were between three and five officially sanctioned descriptive terms, complete with standardized abbreviations. For the antiragus, for example, the operator noted the inclination, profile, reversion, and dimension. (Cole 2001: 40).

Bertillon’s system had been produced in response to a wave of fear about the danger of recidivism as the rural poor migrated to the cities after poor harvests, were arrested as vagrants, and exiled to the countryside, only to reappear again as unidentified persons. Here it should be remembered that it was migration to Paris from the provinces and the social unrest associated with this migration that had, in large part, led to the insurrection of 1848 (Fox 1971: 127; Rapport 2008: 32-38; Price 1975: 33). However, what is interesting is that even though “the Bertillon system of identification had been motivated by popular and political belief in recidivism and its critical role in the growth of the crime problem,” once the system was up and running, it “operated like a feedback mechanism, confirming the belief in recidivism by exposing real flesh-and-blood recidivists. Bertillonage supported the very criminological philosophy that created it: the belief in habitual criminality as a primary cause of crime” (Cole 2001: 51). Here what seems to be occurring is that “criminality” and Bertillon’s system of classifying criminals are symbiotic co-creators of the criminal, the “nature” of the criminal and a particular system of classification a two-headed tautological monster creating criminals as they are classified and classifying criminals as they create crime.

The first use of fingerprinting as a method of identification arose in a colonial context. Though “credit” is usually given to William Herschel, chief administrator of the
Hooghly district of Bengal during the 1850s, and “he always staunchly insisted that the inspiration for fingerprinting was his alone, some contend that Herschel learned about fingerprints from the Bengalis themselves, pointing out that the tip sahi, or signature by finger impression, had been in use in Bengal ‘from a time not known to us,’ possibly after being imported from China” (Cole 2001: 65).\footnote{A nice example of the always more complicated lineage of “our own Anglo-American society” than the “official” version would have it.} And it was in 1898, after fingerprinting systems had been improved upon by “one of Britain’s most eclectic scientists,” Francis Galton (who began working on fingerprinting as a method to classify heredity lineage in the burgeoning field of eugenics, but who also believed it could be useful as “a tool for colonial governance”), and by Eugene Henry, a colonial police official, who devised a subclassification system for the whorls and ridges of fingerprints (Cole 2001: 74-75, 81). The first “successful” use of “forensic fingerprint evidence” in a criminal case occurred in Bhutan in 1898 and led in 1899 to the passage of “the Indian Evidence Act, the world’s earliest endorsement of fingerprints as legal evidence” (Cole 2001: 88, 90).

But the identification of criminals and criminal types was only one part of the much more expansive story of identification which occurred during the 1800s. The lamination of the grid system on the streets of municipalities, the assignment of numerated street addresses, the imposition of standardized national languages, the creation and imposition of surnames (begun much earlier but solidified during this era), the centralization of transportation networks, and the engrossment of state bureaucracies are all components as well as reflections of a perceived need to track and identify subjects and citizens, information and goods, as well as land and territory mapped, surveyed, and appropriated by the state. That this general impetus for a correct method to
identify, as well as the state’s “necessity” to identify, should be manifested in other ways
should be in no way surprising: what would be surprising is if this generalized emphasis
on identity did not pervade other systems and ways of thought.

When we consider Gottlob Frege (1848-1925) and his work in logic,
mathematics, and the philosophy of language, we can safely insert the problem of identity
as one of his primary foci.

Even an unphilosophical man soon finds it necessary to recognize an inner world
distinct from the outer world, a world of sense-impressions, of creations of his
imagination, of sensations, of feelings and moods, a world of inclinations, wishes
and decisions…. A man who is unaffected by philosophy first of all gets to know
things he can see and touch, can in short perceive with the senses, such as trees,
stones and houses, and he is convinced that someone else can equally see and
touch the same tree and the same stone as he himself sees and touches. Obviously
a thought does not belong with these things. Now can it, nevertheless, like a tree
be presented as identical? (Frege 1977: 13).

So, the question is not are the thoughts of the tree and the stone identical with the tree
and the stone, but can they be presented as identical? In other words, can the words “tree”
and “stone” be presented as if they are identical with the actual tree and stone to which
they refer? Well, the thoughts of the tree and the stone are obviously not the same as the
things to which they refer, as they do not belong to these things; so how can words be
identical with the things to which they refer? This difficulty has much to do with the
correspondence theory of truth:

If I do not know that a picture is meant to represent Cologne Cathedral then I do
not know what to compare the picture with in order to decide on its truth. A
correspondence, moreover, can only be perfect if the corresponding things
coincide and so are not just different things. It is supposed to be possible to test
the genuineness of a banknote by comparing it stereoscopically with a genuine
one. But it would be ridiculous to try to compare a gold piece stereoscopically with a twenty-mark note. It would only be possible to compare an idea with a thing if the thing were an idea too. And then, if the first did correspond perfectly with the second, they would coincide. But this is not at all what people intend when they define truth as the correspondence of an idea with something real. For in this case it is essential precisely that the reality shall be distinct from the idea. But then there can be no complete correspondence; no complete truth. (Frege 1977: 3; italics, mine).

If we insist that the idea of a tree and the tree itself are identical, we are not replicating the operation of the correspondence theory of truth, for, in this theory, the tree and the idea of the tree are distinct; but then, how can they completely correspond, as one is a thing (a tree) and the other an idea (the idea of the tree)? "The crucial move is away from conceptions of signification as ideal," writes Joseph Rouse about Frege's work, "'that is, as material expressions of a meaning or content that could be identically expressed in other ways" (1996: 154).^{20}

For those who may think that Frege is being merely tendentious or just plain muddle-headed, that’s fine: for our purposes, it doesn’t matter, for what is of import for us is that Frege is concerned with the question of identity in these passages, and we can answer that question with an apodictic irrepresible affirmative.

“If words are used in the ordinary way,” writes Frege, “what one intends to speak of is their Bedeutung.

It can also happen, however, that one wishes to talk about the words themselves or their sense. This happens, for instance, when the words of another are quoted. One’s own words then first designate [bedeuten] words of the other speaker, and only the latter have their usual Bedeutung. We then have signs of signs. (Frege 1997: 153-154; brackets and italics, Frege).

^{20} Rouse also refers to Husserl's work in *Logical Investigations* (Investigation One) as well.
What Frege is saying here is that A is not identical with “A.” Or, to put it differently, the use of the word “horse” is quite different in the following sentences, A and B:

A: I rode the horse yesterday.
B: “Horse” is a five-letter word.

Or, to put another spin on it, a sign (horse) is a quite different thing than a sign of a sign (“horse”).

Frege goes on to assert that while it may look as if A=A and A=B state the same thing (are identical), this is not necessarily true. First, A=A is tautological while A=B is informative. However, this is only so if A=B is true. As Frege puts it:

But this relation [that A=A and A=B say the same thing] would hold between the names or signs only in so far as they named or designated something. It would be mediated by the connection of each of the two signs with the same designated thing. But this is arbitrary. Nobody can be forbidden to use any arbitrarily producible event or object as a sign for something. In that case the sentence a = b would no longer be concerned with the subject matter, but only with its mode of designation; we would express no proper knowledge by its means. (1997: 151-152).

In other words, A=B is corruptible. A pause that refreshes is absolutely and unequivocally a pause that refreshes; however, the equation of the drinking of a Coke with a pause that refreshes, while not forbidden ‘as a sign for something,’ is only a ‘mode of presentation’ expressing ‘no proper knowledge’ other than the fact that “the pause that refreshes” is a sign of a sign for a pause that refreshes.

What we might term the non-identity of the “idea” of a word is extremely labile, according to Frege, as it can vary among people and even within the same individual:
The same sense is not always connected, even in the same man, with the same idea. The idea is subjective: one man’s idea is not that of another. There result, as a matter of course, a variety of differences in the ideas associated with the same sense. A painter, a horseman, and a zoologist will probably connect different ideas with the name ‘Bucephalus’. (Frege 1997: 154).

This does not mean that we cannot communicate, for “mankind has a common store of thoughts which is transmitted from one generation to another,” but only that the surety of the assumption that one’s sense of any particular word is identical with another’s sense of the same word is problematic (Frege 1997: 154).

Now, while it is fairly simple to demonstrate that Frege was concerned with the question of identity, it is difficult, if not impossible, to demonstrate that Frege’s interest in this question was linked to the more general concern with issues of identity afoot in the nineteenth century. By all accounts, Frege was almost preternaturally introverted, his sole preoccupation his work: “The project that drove Frege’s life work was an attempt to establish logicism. Logicism is the view that mathematics of number can be reduced to logic…. Frege’s development of logic is one of the great achievements in intellectual history” (Burge 2005: 12, 13).

Would it also be correct to state that such a reduction of the mathematics of number to logic would render them identical? It seems to be the case, for if one thing is reduced to another, they must become the same, i.e. identical. And so we see that the issue of identity is raised again in connection to Frege’s work, but, alas, there seems no direct link between Frege’s particular interest with identity and the more general concern with identity pervading society during the nineteenth century, other than the very fact that the question of identity was a question pervading society, seemingly in all its realms, and so must have been pervading the thought of Frege as well, since as an individual within
the particular society being so impacted with this concern, he must have been linked with it. However, this is a tenuous line of argumentation, as it depends on the evidence of influence by indirect suffusion, hardly a claim that would hold up in any court of logic. Still, if we were to work in reverse, and develop a line of argument that the question of identity was a prime concern of the nineteenth century and then recruit Frege’s concern with identity as further proof of our main claim, this would be acceptable as supporting evidence for our line of argument.

However, there is one route into identifying Frege's specific preoccupation with identity with the general preoccupation with national identity that became pervasive during the nineteenth century and continued on into the twentieth century. In his diary entries of 1924, Frege manifests a deep concern with the "inner disunion" of the German people (Frege 1996: 324). Stating that "no doubt one needs someone with youthful vigor to sweep away the people" before this disunion can be annealed, Frege goes on to stipulate that "a Social Democrat can become patriotic and German-minded, a democrat likewise. But can a man from the Zentrum party do so?" (1996: 324-325). Here what we need to keep in mind is that the "Zentrum party originated in 1871 as the representative of the Catholic minority inside the predominantly Protestant German Reich" (Gabriel and Kienzler 1996: 325, f.n. 31). But, according to Frege, it wasn't only Catholics that threatened the unified identity of "German-minded" Germans; it was also the Jews:

One can acknowledge that there are Jews of the highest respectability, and yet regard it as a misfortune that there are so many Jews in Germany, and that they have complete equality of political rights with citizens of Aryan descent; but how little is achieved by the wish that the Jews in Germany should lose their political rights or better yet vanish from Germany. (1996: 336).
It is the very problem of identifying identity (x equaling x) which troubles Frege as he continues his analysis of this "problem:"

If one wanted laws passed to remedy these evils, the first question to be answered would be: How can one distinguish Jews from non-Jews for certain? That may have been relatively easy sixty years ago. Now, it appears to me to be quite difficult. Perhaps one must be satisfied with fighting the ways of thinking which show up in the activities of the Jews and are so harmful, and to punish exactly these activities with the loss of civil rights and to make the achievement of civil rights more difficult. (1996: 336).

Frege, dying in July of 1925, did not live long enough to witness the resolution of this question of identity, as it was not until 1935 that the "German Citizen Law" was implemented, stipulating that "He is a Jew who is descended from at least three grandparents who are purely of Jewish race" (Gabriel and Kienzler 1996: 336, f.n. 61), thereby resolving the knotty "problem" that Frege articulated in a diary entry of 22 April 1924: "If one wants to make laws against the Jews, one must be able to specify a distinguishing mark by which one can recognize a Jew for certain" (1996: 330-331). And so here we have very good evidence for Frege's anti-Semitism ("I have only in the last years really learned to comprehend antisemitism [sic]") as well as evidence for his inserting of the entire question of identity into the greater historical currents of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with its preoccupation with first formulating and then achieving national identity (Frege 1996: 330).

None of this is examined in Tyler Burge's *Truth, Thought, Reason: Essays on Frege*, even though in his introduction Burge presents himself as a historical philosopher and/or a philosophical historian: “My method in writing about Frege has been, almost

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from the beginning … steadfastly historical. History of philosophy is a branch of philosophy as well as a branch of history…. I hope these essays will be read in the light of, and as part of, my own philosophical contributions. Still, in these essays I have tried to train the historical focus on Frege” (2005: 10, 11; italics, mine). Being ‘steadfastly historical’ seems to mean something quite different for Burge than it may for many academics in other disciplines. Rather than any reference to the historical, the social, the political, the economic and/or the cultural context of Frege’s life, what we get in Burge's essays collected in Truth, Thought, Reason is a placement of Frege’s essays and thought in two philosophical genealogies, one covering Frege’s career, the other the history of Western philosophy, but a history sieved through the myopic lens of a practitioner of “mainstream” philosophy, as Burge prefers to dub the analytic wing of the discipline: there is no Nietzsche, no Heidegger, and certainly no Deleuze, Derrida or Foucault. I concede there is one mention of Hegel and another of Parmenides, the latter only to chastise Gödel for comparing Frege to Parmenides. Nor do James, Rorty, or Dewey make the cut, as American pragmatism has been banished to the wings, for “They [the pragmatists] tended … to speak what sounded to analytical philosophers like an older language – a language of ideas rather than propositions” (McCumber 2001: 44).

And so, despite Burge’s repeated assertions that his wok is purely historical, assertions which preface nearly every essay in the collection: “My aims here are historical” (2008: 84); “My mission here is primarily historical” (2008: 213); “I shall not … be building on Frege’s conception [of sense] in this paper. Rather I shall approach it historically” (2008: 242); “This paper is purely historical” (2008: 273; italics, mine); what he deems to be historical has a severely limited historical horizon. By the term,
Burge seems to mean the alignment of philosophical ideas within the tradition of philosophy, but, to repeat, of a very specific tradition. And so we have much discussion of Frege vis-à-vis Plato, Frege vis-à-vis Kant, Frege vis-à-vis Leibniz, as well as Frege in comparison to Russell and Wittgenstein, and Frege as interpreted or mis-interpreted by thinkers such as Michael Dummett, Alonzo Church, and Hans Sluga. Typical of Burge’s historical analysis is the following:

A second source of interest associated with logical objects and the role of truth-values in Frege’s account lies in his rejection of the idea that logic is true independently of any relation to a subject matter. This is the idea … that the positivists used to exempt logic from epistemic and metaphysical inquiry. Frege saw logic as the most general science of being. This is a traditional view of logic. It stems from Aristotle, saturates the medieval period, and runs through Leibniz, Bolzano, Frege, Russell, and Gödel. I think that it is clearly the dominant view in the history of logic. The view seems to me sound. (2008: 24).

This is fine, as far as it goes, though I have trouble understanding why Frege’s rejection of a system of logic independent of any relation to a subject matter comports with a positivist account of logic which secures logic against epistemic and metaphysical inquiry. Perhaps I am simply being obtuse here and displaying in full frontal nudity my lack of expertise in this field, but isn’t the case exactly the opposite, i.e., that relationships to subject matters mire logic in quagmires of inquiry on both the epistemic and metaphysical fronts?

But, never mind: this is not the point that needs to be emphasized. What instead is truly odd is that Burge maintains such a unilinear view of historical contextualization when, in the introduction to *Truth, Thought, Reason*, he delivers up the following warrant:
To appreciate the full depth of a philosopher of the past, one must be patient. One must maintain a reflective listening attitude that goes beyond what is needed to understand a contemporary. There is, first, temporal distance to compensate for. Presuppositions change. What seems obvious changes. One can master these changes only through systematic reading and rereading, and through the consistent exercise of historical as well as philosophical judgment and perspective. (2008: 10).

Well and good. I’m all for that. But wouldn’t such an effort, especially for a scholar of an analytic kind who by definition prides himself on the rigor of his work, especially when compared with the sloppiness of those outside of the “mainstream” of philosophy, need to at least make the tiniest of gestures towards the satisfaction of the requirements of his own code? Doesn’t there at least have to be a more general historical inquiry in order to reckon how presuppositions have changed? In order to compensate for temporal distance, doesn’t there at least have to be the slightest sliver of historical contextualization, not simply vis-à-vis other philosophers engaged in the “mainstream” tradition, but in things social, cultural, economic, and so on? Perhaps Burge is simply following the general practice of analytical philosophers in regards to inquiries into history: as Hans Sluga puts it in his study of Frege, there is a “curious neglect” of historical questions among philosophers engaged in analytical philosophy and a “lack of interest in historical questions – even in the question of its own roots. Anti-historicism has been part of the baggage of the tradition since Frege….

From its very beginning, the tradition has been oriented towards an abstract, formal account of language and meaning, and not towards the comprehending of concrete historical processes. Frege himself considered his task that of the analysis of timeless, objective truths. (Sluga 1980: 2-3).
But can we study Plato without any reference to the Greece of his day? Can we engage with Kant without a hint of a reference to the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, or the various emperors under which Kant was a subject and to which he owed his loyalty? Might we not at least have to understand the general state of scientific knowledge in which these thinkers did their work? And might not such an effort require at least a passing mention of some of the pressing issues of the day? If we are going to utilize an *historical* as well as a philosophical judgment and perspective, to reference Burge’s terms, don’t we at least have to give a nod, however minute, to the social and cultural ambience of the period under investigation? A circular question, granted, but one whose answer is so tautologically patent that one wonders how a scholar, and a self-identified historical scholar to boot, can mount such an inquiry without addressing these kinds of questions.

In *The Courage of Truth*, Foucault offers up a nice criteria of what it means to practice not only a *true* mode of philosophy, but simply to practice *any* philosophical discourse: what he terms scientific discourse (which could be aligned with analytical practice, I suppose), political discourse, and ethical discourse must all be accounted for if a discourse of philosophy is to proceed: "The essential irreducibility of these three poles, their necessary and mutual relationship, and the structure of the reciprocal appeal of one to the other, has underpinned, I believe, the very existence of all philosophical discourse from Greece to the present" (2011: 66). Given these criteria, one could fairly render the judgment that analytical philosophy does not even amount to philosophical discourse and so lies not only *not* in the mainstream of philosophy, but well beyond its outer margins. Foucault goes on to elaborate on this tri-partite combination:
Now what makes philosophical discourse not just a scientific discourse, which [would be confined to] defining and implementing the conditions of truth-telling, what makes philosophical discourse, from Greece to the present, not just a political or institutional discourse, which would be confined to defining the best possible system of institutions, and finally makes the philosophical discourse not just a pure moral discourse prescribing principles and norms of conduct, is that with regard to each of these three questions it poses two others at the same time. Scientific discourse is a discourse whose rules and objectives can be defined in terms of the question: what is truth-telling, what are its forms, what are its rules, what are its conditions and structures? What makes a political discourse no more than a political discourse is that it confines itself to posing the question of the *politeia*, of the forms and structures of government. What makes a moral discourse no more than a moral discourse is that it confines itself to prescribing the principles and norms of conduct. (2012: 66).

Once Foucault has separated out these three forms of discourse - scientific, moral, and political - he tells us that a philosophical discourse must incorporate all three to even qualify as being philosophical:

What makes a philosophical discourse something other than each of these three discourses is that it never poses the question of the truth without at the same time inquiring about the condition of this truth-telling, [either from the side of] the ethical differentiation which opens up access to this truth for the individual, [or from the side] of the political structures within which this truth-telling will have the right, the freedom, and the duty to pronounce. (2011: 66-67).

By limiting its scope to the truth-telling of propositional logic, analytical philosophy has limited itself right out of philosophy, at least if we adopt Foucault's prescriptions (and here we might want to recall that one of the primary "philosophers" of the analytic variety, John Searle, has already sanctioned Foucault as an authority in his speech act dust-up with Derrida).

Parenthetically, here we should observe that simply because $X=X$, it doesn’t follow that a “positive” identification equals a positive identification, that is, if one agrees
that Burge’s self-identification as an historian doesn’t equate with him actually being an historian. This is, if one concurs with this assessment, one of the millions upon millions of cases of mis-identification performed throughout the course of history, from instances of death from “friendly fire” to the two out of three contestants on the old TV show, “To Tell the Truth”, who are not the genuine article. Such misidentifications incorporate a logical rule which can be expressed in the following manner: ”It is ridiculous that from \( x = x \), the logician may assert ‘Caesar = Caesar,’” as humans and their proper names are prey to more foibles and pitfalls of identification than variables and their utter and absolute anonymity (Meyer and Lambert 1968: 10).

Before putting Frege aside, we should also comment on the other item which brought the issue of identity to the forefront during the nineteenth century, and that is the rising tide of nationalism: Hannah Arendt calls the nineteenth century the “nation-creating century” (1959: 162). Both Napoleon I and Napoleon III followed military policies which fomented nationalism on both the domestic and the foreign front, as jingoistic national solidification and imperial foreign ambition on the part of the French led to invasions which in turn fostered indignant sentiments of national self-affirmation on those so invaded. For instance, when Napoleon III invaded northern Italy in 1859, then under the rule of the Hapsburgs, with the result that “French armies were victorious at Magenta and Solferino,” it “unleashed such a tide of anti-French sentiment in Germany,” that this sentiment, along with a concomitant spike in German nationalism, “jolted” Napoleon into signing “an armistice with Austria at Villafranca on July 11, 1859” (Kissinger 1994: 111). Or consider Hegel when he avers that:
Speaking generally, we have only two epochs to distinguish in the history of philosophy, as in ancient and modern art – these are the Greek and the Teutonic. The Teutonic philosophy is the philosophy within Christendom in so far as it belongs to the Teutonic nations; the Christian-European people, inasmuch as they belong to the world of science, possess collectively Teutonic culture; for Italy, Spain, France, England, and the rest have through the Teutonic nations received a new form. (1997: 303-304).

Germany, via Hegel in this case, was not the only nation claiming direct lineage from the ancients; it was a standard practice of the Founding Fathers of the United States to utilize the trope of America’s descent from the Roman Republic; still, this paean to an art and a philosophy of a specifically Teutonic kind and its lineage from the Greeks rings with an awful resonance in this, the Post-Holocaust age.

The entire issue of needing an identity or of having an identity in the first place, led to a yearning for identity, a problem which could be easily resolved by assuming the identity of a German or an Italian or a Pole. Here we can get a hint of the substructure being built for the outbreak of the fever of nationalism, racism, and anti-Semitism which would assume such horrid proportions in the first half of the twentieth century. This crisis was heightened towards the end of the nineteenth century as more and more people poured into the cities: in his famous essay, “The Metropolis and Mental Life,” Georg Simmel begins by stating that “The deepest problems of modern life derive from the claim of the individual to preserve the autonomy and individuality of his existence in the face of overwhelming social forces, of historical heritage, of external culture, and of the technique of life” (1969: 47). Is it any wonder that at approximately the same time as Simmel in Berlin was writing on the fragmented individual in the metropolis, Freud in Vienna was formulating a system of therapy to recuperate the selves (the identities) of just such individuals?
But this “identity crisis” was not limited to Western Europe. Whitman was creating an American expansionist nationalistic identity through his poetry and prose while Dostoyevsky, during the same period, was creating a Russian essentialist identity through his novels and his polemical writings, especially in his famous speech on Pushkin. Both writers thought that their versions of a nationalized and collectivized identity, or an embodied and a personified National Soul, would not only save the souls of their respective nations, but save the soul of the world, an “entity” which of course stretched well beyond their national borders.

Asia was also not immune to this trend. The mapping of Siam, according to Thongchai Winichakul in his *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation*, not only aided the Siamese in their border disputes with the French (vis-à-vis borders with Indo-China), it also led to the creation of the idea of Siamese nationhood and Thai-ness: “The geo-body of a nation is merely an effect of modern geographical discourse whose prime technology is a map” (1994: 17). The geo-body, according to Winichakul, is the physical identification of a people with its map and by extension with that which the map represents, the nation, leading to a collectivized bodily sense of nationhood and its “natural” correlate, individual identity as an embodied member of the nation. The rise of the idea of the nation was also occurring elsewhere: in South Asia, the Afghans drove the British out of Afghanistan in 1842 after a successful raid on the British garrison in Kabul, and, in 1885, the Indian National Congress was established as a counterweight to colonial rule (Kinder and Hilgemann 2003: 89). In certain parts of Africa, especially along its northern littoral, imperial conquest was beginning to lead to a sense of the repressed nation as a counterforce to the repressive power of the metropole. And in South America,
the wave of revolutions and colonial emancipation was prefaced, accompanied, and
followed by budding conceptions of identity as Brazilians, Peruvians, Argentineans, and
so on. But these budding nation-states soon were not immune to the same requirements
for systems of criminal identification as the “older” European nation-states; for instance,
in Buenos Aires, which by 1889 had a population “with as much as 60 percent of its
population foreign-born and unidentified in any systematic way,” an “Anthropometric
Office … using Bertillon’s system” was established to “address the problem of the city’s
growing population and increasing crime rate” (Ruggiero 2001: 185). So that, congruent
with the rising tide of nationalism across the globe, was the rising tide of national identity
systems.

Finally, to retrieve and then put a period on my main thesis: despite his
introversion and his isolation, Frege was not operating in a vacuum. Identity was in the
air! That he worked on a small portion of the puzzle of identity, despite the “timeless”
and “neutral” methods by which the tools of mathematics and symbolic logic are
represented, was not something occurring outside of the concerns of the period in which
he lived. Frege and his interpreters may not have seen the congruence of his concerns
with the concerns of the period in which he lived, but there they are, nevertheless.

Wittgenstein: His Kite, His Vienna

In her Wittgenstein Flies a Kite, Susan G. Sterrett proposes that we trace
Wittgenstein’s “solution of a fundamental problem in logic and the philosophy of
language” in his Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus to “the solution to the sophisticated
technical problem of controlled flight” made by the Wright Brothers in Kitty Hawk,
North Carolina, in 1906 (2006: vii). One piece of evidence she cites to support this is a passage from G.H. von Wright’s memoir of Wittgenstein, “according to which,” Sterrett writes, “Wittgenstein had on numerous occasions explained the importance that thinking about scale models [used extensively in the run-up to the invention of the airplane] had to his having a crucial moment of insight in 1914” (2006: viii):

There is a story of how the idea of language as a picture of reality occurred to Wittgenstein…. It was in the autumn of 1914, on the eastern front. Wittgenstein was reading in a magazine about a lawsuit in Paris concerning an automobile accident. At the trial a miniature model of the accident was presented before the court. The model here served as a proposition; that is, as a description of a possible state of affairs. It has this function owing to a correspondence between the parts of the model (the miniature-houses, -cars, -people) and things (houses, cars, people) in reality. It now occurred to Wittgenstein that one might reverse the analogy [reverse analogical transports!] and say that a proposition serves as a model or picture, by virtue of a similar correspondence between its parts and the world. The way in which the parts of the proposition are combined – the structure of the proposition – depicts a possible combination of elements in reality, a possible state of affairs. (von Wright n.d.: 21).22

Sterrett wants to link Wittgenstein’s quest for a solution to logic and the philosophy of language not to a timeless, neutral zone where timeless, neutral truths are found, nor to what Arendt calls the “timeless, spaceless, supersensuous realm … which Western metaphysics has dreamed from Parmenides to Hegel,” but to the very topicality of the scientific problems of his day (1993: 11).

In similar fashion, but with a different topical issue as their central object of inquiry, Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin in their Wittgenstein's Vienna, trace Wittgenstein’s concerns to the intellectual milieu of the fin de siècle Vienna of his youth. In this section, we will explore both these postulations, with the claim that they at least go some way towards explicating Wittgenstein’s selection of questions on which to train his

focus. In Janik and Toulmin’s reading, Wittgenstein is fulfilling or, as they phrase it, “carrying forward,” not only “the program of linguistic analysis inaugurated by Russell and Moore,” but also, albeit “quite coincidentally, to resolve a general problem about representation which had been vexing all his Viennese contemporaries” (1973: 11).

Janik and Toulmin readily concede that, given “a thinker of Wittgenstein’s profundity, independence and originality” (or Frege’s or Descartes’, for that matter), such a thinker does not “adopt his intellectual and moral beliefs, simply on account of the historical influence of some stronger-minded predecessor or contemporary,” or merely adopt ready-at-hand solutions and apply them to the pressing problems of the time; and, while the answers and arguments provided may transcend topicality, such answers and such arguments are precisely answers to and arguments about the vexing problems of the day:

We can no longer make so clean a separation between his ideas, on the hand, and the historico-cultural context of their exposition, on the other … when it comes to understanding the problems which gave those arguments and beliefs their significance…. Regarded as documents in logic and the philosophy of language, the Tractatus and the Philosophical Investigations stand – and will continue to stand – on their own feet. Regarded as solutions to intellectual problems, by contrast, the arguments of Ludwig Wittgenstein, like those of any other philosopher, are, and will remain, fully intelligible only when related to those elements in their historical and cultural background which formed integral parts of their original Problemstellung. (Janik and Toulmin 1973: 32).

And it does no good to situate Wittgenstein’s concerns in the work of other philosophers in a kind of desperate attempt to make an end-run around the historico-cultural context, viz: well, Wittgenstein was thinking about these things because Frege and Russell were
thinking about these things, as this simply leads to an infinite regress: and why were Frege and Russell thinking about such things? Because… And so on…

Wittgenstein’s emphasis on language, his effort “to re-seduce philosophers away from” the “outer forms of language,” arises not simply in response to the work of Russell and Frege, but also in response to a problem which was haunting the intellectuals of Vienna in the fin de siècle (Janik 2001: 193). In Wittgenstein’s Vienna Revisited, Janik cites a passage from Karl Kraus, the Viennese cultural critic, in order to illuminate the similarities between Wittgenstein’s concerns and those of Kraus: “‘When I don’t make any progress, I have bumped my head against the wall of language. Then I draw back with a bloody head. And would like to go on’” (2001: 193).23 Compare that citation with this from Wittgenstein’s Philosophical Investigations: “‘The results of philosophy are the uncovering of one or another piece of plain nonsense and "bumps" that the understanding has got by running its head up against the limits of language. These bumps make us see the value of the discovery’” (2001: 193).24 Here the correspondence of concern in the limits of language between Kraus and Wittgenstein runs so deep a misdemeanor count of plagiarism might be justly leveled against Wittgenstein. However, the point here is that in the Vienna of the early 1900s such a concern was not ex nihilo sui generis; it was in the zeitgeist:

Far from originating in Wittgenstein’s Tractatus … the idea of regarding language, symbolisms and media of expression of all kinds as giving us “representations” (Darstellungen) or “pictures” (Bilder) had by 1910 become a commonplace in all fields of Viennese cultural debate…. Wittgenstein’s achievement … was not to initiate this discussion, but to draw the threads finally

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23 Janik cites Kraus, “Kunst,” Nachts, Schriften 8, 326.
together by providing a completely general and definitive analysis of the issues involved. (Janik and Toulmin 1973: 31).

Situating Wittgenstein within the milieu of Vienna 1900 might be more easily conceded if we turn to the functional architecture of Adolf Loos and interpret his adoption of functionalism as an explicit rejection of ornamentalism:

In a culture so fascinated by ornamental “beauty” that it sought to embellish a butter knife by turning it into a Turkish dagger, an ash tray into a Prussian helmet, and a thermometer into a pistol, and in which every material tried to look like more than what it was, Loos fought desperately to demonstrate that there is a fundamental distinction between art and utility, that we ignore this at the price of our incapacity to understand anything at all except superficiality…. In his writing as in his building, Loos demanded that scrupulous attention be paid to precisely that craftsmanship that conventional Viennese “good taste” tended to ignore. (Janik 2001: 19).

That Wittgenstein was stripping down language, logic, and grammar as Loos was stripping down architecture will be readily conceded, I believe, if one considers Wittgenstein’s sole work as an architect, the design of a house with Paul Engelmann for Wittgenstein’s sister, Margarete (“Gretl”). A description of “the stark monumentality” of that house from Ray Monk’s *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius* should suffice to align its design with Loos’s project of de-ornamentation:

The house was designed with little regard to the comforts of ordinary mortals. *The qualities of clarity, rigor and precision which characterize it are indeed those one looks for in a system of logic rather than in a dwelling place.* In designing the interior Wittgenstein made extraordinarily few concessions to domestic comfort. Carpets, chandeliers and curtains were strictly rejected. The floors were of dark polished stone, the walls and ceilings painted a light ochre, the metal of the windows, the door handles and the radiators were left unpainted, and the rooms were lit with naked light-bulbs. (1990: 237; italics, mine).
It is this same stark clarity that comes from light cast by a bare bulb that Wittgenstein uses when he analyzes logic and language: "The design for Wittgenstein's sister's Vienna house indicated a family resemblance between Wittgenstein's structuralist logic and architecture without ornament" (Singer 1991: 75-76). Our point here is that this mode of rigorous clarity derived, at least to some extent, from the desire on the part of Viennese intellectuals, Wittgenstein among them, to strip the embellishments from such functional devices as butter knives, ash trays, thermometers, language, logic, and houses. So that, when in the Tractatus Wittgenstein writes that “The world is determined by the facts, and by these being all the facts,” what he is attempting to do is to distill everything down to a level beyond which nothing can be further distilled (1999: 29, 1.11; italics, Wittgenstein).

Now, it so happens that what Wittgenstein is also trying to do in the Tractatus is rid the world finally and forever of what he views as senseless metaphysical questions which have bedeviled philosophers from time immemorial. In other words, he is trying to rid the world of ornamental metaphysical nonsense. As Rudolf Carnap, associated with Wittgenstein through membership in the group of philosophers and mathematicians known as the Vienna Circle, puts it in an essay aptly titled “The Elimination of Metaphysics Through Logical Analysis of Language.”

In the domain of metaphysics … logical analysis yields the negative result that the alleged statements in this domain are entirely meaningless. Therewith a radical elimination of metaphysics is attained. (1959: 60-61; italics, Carnap).25

25 By the way, this is the same infamous essay (originally published in the German in 1932) in which Carnap cites Heidegger completely out of context as saying that “The nothing itself nothings,” leading to many jokes among graduate students in analytical philosophy departments, jokes informed by nothing other than ignorance. For an insightful and illuminating discussion of this, see John McCumber’s Time in the Ditch, 77-81.
What’s odd in all this is that Carnap and Wittgenstein don’t seem to notice that they, too, are practicing metaphysics in their very attempt to divest philosophy of metaphysics. When Wittgenstein states that “What is the case, the fact, is the existence of atomic facts,” and when he immediately follows this declaration with “An atomic fact is a combination of objects (entities, things),” he is doing nothing but metaphysics, at least as I understand it (1999: 29, 2 & 2.01). The very construal of a combination of objects (entities, things) which somehow add up to the fact of atomic facts, with the additional codicil that the world is composed of nothing but such facts is one of the most metaphysical statements every formulated in the history of thought. It does not eliminate metaphysics: it merely reformulates metaphysics in a form more to the liking of Wittgenstein, Russell, Carnap, and others of their camp.

Just think: where are such entities? And what is an entity anyway, if not a metaphysical place-holder, a bizarre amalgamation of thing, organization, and structural apparatus? Where are these atomic facts? Has anyone run across one of them recently? The so-called logical positivists have merely reversed the metaphysical field, replacing the old metaphysics with what Carnap calls ‘negative results,’ which, again, are just as much metaphysical fiddle-faddle as any monadogical postulation as hypothesized by Leibniz, ultimate Form as put forward by Plato, “Being” as posited by Parmenides, “Becoming” as posited by Heraclitus, or, indeed, ”The Nothing that nothings,” allegedly formulated by Heidegger.

To his credit, Wittgenstein eventually came to the conclusion that he had made a misstep and admits as much in the preface to the Philosophical Investigations: “For since beginning to occupy myself with philosophy again, sixteen years ago, I have been forced
to recognize *grave mistakes* in what I wrote in that first book [the *Tractatus*]” (2001: x; italics, mine). The preface is dated January 1945, meaning that Wittgenstein had re-occupied himself with philosophy in 1929, approximately a year after he completed the work on his sister’s house, and seven years after the *Tractatus* was published in English in 1922. In the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein confines himself to an analysis of the use of language, reversing course on the method used in the *Tractatus*, when language was treated as if it levitates above usage. “But what is the meaning of the word ‘five’?” Wittgenstein asks in the *Philosophical Investigations*, before answering his own query: “No such thing was in question here, only how the word ‘five’ is used” (2001: 2, 1). Here he shows that he has abandoned a thoroughly logical analysis of language, which is nothing other than metaphysics strained through the complex logistics of propositional statements, for an analysis based on use pure and simple, reflecting a very similar concern as the work in the *Tractatus* for the de-ornamentation of language and thought.

And that’s the main point to be made here: Wittgenstein’s concern for functionalism arose not out of a placeless timeless void (a metaphysical conceit), but out of the intellectual climate of the Vienna of the early 1900s. Such a propensity and proclivity for simplification is also reflected in the habits of Wittgenstein’s life. The child of one of the wealthiest industrialists of Europe, the young Ludwig grew up in the proverbial lap of luxury: Brahms, Mahler, and Bruno Walter were frequent guests at the musical evenings organized at the Wittgenstein mansion, and the Wittgensteins themselves were “at the centre of Viennese cultural life, during what was, if not its most glorious era, at least its most dynamic” (Monk 1990: 8-9). Later in his life, Wittgenstein gave his entire inheritance away and arranged the circumstances of his life so that
austerity was its prime condition, often retreating to a hut above the Hardanger Fjord in Norway for long periods of solitary meditation. So, in effect, he had stripped all ornamentation away from his life as well, divesting himself of creature comforts and wealth, just as he had tried to divest language and philosophy of ornamentation and fluff.

Let us now return to Susan Sterrett’s _Wittgenstein Flies A Kite_. In her construal of Wittgenstein’s development as a thinker, Sterrett puts Wittgenstein’s fascination with flight as one, if not the prime motivator of his intellectual interests, at least when he was a boy and a young man. A bit of a home-made mechanical genius (Wittgenstein reportedly constructed a sewing machine out of available household materials when he was a teenager), Wittgenstein was inspired by the scientists Ludwig Boltzmann and Heinrich Hertz (the latter’s *Principles of Mechanics* remained one of Wittgenstein’s favorite texts throughout his life - he often cited passages from its introduction). In 1906, at the age of seventeen, Wittgenstein enrolled in the Technische Hochschule in “Charlottenberg, near Berlin, considered ‘‘the most renowned and best of the German engineering schools’’” (Sterrett 2006: 76).26

Perhaps if we move the lens back a bit we can get a more stereoscopic picture of Wittgenstein's decision enter engineering school. The invention by the Wright Brothers did not come *ex nihilo*: once again, there is a context involved. Not only had flight been a dream of humanity for millennia, but also the period leading up to the successful flight in Kitty Hawk in 1906 was preceded by decades of experimentation by the Wrights as well as many other experiments by many other would-be aviators. The "problem" of flight captured the imagination of every restive mechanical intelligence in the scientific world

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during this period. Wittgenstein’s fascination with this was not, once again, a fascination out of context. A fundamental part of the experimentation leading up to the flight of the Wright Brothers was the use of models as models of flight. For instance:

The Wright Brothers had been interested in flight since their boyhoods, when their father had bought them a helicopter-style toy called a “bat” that was wildly popular in Europe. It was an amazing toy, able to stay aloft for appreciable periods. It was based on a design by Alphonse Penaud, an aeronautical researcher in France, who designed his *flying models machine* to be inherently stable. The Wrights had for years tried to make bigger versions of that helicopter toy, but bigger versions didn’t fly, and their technological adventurousness was directed to other pursuits – first printing presses, and then optimizing the newer-style, high-precision “safety” bicycles. They never lost interest in the helicopter toy, though. (Sterrett 2006: xi; italics, mine).

Indeed, the steering mechanism of a bicycle itself as well as the observation of the Wrights of the twisting of a cardboard box “in which bicycle inner tubes were shipped” led to the technical breakthroughs which allowed the Wright Brothers to construct a successful flying machine (Sterrett 2006: xi).

Thus it was thinking through replication, modeling upon a model, or what could be termed allowing similarities to play themselves out through transformations of scope and scale, which was the general intellectual systemic apparatus foundational to the invention of the airplane by the Wright Brothers. Sterrett makes the claim that such a way of thinking was instrumental not only in Wittgenstein’s analysis of language and logic in particular but also to the entire intellectual development of the last nineteenth and early twentieth century in general. To support this thesis, Sterrett cites an obscure essay titled “On Physically Similar Systems” by the almost equally obscure scientist, Edgar Buckingham, a paper which, so Sterrett avers, can be linked to Wittgenstein via the
person of William Ostwald, who happened to be both the first person willing to publish the *Tractatus* after it had been passed over by many others, and “Buckingham’s doctoral thesis advisor” (Sterrett 2006: xix). Sterrett concedes that much of what she suggests “contains some element of speculation” (2006: xix-xx); still, when we note that “although” the specifics of Buckingham’s work “addressed equations that involved products and sums,” it was generalized by him to encompass “problems in heat and electrodynamics,”27 and indeed “is applicable to any phenomenon that one might describe in terms of relations,” and if we then add that Buckingham’s paper appeared in July of 1914 and that Wittgenstein had his “breakthrough moment” vis-à-vis language as a picture (as a model) in September of 1914, we can at least believe that there was some sort of quirky serendipitous synchronicity in this temporal congruence (2006: 181, 182, 183; italics, Sterrett).

However, it would be a mistake to leave the impression that thinking through modeling, or what might be called conception via replication, is something that leapt out of the blue in the nineteenth century. In fact, in *The Forms of Meaning: Modeling Systems Theory and Semiotic Analysis*, co-authors Thomas A. Sebeok and Marcel Danesi use the terms "trait," "instinct," "innate ability," and "truly astonishing evolutionary attainment," as descriptors of this capacity (2000: v, 1), and they go on to claim that "modeling and knowing are intrinsically intertwined in human life" (2000: 167). Yet and still, the modeling 'instinct' seems to have come to the fore during the 1800s: though Sebeok and Danesi trace the origin of theorizing about modeling back to the Greeks (Hippocrates, Galen, and Euclid, in particular), many of their exemplars of thinkers who

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used modeling as their primary form of conception are taken straight out of the nineteenth century: e.g. "Friedrich J.K. Henle, the illustrious German atomist and physiologist," who based much of his theories about the experience of pain on modeling (Sebeok and Danesi 2000: 159); as well as the work of the "German mathematician Carl Friedrich Gauss (1777-1855), the Russian mathematician Nikolai Ivanovich Lobachevski (1793-1856), and the Hungarian mathematician Janos Bolyai (1802-1860)," as well as the work of the "German mathematician Georg Friedrich Bernhard Riemann" (2000: 166). Sebeok and Danesi also point out that in The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animal, Darwin makes the "claim that animal behavior constituted a viable analogue for human behavior," which, by "the end of the nineteenth century, … led to the establishment of comparative psychology" (2000: 17). So, whether the capacity to think via modeling is a trait, an instinct, or an evolutionary attainment, something significant seems to have happened during the 1800s which catapulted this ability into the forefront of consciousness as a tool of analysis, an instrument of conception, and a vehicle for invention.

Another item Sterrett adds into this mix is the often ignored motivation for Wittgenstein’s first extended visit to England: his desire to fabricate and fly kites. His “move to a kite-flying station in the north of England in the summer of 1908 was actually part of a more general move: the move to study aeronautical engineering at the University of Manchester” (Sterrett 2006: 81). During his summer job at the kite-flying station (the kites was used for meteorological observation), Wittgenstein “first observed and then learned how to make a kite,” which was probably not too difficult for someone who had once constructed a sewing machine out of odds and ends. Nevertheless, kites he did make.

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28 First name - check.
and kites he did fly, and kites of course can be conceived of as replicas or models of birds while airplanes, also, can be conceived of as replicas or models of birds. Curiously enough - or perhaps not so curious at all but merely a signature item of the intellectual focus of the era – Earnest Rutherford was at Manchester at roughly the same time as Wittgenstein and “it was in these years that Rutherford established the structure of the atom,” another example of modeling, replication, and the importance of similarity (McGuinness 1988: 62). And it’s this principle of similarity that is the item Sterrett wants us to trace all the way through from kites to propositions, for Wittgenstein would come to understand that, just as the flight of a kite replicates the flight of a bird, the proposition is “a model of reality;” and he would also “break away from the presumption … that it is the form of our sentences or equations that mirrors the world, and see that instead it is our language itself that mirrors the world” (Sterrett 2006: xxii).

So what we have posited here is the idea that Wittgenstein’s achievement was not only to see that it is not the form of language, mathematics or logic that mirrors or replicates reality, but that language, mathematics, and logic in and of themselves mirror reality. They are models or pictures of the world, in other words. As Michael Losonsky puts it in Linguistic Turns in Modern Philosophy:

A guiding idea of the Tractatus is that a proposition is a picture and a picture is a state of affairs in which the elements of the picture are arranged or concatenated in a certain way. Each element of the picture represents an object and the fact that the elements of the picture are arranged in a certain way represents or means that those objects for which the elements are combined in a specific way. (Losonsky 2006: 192-193).
Losonsky refers to *Tractatus* 2.15 here, and with good reason, for Wittgenstein states in this remark “that the elements of the picture are combined with one another in a definite way, represents that the things are combined with one another” (1999: 33). And, if this is so, that is, if the pictures represent objects in the world and represents them as they are ‘combined with one another,’ then it follows that through comprehending the inner workings of this combination, its mechanisms, its operations, we can then comprehend the world; ergo:

2.1 We make to ourselves pictures of facts.
2.12 The picture is a model of reality.
2.202 The picture represents a possible state of affairs in logical space.
2.203 The picture contains the possibility of the state of affairs which it represents.
2.21 The picture agrees with reality or not; it is right or wrong, true or false.
(Wittgenstein 1999: 33, 35).

And so on. In other words, the picture, whether it be a sentence, a statement, a proposition, a syllogism, or an equation, is a picture of reality and can be confirmed or falsified through, in this case, the form of propositional statements verified or falsified by truth-tables.

Now, whether one buys Wittgenstein’s “picture” here or not (as stated previously, he came to regard the entire enterprise of the *Tractatus* as a “grave mistake”) or whether one buys Sterrett’s delineation of the genealogy of Wittgenstein’s early development as a thinker, is almost beside the point, that point being, once again, that intellectual advances must be considered as products intimately tied to the periods in which they occur. This doesn’t mean that they cannot possibly be applied to other periods or places; indeed, they may even ascend to that timeless placeless Truth which metaphysicians conjure up as the
Valhalla of idealism; yet and still, they have a provenance within particular times and specific places and those particularities and specifics matter, not only as some sort of minor backdrop against which to properly comprehend their provenance, but also as matrices the comprehension of which can lead to a much richer appreciation of the work being done.

As Friedrich Waismann, one of the charter members of the Vienna Circle and therefore a self-identified strict and rigorous analyst to the core, puts it: “What if a hundred years ago [Waismann is writing in 1929] a physicist had constructed a theory like the general theory of relativity, i.e. a system of both physical and geometrical axioms? At that time, when the matter was not clearly understood, would it not have been right to ask, But is such a theory even thinkable without inconsistency?” (1979: 141; italics, mine). In other words, the context of time matters, as does the context of history, which is only a form of humanized time, I suppose. In our examination of the first phase of Wittgenstein’s work (pre-Philosophical Investigations), we have seen that a doubled contextual framing may help us situate the nature of Wittgenstein’s concerns – on the one hand, the de-ornamentation of language, logic, and mathematics is set against the general intellectual project of the de-ornamentation of the Viennese gee-gawed culture of the fin de siècle, and, on the other hand, what we might call the similarity model, or the modeling of the model as a method by which to comprehend the workings of flight (amongst other things), is re-worked as a method by which to understand the relationship between language, logic, mathematics, and what is euphemistically known as reality. Let us now turn to American philosophy of the 1950s and its relationship to Senator Joseph McCarthy.
Joe McCarthy and American Philosophy

In *Time in the Ditch: American Philosophy and the McCarthy Era*, John McCumber makes a more than plausible case that philosophy in the United States of the 1950s was a field not immune to the witch-hunting apparatuses of the Red Scare. In fact, McCumber makes a strong case that the direction of American philosophy was profoundly impacted by McCarthy’s inquisition and that its turn to a “rigid” analytical variety of philosophy had as much to do with politics as it did with anything like Truth or Logic or the notion that it may be “a great improvement in method to try to aim at the basis of knowledge by looking not for the primary facts but for the primary sentences” (Schlick 1959: 212; italics, Schlick). McCumber also notes that this influence has never been acknowledged by those within the discipline, an acknowledgement that McCumber believes might lead to a certain amount of critical self-reflection on the part of the discipline’s practitioners, and that, furthermore, the legacy of the Red Scare still scars the discipline: “American philosophy has hardly stood still, of course, since the days of Joe McCarthy. But on both its disciplinary and its intellectual levels, it remains today in part a legacy of the junior senator from Wisconsin [McCarthy] and his academic allies” (2001: 60). So here, once again, we have a story in which a certain brand of philosophy is presented as if it stands outside of the contingencies of history when, in fact, its core interests and methods may be products of history.

Though the field of philosophy “was not singled out as a target by the vigilantes of the 1950s…. Philosophy, in fact, may be in first place in terms of the percentage of its practitioners who fell afoul of right-wing vigilantes,” states McCumber, noting that philosophy professors were “4 times the percentage of English professors, and 20 percent
above the physicists,” in terms of the relative likelihood of being subjected to inquiry from the various organs of the Red Scare, whether those came in the form of the State of California demanding signatures to a Loyalty Oath or via subpoenas from McCarthy’s committee itself (2001: 25; italics, McCumber). McCumber concedes that some of this may be attributable to run-of-the-mill American anti-intellectualism, philosophy itself being a dubious enterprise for “rugged” Americans of the red-and-white-and-blue variety and so being low-lying fruit for McCarthy and his acolytes. However, in an era when saying anything “‘provocative, unorthodox, or interesting’” could cause one to become a target of those searching high and low for Communists and their “Sympathizers,” it isn’t hard to imagine that philosophers, at the time “among the freest spirits in the academy, managed to attract more than their share of anti-intellectual wrath” (McCumber 2001: 24, 25).

What happened as a result of this, according to McCumber, is that philosophy learned its lesson: it pulled in its inquisitive antennae and curled into an analytical shell. Anything “dubitable” was cast aside: Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche, of course, but also Husserl and Heidegger, as well as those “stained” by their association with Communism, such as Sartre and Marcuse along with the latter’s associates from the Frankfurt School, Adorno and Horkheimer, as well as Pragmatists such as Dewey and James, and, later, Richard Rorty. Analytic philosophy provided a sanctuary for American philosophers: when “timeless truths” are the objects of analysis and logical propositions are cast as their

29 McCumber is basing this on information gleaned from the Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors (43:57); he adds the qualifier that “Unless a smaller proportion of philosophers belonged to the AAUP than did members of other disciplines – which would, if true, require some explanation of its own – we are left with philosophy in first place” (2001: 25).
30 McCumber is citing Ellen Schrecker’s No Ivory Tower. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997, 109, who, in turn, is citing Harold Taylor, president of Sarah Lawrence Collège.
operators of veracity, one is shielded from controversy of any kind. There are no politics in a truth-table. But to strip oneself of politics is of course a political act, especially in an era when politics trumped all.

McCumber nominates “Quinean truth” as one of the prime exemplars of this route to safety:

The utterance of a statement occurs in a personal and social vacuum. Quinean truth becomes selfless, and to all intents and purposes, timeless as well, for if we abstract from all occasions of utterance, we get something that might be uttered, though not always truly, on any occasion. That comes fairly close to being timeless. (McCumber 2001: 47).

Such an analysis divests philosophy of any need to consider such “extraneous” factors as history and geography: truth, being timeless and placeless, is a stand-alone entity, needing nothing but a sound syllogism or a valid proposition or an well-constructed protocol statement for its veracity to be certified. However:

When Quinean truth is made philosophy’s only goal, philosophers are directed away from reflecting on the historical conditions of their discipline, and toward uncovering the logical conditions of the quest for truth; away from social or pragmatic construals of meaning, and toward a conflation of it with reference and truth-conditions; away from investigation of the social work and complicities of philosophical approaches, and toward issues concerning the scientific justification of beliefs in general. (McCumber 2001: 48).

What’s odd about the presumption of analytical philosophers - that they are the hand-maidens of science, “giving” science the logical syntax by which it can be safely and securely grounded in truth-conditions and therefore unperturbed by the “wilds” of speculation - is that those who practice physics – long considered the standard-bearer of science (“The highest in dignity are the stars”) - make it their business as well as their
obligation to engage in just such “wild” bouts of speculation, albeit in a form of speculation based on much theoretical knowledge (Gadamer 1992: 15).\footnote{The citation is from Gadamer, who references the Greek but does not give an attribution. Might it be Aristotle? Heraclitus? Plato? Sophocles?}

I myself well recall a conversation I had some thirty-five years ago with the associate director of the Livermore Atomic Testing Lab, who gave an account of how a weapons program might get kick-started at the Lab. As this fellow recounted it, a group of scientists might be having lunch in the cafeteria at the Livermore Lab and get to speculating about what the Russians might be doing right about now. One says to another, ‘I wonder if the Russians are developing a weapons system that only kills pregnant women?’ Says another in reply: ‘They just might be doing that.’ And voila!, a proposal for just such a system is drawn up, funding is found, and our “truth-conditioned” scientists are attempting to create just such a system so as to “balance out” our enemies, those hypothetical scientists cooking up their hypothetical weapons system in the USSR. True story.

Or take something a bit more palatable as well as a tad less anecdotal. When Michio Kaku imagines Einstein coming up with the special relatively theory, it arises exactly through such a bout of “wild” speculation:

Then it suddenly hit him, the key to the entire problem. Einstein recalled, “A storm broke loose in my mind.” The answer was simple and elegant: time can beat at different rates throughout the universe, depending on how fast you moved…. This meant that events that were simultaneous in one frame were not necessarily simultaneous in another frame, as Newton thought. He had finally tapped into “God’s thoughts.” He would recall excitedly, “The solution came to me suddenly with the thought that our concepts and laws of space and time can only claim validity insofar as they stand in a clear relation to our experiences…. By a revision of the concept of simultaneity into a more malleable form, I thus arrived at the theory of relativity.” (2004: 61, 62; italics, Kaku).\footnote{Kaku cites Denis Brain’s Einstein: A Life. John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1996, 61.}
So there you have it: ’The solution came to me suddenly with the thought that our concepts and laws of space and time can only claim validity insofar as they stand in a clear relation to our experiences.’ Aside from lending us a clear and distinct exemplar of our main thesis, that it is precisely through speculation (’A storm broke loose in my mind’!), wild and rough-and-ready as it may be, that major break-throughs in science are catalyzed, doesn’t Einstein’s assertion here also contradict the “objective” positioning of “Truth” which analytic philosophers try to instantiate as the one and only place-holder of veracity. For, if the very concepts and laws of space and time can only claim validity insofar as they stand in a clear relation to our experiences, then it is not the view from nowhere that grants validity to concepts and laws, but the view from somewhere, made accessibly through our experiences (i.e. our subjectivity!) which grants such validity! Context, in other words, is all.

Now, before “rigorous” analytically-minded readers upbraid me for letting loose the Speculative Dogs of Hell, let me reassure them that I know that I am writing on a computer, that my mug is a mug, this table a table, and so on.

However, if we return to our account of American philosophy and its relationship to the McCarthy era, we will discover that the so-called “T” in “Truth” is, at least to a certain extent, a lid that was clamped on philosophy in the United States and its practitioners as a method by which to hound “subversives” out of academia while guaranteeing the loyalty of those who remained untouched by scandal. Both McCumber in Time in the Ditch and Ellen Schrecker in No Ivory Tower cite the situation at the University of Washington in 1947 under its president, Raymond B. Allen, as the prototypical and paradigmatic case of the confluence of academic freedom, knowledge as
defined as a search for “objective” truth, and the pressure arising from the Red Scare. In President Allen’s “inaugural address in May 1947, he reminded his faculty about its ‘special obligation to deal in a scholarly way with controversial questions,’ and cautioned them that if they strayed from such objectivity ‘they will lose their security’” (Schrecker 1986: 95). But he also offered them the possibility of safety, for,

Thanks to … Raymond B. Allen… they [the faculty] had been told what, in the climate of the times, they needed to avoid: anything unscientific or subjective. Logical positivism provided a philosophical framework for doing this. If they wanted to be really safe, they could accept the Allenian view, finding intellectual respectability for their political prudence by claiming to deal with timeless truths. If that was unpalatable, they could see themselves as similar to empirical scientists, borrowing a timeless, spaceless respectability that even Allen recognized. (McCumber 2001: 45-46).

Eventually the investigation at the University of Washington led to the dismissal of three professors while sanctions were imposed on three others, who were put “on probation for two years and made” to “sign an affidavit that they were no longer in the Communist Party” (Scherecker 1986: 103). Allen’s position was that “embracing communist dogma precluded sincerely seeking truth…. It was his position that since no member of the Communist Party could ever be truthful, no member of the Communist Party should be allowed to teach” (Lewis 1988: 164). One of those fired was Professor Herbert Phillips of the philosophy department. Philips “routinely told his classes that he was a Marxist and warned them to take that fact into account in assessing his lectures” (Schrecker 1986: 44-45); after being dismissed, Phillips sent our more than 2000 applications but did not

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33 Schrecker cites Raymond B. Allen’s “The President’s Analysis,” Communism and Academic Freedom (Seattle, 1949), 93, a document which she states in footnote 24, page 377, “was very widely distributed” at the time.
receive one nibble in return: he “spent the rest of his life working at odd jobs”
(McCumber 2001: 27). One state south, the Cold War scare was also having its impact on the university: one Ralph Spitzer lost "his position as a professor of chemistry at Oregon State University," merely by suggesting that the work of the Soviet scientist Trofim Lysenko "ought to be examined" (Levins and Lewontin 1985: 187). As for Allen, he became the first chancellor of UCLA in 1952, remaining in that position until 1957.

The situation at the University of Washington and Allen’s privileging of “truth” provided a license as well as an instigation for philosophy departments in the United States to divest themselves of any taint of “speculation” and turn to "timeless truths” instead. And what could be more conducive for the timelessness of truth than analytical propositions and protocol statements, the bread and butter of the logical positivists. But the analytic turn led to a blind spot within these departments; in fact, it led to two 

*blinding* blind spots: first, a refusal to reflect on the history of American philosophy, especially the history of American philosophy during the McCarthy era, and so an ignorance of the institutional and political reasons behind the ascension of analytical philosophy within American philosophy departments – American analytical philosophers are, as McCumber puts it, “sadly ignorant of the real condition of their own profession and of the political events and forces that had shaped it” (2001: 166); and second, a refusal to reflect on any relationship philosophers may have to the culture in which they are working, due to the timelessness and placelessness of their ethos. This leaves such thinkers in a bind, for “it is very difficult,” if not downright impossible, “for a philosopher to leave behind” or ignore “the determining characteristics of her own
culture, many of which are invisible to her and all the more powerful for that”
(McCumber 2001: 100).

Such a situation has led to a kind of double isolation for those working in such departments. One, they are isolated from philosophical developments flourishing in other disciplines within the humanities and the social sciences, as the last fifty years have seen an explosion in philosophical thought which has completely gone on, for the most part, without any participation of academics from Anglo-American philosophy departments of the analytical variety. This, to me, is unfortunate, as the rigorous parsing of language and thought which analytical philosophers can bring to the intellectual table could be of great assistance in separating the gold from the dross in some of this work. Secondly, analytical philosophers have tended to separate themselves out from their own historical context. When all that is needed for timeless truth are the very instruments of such truth such as propositions and protocol statements, what need is there for anything else? This leaves analytical philosophy in the odd position that some no longer even consider it philosophy per se: Traditionally,” writes Aaron Preston in Analytic Philosophy: The History of an Illusion, “the overreaching goal of philosophy is the rational construction of a general – and in that sense all-embracing - worldview that provides reasonable answers not only to metaphysical but also moral questions, thereby serving as a rough-and-ready roadmap orienting the human being toward its summum bonum, a life of eudemonia, or ‘flourishing’” (2010: 10-11). Preston concludes that analytic philosophy has abandoned such goals. Preston (as well as McCumber, for that matter) also believes that analytic philosophy fails as a movement or a doctrine in another important aspect as well: ironically, its practitioners do not offer up an analysis of its own foundational ontology:
“For now it should simply be noted that the failure of analytical philosophers to provide a
metaphysical and methodological account of their manner of philosophizing counts as a
tremendous oversight that makes their philosophizing un-philosophical in an important
sense” (Preston 2010: 8). However, to offer up such a statement of purpose, such a
testament or manifesto, such a plain explanatory discursus, might lead back to the
shameful provenance of analytical philosophy, and so prove a task too distasteful to
pursue. But analytical philosophy’s “attempt to be rigorously scientific, foisted on it
during the McCarthy era, resulted in a situation in which…. A greater turn from the
Delphic maxim … ‘know thyself’ could hardly be imagined” (McCumber 2001: 166).
Such an ignorance cannot carry the burden of its own weight and must be relieved or it
will collapse of its own accord.

The other thing analytical philosophers seem to ignore is that to a certain extent
the facts of science are bound by contingency as well. Physics, typically viewed as the
sciences of sciences (though neuroscience and biochemistry are giving physics a run for
the money), its empirical stability and ahistorical rigor a state of epistemological affairs
which all the other disciplines "should" aspire to, is itself bound by history, not only due
to the "progress" of knowledge but also to the historical transformation of the objects of
physics themselves. For instance, in their *The Dialectical Biologist*, Richard Levins and
Richard Lewontin report that:

There are, of course, physical constants like the mass of the electron, the speed of
light, and Planck’s constant, which we regard as fixed and insensitive to the
systems of which they are a part. Yet their constancy is not a law derived from yet
other, more primitive principles, but an assumption. We do not, in fact, *know* that
"the" mass of "the" electron has been the same since the beginning of matter nor,
even if it has been so constant, that its value is not an accident of the history of
matter. Whether such values are indeed changing and, if they are, at what rate, is a contingent question, not to be answered from principle. (1985: 277; italics, Levins and Lewontin).

Here we can add more lability to one of the most (ostensibly) stable of empirical foundations for empirical foundational truth: the place. As Doreen Massey points out in *for space*, there are "long and turbulent" geological histories to all places, leading to the unsettling conclusion that "timeless" truths which root themselves in findings from "timeless" places are nothing more than a fiction unless historical transformations are somehow factored into the equation: "What … geological history tells us is that this 'natural' place to which we appeal for timelessness has of course been (and still is) changing" (Massey 2005: 133).

However, it would be wrong to assert that analytic philosophers do not have an historical narrative through which and by which they locate themselves in intellectual history: Frege is of course central to such a story: as a historical marker, his work is used as a monument to parse off all that comes before as well as all that follows from his work, with such figures as Descartes and Leibniz falling on one side of that marker and Russell and Quine falling on the other. But the point Preston and McCumber are making still holds true, in all its double-hinged cogency: analytic philosophers have successfully ignored the role which the McCarthy Era played in the privileging of their brand of philosophy and they have neglected to construe a metaphysics which would (or at least might) explain the centrality of their mode of philosophy in a cosmos that exceeds their philosophy. But the greater fault of analytical philosophy may not be its habitual neglect of any sort of inclusion of historical context into their thinking, but a “vast forgetting, or disregarding, of the body, and experiential knowledge;” the willful disregard of these two
factors leads to the untenable situation in which “all the things that conceptual language can do when its forgets its embodied source” drives thinking to conclusions “which are ludicrous” (Wheeler 2006: 43-44), such as the postulation of the brain in a vat.

As a way of (possibly) linking the McCarthy-analytic philosophy connection to the present, it is interesting to note the linkage Foucault makes in *The Birth of Biopolitics* between "American" philosophers who "have employed logic," i.e. American philosophers of the analytic variety, and neoliberalism, which of course can be read as an off-shoot of McCarthyism, at least in the manner in which neoliberalism is practiced by the right wing of the United States:

When you consider the way in which the Americans have employed logic, the logical positivism of the Vienna School, in order to apply it to scientific, philosophical, or everyday discourse, you see there … a kind of filtering of every statement whatsoever in terms of contradiction, lack of consistency, nonsense. To some extent we can say that the economic critique the neo-liberals try to apply to governmental policy is also a filtering of every action by the public authorities in terms of contradiction, lack of consistency, and nonsense. (2004: 247).

Perhaps the connection between analytic philosophy and neoliberalism is too attenuated to hold, yet and still, it is an intriguing connection, and perhaps one worth further investigation.

*Conclusion*

What I have attempted to accomplish in this rather extended chapter is of course what I may not have accomplished at all: however, what I have attempted to accomplish is to take time, drill it vertically back into its past, and plumb its depths. We added the excavation of history to the thin moment of time that passes us by and then passes us by
again, moment by moment, instant upon instant. Through our exploration of the ruse, the analogical transport, and the essential temporality of the “timeless truths” of analytic philosophy, I have tried to demonstrate that history must be accounted for in any analysis of anything whatsoever, including, of course, an analysis of the everyday.

So now, at the end of the first part of this study, we have taken Goffman’s situation, added on the time-space-place continuum, and then mined time vertically. We have also, at least to a certain degree, widened Goffman’s constricted focus on “our own Anglo-American society,” an expansion which will be followed through in a much more intensive way throughout the rest of our investigation.
Place Two: Coffee Shop

Coffee at Peet’s on Westwood Boulevard, east side of the street, just south of Santa Monica, in “Moss Plaza” which is no plaza at all but a mini-mall if ever there was one. Besides Peet’s, Moss Plaza contains a print shop (The Printing Depot), a cleaners (Noble Cleaners), a Chinese restaurant (Lu’s Chinese Kitchen), a pharmacy (Imperial Pharmacy), a Mexican restaurant (Eduardo’s Border Grill), a manicure shop (BF Nails & Spa), a barber (Fantastic Sam’s), a Japanese restaurant (California Roll & Sushi), and an eBay sales mediator (I SOLD it on EBay).

Let us pause to pay homage to the strict methodologies of the social sciences and scientifically notate the time: Thursday, 7:43 a.m., 17 July 2008.

What could be more everyday than a cup of coffee, steaming?

We’ll just sit here and sip on it, nurse it along (as they say (the anonymous ‘they’)) and comfort ourselves in the given of its given.

We’re regular customers. They know us. But do we know them? How far does this familiarity extend? Is it given, that extent? Technically, no; we could divorce our spouses and marry someone from behind this very counter. But then of course we’d no longer be an everyday customer; we would have sacrificed our status as regulars by inserting ourselves into a different order, another segment and sector of the given. By such an act we would rearrange the given, at least to a certain degree. The given would then include: oh that couple, why yes, she met him at Peet’s, she liked the way he made her latte and one thing led to another and it just went on from there…this romance becoming part of the given lore of this particular given place.
Is there more comfort in being known at a coffee shop, a regular, or in being anonymous, a stranger? Which partakes more of the everyday? Or are both conditions equally everyday? If one desires anonymity and it’s violated, does that ruin the everyday aspect of a coffee shop? Well, what is the ‘everyday aspect’ of a coffee shop? Wouldn’t that depend on the coffee shop? But then what is the ‘everyday aspect’ of any given place? If a place is observed from a certain angle, does it retain its everydayness but lose it when viewed from another angle? That doesn’t seem likely; however, when observed from outer space or from an airplane flying at 35,000 feet or even from a passing car, the everyday aspect of any place might go totally unobserved (or be unobservable). Are there certain parts of a place that are everyday and other parts that don’t fit within its scope? But what is ‘the scope’ of the everyday? Can the scope of the everyday be seen? When walking into a coffee shop, is the everyday immediately present, or does the everyday arrive with the coffee? But what if the coffee’s no good? Does the everyday abandon a coffee shop if the coffee’s rotten? But then one person’s lousy cup of coffee is another’s par excellence, so that couldn’t be true. The quality of the coffee can’t be the elemental element that aligns a coffee shop within the scope of the everyday; it must be the feeling there. But what does that mean: the ‘feeling there’? What feeling where? Is the feeling locatable? Does it exist everywhere in equal strength in every part of the coffee shop or does it inhabit one part more than another? Is the everyday of more intensity behind the counter or in front of it? At a table sipping coffee or standing and tapping one foot? Can one person unilaterally destroy the feeling of the everyday? Say someone behind the counter speaks too loudly: can that obliterate the pervasive calm of the everyday? Does the everyday require pervasive calm? Is that one of its necessary conditions? Couldn’t a
pneumatic drill operator do his job and stay within the confines of his particular brand of
the everyday? In fact, wouldn’t he have to keep that jack-hammer pounding to keep
within his particular brand of the everyday? What about a rock guitarist? The wailing
feed-back of his guitar, an everyday sound for him, might be the absolute death knell of
the everyday for others. And certainly a jackhammer and an electric guitar operating
either singly or in tandem (!) in a coffee shop would destroy its everyday quality,
granting that it had such a quality to begin with.

But let us return to Peet’s on Westwood Boulevard and this particular
instantiation of the everyday. Let us catalogue and classify the components of the coffee
shop: perhaps through this taxonomic operation we will arrive at some understanding of
the everyday, at least as it is given within this place.

Exhibit A: Coffee, of course. A wall menu (tote board? selection chart? option
graph?) lists the dizzying possibilities: Soy Lattes, Madagascar Vanilla Freddo’s, White
Chocolate Mochas, Café Freddo Extra Bold, and so forth, with prices and sizes appended.
Types of coffees are listed as well: Arabian-Mocha Java, Major Dickason’s Blend,
Sumatra, French, Italian, House Blend, Garuda Blend, Fair Trade Blend, Gaia Organic
Blend, Blend 101, and Espresso Forte.

B: Teas. Phoenix Mountain Oolong, Lion Mountain Keemun, Pride of the Port,
Assam Extra Fancy, Jasmine Downy Pearls, Gunpowder, Jade Mist Organic.

C: Pastries, gleaming and fluffy behind the polished glass, Cherry Rustic Tarts,
Dried Fruit and Nut Scones, Blueberry Muffins.
EX. D: Coffee paraphernalia (AKA accessories and appurtenances): saucers and cups, espresso machines (Saeco Odea Giro Espresso Machine) and tea strainers (Bodum New Yo-Yo Tea Cup Infuser with Double Wall Glass), grinders (Capresso Infinity Conical Burr Grinder) and tampers, containers and tumblers.

EX. E: Seven tables, sixteen chairs, eight stools.

F: A condiments and utensils stand, half-and-half, straws, napkins, and so on.

G: Bathrooms, his and hers.

H: A holder for discarded (but still ostensibly desired) newspapers.

I: Two garbage containers, sprucely maintained.

J. Sweets and assorted goodies: Peet’s Dutch Cocoa, Peet’s Dutch Cocoa Syrup, Chewy Peps, Organic Crystallized Ginger, Semifreddi’s Chocolate Almond Biscotti, June Taylor Blood Orange Marmalade, Route 29 Licorice Piglets, Route 29 Barnyard Licorice, Scharffen Berger Sauce Duet, Rabbit’s Gracious Granola, and so on.

K. Two surveillance cameras, tucked high in opposite corners above the counter, tilted down towards the cash registers, shooting (we assume (don’t we?)).

L. A swinging door leads into a kitchen area (or what is assumed to be a kitchen area).

M. Outside is one bench, facing north into the mini-mall’s parking lot. Not exactly the prettiest vista, but handy for those coffee drinkers who also happen to be smokers or have dogs in tow.

But does this catalogue (or any such catalogue) relay the given quality of this coffee shop’s particular manifestation of the everyday? Of course it does not. And indeed
it could not possibly deliver such a thing (if such a thing exists), as any such list would simply identify the place as a Peet’s, as any Peet’s at any one of its 180 locations would carry such items.¹ Besides, it must be inhabited by people, that is, customers and workers, in order for the coffee shop to take on its essential qualities of everydayness. A mere list of items does not illuminate much about a place’s (possible) inclusion within the ranks of the everyday; but then without such items, any coffee shop could not fulfill the possibility of its everydayness. After all, if there were no tables or chairs in a coffee shop, we would immediately sense that something was off, and without coffee, the store would become – what? – a mockery of itself? a living embodiment of false advertising? an establishment dedicated to a particular form of deception?

This brings us to the question of what can be accepted as a coffee shop. Does the category have parameters and are these limits distinct or vague? In other words, how elastic are the accepted norms for what constitutes a coffee shop? Every chain has certain definite givens: despite geographic disparities, a Starbuck’s in Spain and one in Detroit should have the same products on display and beverages for sale: this is what is offered by such places: they promise a familiarity of ambience and a standard standard of quality, no matter where they are located. Now there may be some slight degree of flexibility allowed, or some unnoticed or unnoticeable drift or leakage that yields a range of difference, but how far can that go before the shop in question has violated the parameters of its classification? With one-of-a-kind coffee shops, uniqueness is precisely what is offered. But what if such uniqueness consists of a storefront with a coffee pot inside and Styrofoam cups stacked next to the pot? Imagine it’s up to costumers to brew the coffee and toss a donation into a communal bucket. There’s no selections offered

¹ Re an email from Natalie Sigala-Perez, Customer Service Representative, Peet's Coffee & Tea. 8/7/2008.
(besides the coffee, that is); there’s no one making or serving coffee; there’s not even a place to sit. There’s just a pot of coffee and a stack of cups. Is this a coffee shop? It doesn’t seem to qualify, as it doesn’t approach what we have come to expect of a coffee shop as well as what we expect of the elemental structures of capitalism.

But now we begin to strike against the contingency of our conceptions of the given. It wasn’t that long ago that coffee, at least in individual cups, was mainly purchased, at least in America, at diners, lunch counters, and certain faux-European restaurants, found only in such faux-European cities such as New York and San Francisco. The phenomena of premium coffee along with premium coffee shops did not as yet exist. So any sense of everydayness that may be associated with one-of-a-kind shops as well as chains such as Peet’s, Starbucks, Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf, and Seattle’s Best did not exist: it had to be created and then accepted as such. From this we can conclude that the everyday, at least in this particular form, is contingent upon time and place; we can also surmise from this that the creation of the everyday, in a more or less deliberate fashion, is a primary goal of anyone establishing a coffee shop.

At a chain of coffee shops, this sense of everydayness is corporately installed. Protocols are observed, music piped in via satellite radio, room temperatures centrally monitored, the quality of the coffee and service maintained through corporate headquarters with franchises only in charge of the local maintenance of those qualities. At a bus-stop – for instance, the one at the southwest corner of Hilgard and Westholme – no one is in charge of installing or maintaining its everyday quality: the police will respond to emergencies, and mechanics and paramedics will respond to breakdowns of various kinds, but no one monitors the overall feeling of the place (that is, besides the
wayward social scientist). In contradistinction, the everyday feel of a Peet’s coffee shop is a quality that has been carefully crafted over the decades since the original Peet’s opened in Berkeley in 1966. Part of this disparity is due to the inherent differences between public and private places. Though over the last few decades urban planners have become much more attuned to the need for the deliberate crafting of an everyday quality in the creation of public spaces, such public spaces do not depend on such a quality for their ongoing existence whereas the very survival of many private spaces does depend precisely on such a quality. If a coffee shop cannot supply an ambiance indicative of the everyday, customers will respond by not responding, i.e., they will not return. They may not be able to exactly put their finger on why it is that they are not coming back for “repeat business;” they may simply feel that they do not quite like the place, even though the coffee tastes fine. When it comes to the everyday, no amount of prime Mocha-Java can nullify its failure to manifest itself.

But how can such an intangible as the everyday be deliberately created? Indeed, what exactly is the everyday quality of a coffee shop? How does it present itself? Rather, does it present itself? Is it not just “there,” that is if it is properly functioning? Shouldn’t it be “just there”? Or at least appear to be operating in such a way? That is, if it’s functioning properly. But then, how does the everyday ‘properly’ function? Say, in a coffee shop? Say at Peet’s on Westwood near Santa Monica?

Well, the customers always stay on one side of the counter and the employees, for the most part, stay on the other side of the counter. The employees serve coffee and the customers drink coffee. The employees have name tags and the customers do not. Employees are paid to serve coffee and customers pay to drink coffee.
But wait, this is precisely the point: is that all customers pay for? Consider the baldness of that statement: ‘customers pay to drink coffee.’ As if all that customers required was a particular liquid, served hot, cold, and every other which way. Why not construct a machine to do that? Why not simply use a siphon and funnel coffee into people? A hose could be dropped from stainless steel machines at intersections and drivers could open their mouths and have coffee squirted into them; payment could be made via credit card read-outs and options could be pre-selected. If such contraptions could duplicate the quality of a Starbucks’ or a Peet’s, would people still feel a need to frequent coffee shops? What would coffee drinkers be missing if high-tech vending machines could duplicate premium quality? Is it the feel of a place? Is that what they would miss, the feel? But what is this “feel” exactly? Of what does it consist? Is it just the taste of the coffee? Or is it the smell of the coffee too? Is it the hiss of the espresso machine? Is it the sight of the same regulars who show up every morning? Is it the cups the coffee comes in? Their shape? Their tactile quality? The haptic essence of a hand around a cool glass of iced coffee? Or is it the sight of the same faces at a certain time of the morning? The exchange of pleasantries? Or does it have something to do with anonymity? Of being alone in public?

Perhaps this depends on the customer. Maybe some customers need to be left alone while others need conversation. Perhaps this is the real art of an employee at a coffee shop: discerning between those that want anonymity and those that want friendship, or at least acquaintanceship. Some customers need a place in which to appear and some need a place in which to disappear. Some want no intrusions and others want someone to take an interest in them. Some are fleeing human contact and others are
seeking human contact. The sense of being anonymous in public, of being non-
identifiable, is something that’s rare during this era of instant information and constant
surveillance. Can we ever be alone anymore? Are we ever inaccessible? Do our friends
and spouses, our children and our parents, always have to know exactly where we are at
ever as well as any moment? Is accessibility now a hidden but pervasive and necessary
component of the everyday?

What is lost if anonymity is removed from the everyday? Anything? Public as
well as private space is now almost constantly and ubiquitously monitored; surveillance
cameras are now part and parcel of the given. We are watched in the everyday. The
everyday is being observed. The everyday is being recorded. The everyday can be played
back. But can the sense of the everyday be caught on film? Can its quality be recorded?
Can it be played back? Is its quality too intangible, too amorphous, to be monitored and
observed? All of which finally reduces to one question: what is the everyday?

Let’s see if we can find it at Peet’s. Let’s see if can find it in a cup of coffee. Let’s
see if we can find it in this large cup of iced coffee.

There…take a sip.

Did you find it?

Did you taste the everyday in the coffee?

Did you smell it?

Was it there for an instant and then did it vanish? But if it did, where did it go?
And why did it go? Perhaps the everyday cannot abide attention. Perhaps it was never
there. Perhaps the everyday is simply an invention, a quaint fabrication, an anachronism,
something that may have existed “once upon a time” but is now no longer retrievable
except through nostalgic reflections of Norman Rockwell Americana. Perhaps the fabrication of a sense of the everyday at such establishments as Starbuck’s and Peet’s is simply a formulation of a nostalgia, a harking back to something that may never have even existed: a sense of belonging, the comfortable ease of a place, a sense of secured anonymity, an anonymity secured by the cozy knowledge that here is a place in which one will be left alone; a sense of security subtended to regularity, a reiteration that becomes a routine, a given so given that it doesn’t even seem to be given: as if it’s simply there, a gift (given by whom?) waiting for one to arrive and partake of it, sit in its cozy ease, drift with its presence, the gift of its presence, the everyday quality that may be an illusion but SO WHAT, let us have our illusion, and with a double shot of espresso please.

So perhaps the everyday has something to do with belonging, but an anonymous version of belonging. A belonging that amounts to a more or less unconscious participation in a community that demands nothing except that its boundaries be observed. Those boundaries are the terms of normality and the codes that attend the flow of the contingently-accepted circadian routine; nowhere are the codes posted as such and there’s no institution specifically dedicated to the teaching of these regulations: the limits that define the parameters and perimeters of the everyday are absorbed through osmosis, a slow accumulation of the learned social behavior that mediates the everydayness of the everyday.

So, for instance, at Peet’s on Westwood and Santa Monica Boulevards, a man is chased out of the store, in as inconspicuous a manner as possible (can you chase someone out of a store inconspicuously?), due to the fact that he had - at some previous but
undisclosed moment in time - stuck a hand in the tip jar and absconded with a fistful of money. This is not allowed in any establishment; it is outside the bounds of the given (although oddly enough it did occur). Yet another man – old, clothes grubby and tattered, unshaven, balding – is allowed to come into the store on what appears to be a daily basis and use the bathroom without purchasing anything. He seems to compensate for this privilege by picking up a wad of paper napkins on the way in and wiping off tables on his way to the toilet. And he does everything swiftly, without a fuss, without bothering anyone, without breaking the rhythm and the motion of this shop’s particular instantiation of the everyday (and what exactly are its rhythm and motion?).

Could one purchase a small cup of coffee at five a.m. when the store opens and nurse it along until closing time at nine p.m.? This would seem to be the case, as the privilege of sitting at a table for any extended amount of time is purchased thereby. And if a customer did this, day in day out, they themselves would become part of the shop’s everydayness. Regulars do exactly this, of course, but on a much more limited scale. Their presence, its very reiteration on a more or less customized basis, makes them regulars. Frequently their orders do not have to be taken, as the reliability and steadiness of their desires have become woven into the warp and woof of this particular given. They try to sit at the same tables and if they cannot, they seem slightly out of place. At the Peet’s on Westwood near Santa Monica, the regulars include (as least in the judgment of this observer) lawyers, real estate brokers, limo drivers, students, businesspeople of various kinds, retired folk, and housewives. Given that the shop is located in West Los Angeles, in propinquity to UCLA and several business districts, all these types are easily explicable save for the limo drivers; however, given that the Bluewave Car Wash graces
the southeast corner of Westwood and Santa Monica and being that the drivers of limos apparently find it wise to have their stretches washed anew every morning, their inclusion is not so mysterious after all.

Yet, before jumping to conclusions about these limo drivers (or any other customers, for that matter) it must be acknowledged that the act of inserting people into slots is fraught with peril. Though such insertions are probably necessary and even inevitable, given self-defense mechanisms (their utility in separating the dangerous from the merely eccentric from those who fit into “normal types”), time factors (that is, the lack of it), and the general inessentiality of knowing each and every person to such an extent that no extraneous presuppositions are attached to them. In settings that are more or less anonymous (can there be shades or degrees of anonymity?), the classification of people into general types is unavoidable and may even serve as an aid in warding off intrusions which could possibly threaten anonymity. We touched on this issue before while discussing the intersection of Hilgard and Westholme, but perhaps in this context, Peet’s at the southern end of the mini-mall adjacent to the intersection of Santa Monica and Westwood, there is a deeper issue about the nature of the everyday which needs to be addressed.

However, before proceeding any further, perhaps we should return to that parenthetical remark - ‘can there be shades and degrees of anonymity?’ What is the benefit of acquaintanceship if not that it allows for a margin of anonymity? On the one hand, someone can be so anonymous as to never be noticed (but then would they even qualify as a `someone’?): blending into the crowd, they vanish, never pay taxes, never obtain a social security number, their identities become so abraded that they no longer
even know who they are. This would be a state of absolute anonymity wherein a person is anonymous even to themselves, an anonymity which could be described as being a kind of second cousin to amnesia, brought about not by a shock (as in amnesia) but through a slow erasure of the personality and the ego. We can imagine cases such as this, though the possibility seems remote in a system such as ours, one pervaded by the rigors of commerce, bureaucracy, and surveillance. A purely cash economy or one administered via the Internet might allow someone to avoid relationships demanding any form of identity that could be tethered to what has come to be called a person (are virtual people anonymous? (but what exactly is a ‘virtual’ person?)).

On the other hand, there are those who have not been abraded to the vanishing point, but who nevertheless maintain a kind of discrete anonymity. Perhaps they may be regulars at a coffee shop very much like the Peet’s on Westwood near Santa Monica, but they may have never progressed beyond the most routine of exchanges with the employees and other customers. Besides their preferences in terms of coffee, the employees know nothing about them. Next up (down?) on the scale of anonymity (could a scale be anonymous? or merely unknown?) would be those customers who strike up some form of acquaintanceship with the employees. The people working at Peet’s (the workers) know the drink as well as the size of the drink the customer desires, plus they know the person’s name and perhaps some other basic information: marital status and employment situation, for instance. Acquaintanceship can only be extended so far and then it must become friendship. Is there a certain point at which this happens? A clear and identifiable line separating the acquaintance from the friend? If a Peet’s worker and a customer exchange email addresses or cell phone numbers, would that transform an
acquaintanceship into a friendship? Or would the relationship only be transformed in such a way if a call is actually made or an email actually sent? But in order to initiate a friendship wouldn’t that initial act of communication have to be reciprocated? So let’s assume that messages are going back and forth: does this a friendship make? Perhaps the start of one. Maybe if a customer and an employee form a plan (make a date?) and meet at a separate location – a neutral site with no bearing on their identities as employee and customer – then it seems we would grant them the status of being friends. Of course there are many degrees of friendship: close and intimate at one end of the scale and new and “kind of” at the other end.

But what does this have to do with the everydayness of a coffee shop, in general, and this Peet’s, in particular? Well, the various demarcations between friends, acquaintances, and strangers (perhaps in the context of this Peet’s franchise, strangers are folks who show up once and are never seen again) set up the social alignments at work within the store. These lines of course are not frozen: a regular customer can renew an acquaintanceship with one of the workers when she gives her order and exchanges pleasantries and then retreat back into a relative anonymity (that is, if such a state exists) while she sips her coffee and reads her newspaper, and then once again acknowledge a relationship with the employee, no matter how shallow, as she leaves. Or a semi-regular customer could descend to desperate straits and one day impulsively raid the tip jar: this would reduce this person’s status to banishment and exile, turning them into an ex-semi-regular tainted with a certain degree of notoriety. Or a regular could slowly become irritated with some aspect of the service and one fine morning abruptly cancel their allegiance to the store, transferring their loyalty to the Starbuck’s down the block. All
sorts of things could happen to rearrange the social matrix: someone could die (in the store!) or give birth (in the store!) or, in the midst of a blistering argument over politics, religion or sports, toss a scalding cup of coffee into someone’s face (right there in the store!): the possibilities abound!

Let us return to the display of the variety of coffees presented at Peet’s (wait – these coffees are not merely presented at Peet’s, they are sold at Peet’s; however, they are “presented” prior to being sold). It should be noted that the coffees, as displayed, are divided into categories and those categories seem to be classified in three ways: geographically (Americas, Indo-Pacific, Africa & Arabia); qualitatively (Dark Roasts, Signature Blends, Reserves (but perhaps ‘Reserves’ indicates some sort of special status: maybe they are kept off limits to the customers and only made available during emergencies!)); and, finally, sui generis, Las Hermanas, coffees grown by a cooperative of women in Nicaragua. So that one can purchase and imbibe coffee while vicariously traveling the globe; add Lu’s Kitchen, Eduardo’s Border Grill, and California Roll & Sushi from Moss Plaza and one begins to conceive of a certain global quality to Peet’s and its immediate environs. Viewed from a networked perspective, we can imagine Peet’s on Westwood as a node tethered to the network of coffee plantations around the world as well as to the physiological networks embedded in all its customers, their lips and throats and stomachs, not to mention their caffeine-stimulated nervous systems. So, as part and parcel of the given given at this Peet’s (or any Peet’s, for that matter) is this double-structured network, looping out to various coffee trees growing beans around the world and looping back to be unpacked, roasted, ground, and brewed before being mixed and frothed into a drink by a barista, only to come looping into what we might call the
shadow network or the second half (the doubled part) of the double-structured network, into the bodies of those drinking drinks and the given digestive, nervous, and circulatory systems of their respective bodies. The everyday, on a networked level, branches in and out, forming a mirrored double dendritic structure: after all, is the steaming cup of coffee picked and processed in Nicaragua by the feminist collective Las Hermanas and savored at the Peet’s in West L.A.’s Moss Plaza any more or less a component of the everyday than the gurgling stomach of a Westwood attorney as she downs and digests her morning cappuccino? I think not. Both folds of the structure are full participants in the everyday. And at multiple nodes along the complete circuit(s) of the network(s), manifestations of the everyday present themselves: a coffee bean being picked, that same bean being bagged, loaded onto ships, transported, a member of the International Warehousemen and Longshoremen’s Union unloading a container in San Pedro inside of which rides that bean (a generic bean! a postulated bean! a theoretical bean! a hypothetical bean! but nevertheless a bean!), hauled by truck to a logistics hub, re-routed to a roasting station; roasted, packaged and re-re-routed to Moss Plaza in silvery five-pound bags stamped Tanzania Kilimanjaro, Sulawesi-Kalosi, Ethiopian Fancy, Guatemala San Sebastian, French Roast, Italian Roast, and Arabian Mocha-Java; ground (and there goes our theoretical bean! as it is theoretically crushed and theoretically fragmented, a theoretical part vanishing into a pervasively theoretical whole), brewed and poured, and, finally, swallowed, disappearing down the throat into the inner workings of the flip-side of the outer shell of the everyday, the innards of the person in all its given and necessary activities: circulation, respiration, cogitation, urination, reproduction, and so forth and so on.
Of course other networks must connect to Peet’s to make the two primary networks (those of coffee and those of the drinkers of coffee) possible, including links to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power; the system of roads, avenues, boulevards, and streets conveying the converging customers to Peet’s, and the systems of oil extraction and gasoline production (connections to the Middle East, Shell, Russia, Venezuela, Mexico, Exxon Mobil) subtending such transport systems; systems of currency and exchange, including cash and credit cards and the fiduciary trust supporting the transactions made with such methods; systems of language whereby orders are formulated in word and sound; logistics systems whereby coffee is moved to market and sold; legal and insurance systems whereby the contracts of employees are consummated and the establishment itself protected against fire, theft, earthquake, various forms of liability, and so on; and the unwritten but tightly circumscribed sociological systems of behavior and role-playing whereby customers act like customers and employees like employees as well as the psychological systems whereby one’s sanity is more or less duly maintained. Of course there are political systems encircling this construction, governmental systems instantiated at a variety of levels, from city to county to state to nation, the last entity set within the international system of nation-states.

One last transcript of everyday conversation at the Moss Plaza Peet’s and we should be on our way: we have another bus to catch:

“White Chocolate Mocha Large for Isabel!”

“How old is your baby?”

“Would you like a receipt?”

“I’ll get in touch with Phil and tell him we agree on that point.”
“Medium Madagascar Vanilla Freddo for Bruno!”
PART TWO

…how to conceptually and empirically examine the dynamic nature of the relationships between institutional, structural levels and the practices of everyday life. The argument is that only a combination of macrolevel data on the local political economy and microlevel qualitative observations can provide an adequate understanding of the nature of changes in local communities. The linkage between these two levels is made both theoretically and empirically by establishing and identifying “mediating institutions” as the actual and specific sites of participation and practice of real individuals and groups. The pattern of interrelations that constitute communities takes form and develops within these mediating institutions, some of which… [are] the workplace, school system, housing complexes, and community organizations, to which we add the household, families, and household networks. (Rocco 1996: 373).
**Chapter Five:**

**Schutz: Typifying Typifications**

*Introductory Remarks*

So we begin our mid-section, the paunchy guts of our investigation. We will be making three cuts here: Schutz and his conception of typification. Then Marx and the notion of reproduction as it plays out in daily life. And, finally, we build out the spatial horizontally in a different direction but in similar fashion to the way we built out history vertically.

But, prior to beginning these tasks (the “belly” of our schema waiting patiently in the undulating wings, as it were), let us review what we have done so far. Responding to Blanchot’s challenge that the everyday is always and forever elusively escaping our grasp, we wondered if Hacking’s postulation of an alliance between the “bottom-up” Goffman and the “top-down” Foucault might be used as a kind of theoretical butterfly net to capture the everyday. Careful to indicate that the structure we are creating is polymorphous and polymer, we formulated a schema which can twist and bend, Mobius-like, M.C. Escher-style, so that all bottoms are tops and all tops bottoms and the middle is no middle at all. Still we must start somewhere and so we followed Hacking’s cue and began with Goffman.

Starting with Goffman’s situation, we added the time-space-place continuum and the verticality of history to our street level foundation. Covering ground like a runaway freight train, we glossed Einstein and Wittgenstein, Descartes and Hägerstrand, Soga and Burge, Zuma beach cells and the protocol statements of the Vienna Circle. We thought
about including Willie Mays, Howling Wolf, Twyla Tharp, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, Nikola Tesla as well as the chemical composition of turpentine, but passed on those, saving them for a serendipitous rainy day. And so now to begin with Schutz, Alfred, and his construal of what’s necessary to maintain the self in what he calls the “pure we-relationship.” In this chapter, we will explore the issues of understanding, Ideal Types, and reciprocity as we investigate the ways in which individuals and groups communicate. We will investigate understanding negatively: through examining instances in which understanding did not happen; via the corso negativa we will, hopefully, arrive at an understanding of understanding via an understanding of misunderstanding. We will explore this through three modes – the first at a macro historical level, the second at an intersubjective, interpersonal level; and the last at a fictive level. We will utilize historical texts to delineate the first, personal anecdotal material for the second, and an example from fiction – an excerpt from Sartre’s Nausea - for the third.

But let us begin our investigation of the Austrian sociologist-philosopher-banker-professor, Alfred Schutz (1898-1960), a Jew who fled Vienna for Paris in 1938 and Paris for New York in 1939, and his construal of typification in a most unlikely place: Hanoi.

In a series of six under-reported meetings from November 1995 to February 1998, “U.S. and Vietnamese scholars and former civilian and military officials,” including former Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, former Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach, and Generals William Y. Smith and Dale Vesser, as well as former Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach, former Ambassador to the Soviet Union Dinh Nho Liem, and Generals Dang Vu Hiep, Doan Chuong, and the legendary Vo Nguyen Giap met in Hanoi to discuss this question: “In the light of what now can be learned from the
historical record, what U.S. and Vietnamese decisions might have been different and what difference would they have made in the course of the war – *if each side had judged the other side’s intentions and capabilities more accurately*” (McNamara et al. 1999: 17; italics, McNamara et al.)?

What the assembled discovered was that both sides of the conflict in Vietnam had profoundly mis-understood one another throughout the war. Opportunities for negotiations to either not begin the war in the first place or to end it once it had started had been repeatedly missed due to misconceptions and misjudgments. The inability to understand one another’s intentions and motives had, both sides concluded, led to a tragic situation in which some three million Vietnamese and 59,000 Americans had died. For instance, within one week of the Kennedy Administration coming to power on January 21, 1961, President Kennedy had “approved the main provisions of a counter-insurgency plan for South Vietnam” while “in Hanoi, Radio Hanoi announced the formation of the NLF [National Liberation Front, aka the Viet Cong], along with its founding ten-point program” (McNamara et. al 1999: 97). However, even though “Washington and Hanoi had taken actions each felt was in its interest … they were based on misperceptions of the other side and would prove to contribute importantly to the magnitude of the tragedy to follow” (McNamara et al 1999: 97). These two actions, implemented within the same twenty-four hour period, were based - according to McNamara and the other participants in the meetings in Hanoi in the 1990s, both American and Vietnamese - on absolute misperceptions of the intentions and motivations of the other side, and were thus emblematic of not understanding, but *mis*-understanding.
Was this a missed opportunity? Because neither Washington nor Hanoi chose to use the relative flexibility provided by the change in American administrations to renew attempts to investigate the real, as opposed to the imagined, motives and intentions of each other – that is, to establish a direct and credible channel of contact. Instead of talking to each other, Washington and Hanoi each endorsed its own particular version of covert war against the other’s allies in South Vietnam. Each was based on a fundamental misreading of the other. Neither country troubled to recheck the accuracy of its assumptions by discussing it with the other. (McNamara et. al. 1999: 97; italics, McNamara et al.).

Such fundamental misreadings can occur on the macro- or the micro-scale. Obviously the ‘missed opportunity’ under scrutiny here is an exemplar of a misreading on a macro-scale; we will later explore misreadings on the micro-scale.

Of course, not all the interpretations on the part of the Vietnamese and the Americans during the War regarding one another’s intentions and motives were based on the mis-interpretation of one another’s intentions and motives. Many a decision was based on interest and real-politic. “On the subject of Laos,” states Nguyen Co Thach, who had participated in the 1961-1962 Geneva conference on Laos, “between North Vietnam and the United States there was far from complete correspondence. You see, at the time, the United States wanted a pro-Western neutrality in Laos, while North Vietnam of course did not want a pro-Western neutrality for Laos. Of course, North Vietnam wanted a neutrality for Laos that was pro-Vietnamese or procommunist [Laughter]” (McNamara et al. 1999: 131).

But other actions were based on total misreadings. For example, in January and February of 1965, there was what we could call a complete breakdown in understanding between the Americans and the Vietnamese, a misunderstanding with extensive and deadly ramifications, one in which the gross dimensions of mis-interpretation were not fully understood until the June 1997 meeting of the two former enemies in Hanoi. During
the last week of January 1965 and the first two weeks of February of that year, a fork-in-the-road moment occurred in the Vietnam War. From the American side, the issue was: should the United States back the Buddhists in the South who “seemed to some U.S. officials to be nearing some sort of deal with the South Vietnamese government, such as it was, and the NLF, to create a coalition government that once established would ask the Americans to leave” or should the United States “first show its support of the South Vietnamese civilians and military personnel … by launching a bombing campaign against the North, especially if (as everyone expected) Hanoi-backed and –directed targeting of Americans continued” (McNamara et al.: 1999: 170-171; italics, McNamara et. al)?

In late January of 1965, President Johnson sent McGeorge Bundy, his national security advisor, to South Vietnam “to assess the situation and return with recommendations for the president that would assist him in deciding which fork in the road to take” (McNamara et al. 1999: 172).

The trip was fateful indeed. At 2:00 A.M. on February 7, the last day of the Bundy team’s visit to Saigon, the NLF ended the Tet holiday truce by bombing the U.S. airfield at Pleiku, in northern South Vietnam, and the U.S. helicopter base at Camp Holloway, four miles away. Of the 137 Americans wounded, nine died and seventy-six had to be evacuated. There was also heavy damage to equipment. As a result, the National Security Council was called into session in Washington. Following four lengthy telephone consultations with Bundy and others in Saigon, the president ordered reprisal attacks on North Vietnam in an operation called “FLAMING DART I.” (McNamara et al. 1999: 172).

Three days after FLAMING DART I, President Johnson ordered the commencement of ROLLING THUNDER, a bombing campaign against North Vietnam which would continue for three and a half years. The fork in the road had been taken, indeed. But it
was based on a thorough miscalculation of the enemy. The American administration interpreted the attack on Pleiku as well as the attack of February 10 at Qui Nhon, resulting in the deaths of twenty-three American soldiers and the wounding of twenty-one others, as direct repudiations of both Bundy’s visit and the peace negotiations of the Buddhists which had prompted the visit in the first place. In addition, the Americans read the attacks of the NLF as repudiations of the Russians as well: “there was speculation in the U.S. intelligence community that the attack [on Pleiku] had been planned by Hanoi for an additional reason: to embarrass Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin, who was in Hanoi at the time, as a way to compel the Soviets to forsake their notions of a peace initiative” (McNamara et al 1999: 173). Any way they read it – as a repudiation of either Bundy, Kosygin, and/or the Buddhists – the Americans were certain the attacks on Pleiku and Qui Nhon were deliberate signals that peace was not an option and that the North and the NLF had selected war at this juncture.

However, as it turned out, this was a staggering misreading of the situation, and a misreading of both the facts on the ground and the “strategy” motivating the NLF’s attacks, as McNamara’s *Argument Without End* makes clear:

Revelations by Gen. Dang Vu Hiep at the June 1997 conference in Hanoi clearly indicate that the attacks on both Pleiku and Qui Nhon were planned by field commanders who had no idea that Bundy was in Saigon or that Kosygin was in Hanoi. Moreover, at the February 1998 Hanoi conference, Col. Quach Hai Luong, of Hanoi’s Institute for Strategic Studies, reported that NLF forces at Pleiku were unaware that U.S. personnel were present at the time of the attack! In other words, the Pleiku attack was not targeted at Americans, was not ordered by Hanoi, and was not designed by Hanoi to send a signal of any kind to anybody. (McNamara et al. 1999: 173; italics McNamara et al.).
It seems that this mis-understanding was based on a reading (or, rather, a mis-reading) of the National Liberation Front as if was run on the same vertical hierarchical top-down command structure as the United States military. Field commanders qua field commanders do not make independent decisions. Tactical decisions with strategic ramifications (here let us recall de Certeau’s parsing of tactics and strategies) are not left to commanders in the field (note how this reading of “field commanding” knocks the command element right out of the equation; i.e. field commanders no longer command in the field). Such decisions are passed down from the top of the command structure, and are made with full cognizance of foreign as well as domestic implications attendant to (or even possibly attendant to) such decisions. It was outside the range of the assumptions of the American Administration that such decisions could happen in any other fashion. This was simply not the way such things are done!

Before shifting into a Schutzian interpretation of this misunderstanding, the dimensions of this mistake bear repeating, not only because the depth of misinterpretation on the part of the Americans was staggering, but also because the ramifications of this misreading were tragic. The Americans assumed that the NLF field commanders who attacked Pleiku and Qui Nhon knew both that US national security adviser McGeorge Bundy was in Saigon and that Russian premier Alexei Kosygin was in Hanoi and that these assaults were intended to send a signal to both the United States and the USSR; to the United States, the intention of the field commanders was to send the signal that no negotiations for a peaceful settlement were possible and to the USSR, that North Vietnam as well as the Viet Cong were not minions of Russia but were fully capable of successfully undertaking independent military action, such as attacking American forces
in Pleiku and Qui Nohn. These attacks led to the immediate decision by LBJ to begin first FLAMING DART I and then ROLLING THUNDER, the latter a bombing campaign against North Vietnam which lasted for over three years, as well as to the long-range decision to substantially increase American troop levels in Vietnam. In other words, this was a pivot-point in the course of the war, the decisions made as a result of the attacks against Pleiku and Qui Nhon leading directly to the most intense period of fighting in the entire conflict. And yet these decisions were based on a complete and utter failure to understand the enemy. Not only did the field commanders who ordered the attacks not know that Bundy and Kosygin were in Vietnam, they did not even know that American forces were in the areas they attacked!

Now let us attempt to apply the notion of understanding to this situation. In the glossary appended to On Phenomenology and Social Relations: Selected Writings of Alfred Schutz, the editor, Helmut R. Wagner, defines “Understanding – Verstehen” as:

To understand, in general, means to comprehend the meaning of something. What is understood is meaningful. Understanding is the basis of all intersubjectivity. Persons deal with one another successfully only to the degree to which they reciprocally understand each other’s motives, intentions, etc., at least to the degree to which this is relevant to the purposes at hand. (1970a: 323).

Setting aside whatever misgivings we may have about the simplicity of this presentation, as well as the definitional and metaphysical blurriness regarding ‘the meaning of something,’ let us pay attention to what is important, at least in terms of our purposes. Wagner’s gloss of understanding, perhaps due to its unwavering simplicity, may detract us from an essential yet obvious insight which is of utmost importance in comprehending the forms of communication underlying the everyday. And that is, to re-state Wagner’s
formulation, that we understand each other only to the degree that we share a reciprocal understanding of one another’s motivations and intentions (etcetera), at least to the degree to which this is relevant to the purposes at hand. Though seemingly a low bar to clear and coherent communication, such a conception of the qualifications involved in successful acts of communication are actually very complicated, striated and pock-marked, as they are, with all kinds of opportunities for mis-communication and their concomitant and inevitable results, i.e., multifarious instances of mis-understanding. If to achieve successful acts of communication, we must reciprocally understand one another’s motivations and intentions as we communicate, and if we also must mutually comprehend the relevant purposes at hand of our separate acts of communication, then we can easily understand why even the simplest act of communication is riddled with obstacles to such a degree that it’s a wonder any communication ever occurs!

In the case at hand, namely, the misunderstanding (or what might be more precisely termed the complete lack of understanding) which existed in the winter of 1965 between the members of the American Administration and the NLF field commanders, what can we say in regards to reciprocity? Well, obviously there was none. On the American side, a reciprocal understanding of tactical and strategic considerations between the military leaders of the US forces and the NLF was assumed, an assumption which turned out to be a mis-assumption; while on the part of the field commanders of the NLF, it seems that no thought was even given to reciprocal forms of understanding, as they simply acted based on their own understanding of the situation at hand.

Given that there was no reciprocal understanding in our historical example, what would underlie the establishment of an actual case of such understanding? How do two
people (or in this case, two sets of people) gain such a sense of reciprocity? In other words, how are we to understand successful cases of understanding?

First, it seems that we should construct some notion of the kind of world within which such reciprocal understanding could occur. Schutz delineates the parameters of such a world by claiming that such a world “existed before our birth,” and was experienced and interpreted by others, our predecessors, as an organized world. Now it is given to our experience and interpretation. All interpretation of this world is based on a stock of previous experiences of it, our own and those handed down to us by parents and teachers; these experiences in the form of “knowledge at hand” function as a scheme of reference. (1971a: 7).

What is implied in this statement is that this transference of knowledge, from parents and teachers to “us,” is done without friction or any loss of knowledge during its cross-generational transfer. In other words, the knowledge is transferred intact, unencumbered by distortions and disturbances, without any abrasions and erosions that may subtend such temporal or spatial transformations: the pedagogical transfer, therefore, is assumed to be performed in an ideal state. Note, too, that this knowledge concerns a world that is ‘organized.’ Now, of course anything that is organized must be organized in a particular fashion. And it seems that this world, that is, “the world (the natural and the social one) is from the outset an intersubjective world and … our knowledge of it is in various ways socialized” (Schutz 1971a: 55; italics, mine). And, even given that Schutz in this passage is referring to intersubjective communication as typically performed in face-to-face situations, it is simply by an extension of this construal of the ‘scheme of reference’ within which we communicate with consociates, those “men” who live at the same time and “in the same spatial segment of the world” as “I” do, into a situation within which we
communicate with contemporaries, those whom live at the same time but do not share ‘the same spatial segment’ as “I” do, that such a schema can be transferred from consociates to contemporaries (Natanson 1971: xxxiii).

Putting all these things aside, at least for the moment, how are consociates and contemporaries known? How is it that we arrive at an understanding of them? Why, “they are known by way of the typifications of the common-sense world” (Natanson 1971: xxxiii). Well, what is this common-sense world and what are the typifications that are said to populate it? We shall work backwards here, unpacking the latter first and the former last. Schutz’s typifications, or ideal types, are derived from Weber, which are, in turn, derived from “abstract economic theory” as well as from the Rhetoric of Aristotle (Weber 1970: 497). ¹ Weber was also attempting to make explicit what was already occurring in various disciplines:

By using this term [ideal type], Weber did not mean to introduce a new conceptual tool. He merely intended to bring to full awareness what social scientists and historians had been doing when they used words like ‘the economic man,’ ‘feudalism,’ ‘Gothic versus Romanesque architecture,’ or ‘kingship.’ (Gerth and Mills 1958: 59; italics, Gerth and Mills).

Another possible source for Weber’s use of typification, and perhaps a more likely one considering Weber’s research into Christianity in general and Calvinism in particular, is biblical typology, a form of theological thinking which had been in use since at least St.

¹ Perhaps I am overstepping genealogical bounds by including a Weber-Aristotle connection. In a letter to Eric Voegelin, dated 1 November 1949, Schutz writes: “Now, it seems to me, Aristotle introduces two series of ideal-types: 1) states of affairs (including the results of human action, for example institutions, constitutional systems etc.). These are discussed in Book One of Rhetoric. 2) constant motives of the actors (including elements, that follow from their “situation,” such as age, nobility, wealth (social status) etc.). I believe that in the passage you quote, 1366a12, Aristotle merely meant to point to the necessity of constructing ideal-types in both cases” (Wagner and Weiss 2011: 125).
Augustine.² Here the Old Testament is reckoned as the first type, as it can be read as a future-oriented model of the New Testament: “You could regard the type as a special sort of symbol, a prophetic symbol, where the ‘image’ is historically given in the Old Testament and the meaning must be inferred as the ‘fulfillment’ of the image in a certain direction [i.e. in the New Testament’s “fulfillment” of the Old Testament’s prophecy]” (Brumm 1970: 24). Here, the figure (figura), the type (typus), and the parallel are used as hermeneutic tools to read a teleological theology out of the Old Testament. This form of typology was taken up by the Puritans when they arrived in New England:

Another use to which the American Puritans put typology was in relating their own destiny typologically to the Old Testament, which was then regarded as concrete, dramatic, universal history of providential significance. A compact such as that of the Mayflower exhibits a typological element. And the emigration to the American wilderness was an exodus of the children of Israel to a “second Jerusalem.” (Brumm 1970: 33).

Yet could a typology used by Christians as “a form of prophecy” to set “two successive historical events into a reciprocal relation of anticipation and fulfillment” (Brumm 1970: 27) actually have any sort of connection, let alone a genealogical or causal connection, with Weber’s construals of Ideal Types and typification? Well, let us at least stipulate that it was a form of typology that had been in currency for centuries and let us also note that it would be at least not a shock to genealogical systematics in general to discover that Weber was aware of this utilization of type, especially (as already noted) given his

² The genealogy is in fact much more complex than this and can be traced back to Philo of Alexandria. See Ursula Brumm’s American Thought and Religious Typology, the various essays collected in Typology and Early American Literature (edited by Sacvan Bercovitch), as well as Typology and Seventeenth-Century Literature by Joseph A. Galdon.
extreme interest in the intellectual history of religion in general and Christianity and Calvinism in particular.

By the nineteenth century, social scientists had left proper names behind (King John, King David) in favor of a terminological categorization (kingship), a form of simplification which is fine as long as it is recognized that the typification has been realized at the price of reductionism. In Weber’s construal:

An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct (Gedankenbild). In its conceptual purity, this mental construct (Gedankenbild) cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality. It is a utopia. (1970: 497; italics, Weber).

Here we might want to pause to contrast the allegorical and the typification, as they seem to be oppositional, both in their construction and their results. Whereas the type is assembled out of the marshalling of many tokens, the allegorical figure is assembled by taking the token as the marshaled embodiment of the type. For instance, “Individuals in the Old Testament are taken as personifications of abstractions – Moses is intelligence, Aaron speech, Enoch repentance, Noah righteousness, Abraham is virtue acquired by learning, and so on” (Davis 1972: 15; italics, mine). So that in allegorical figures, the personification embodies the abstraction, while in typification, the abstraction signifies the many persons who embody the type.

In order to understand Weber’s notion of ideal typification, let us return to the type under examination, a field commander. An ideal type, “a Field Commander,” a kind
of Platonic Form of a field commander, is assembled by organizing and arranging a great mass of unorganized and disarranged *more or less* present and *occasionally absent* concrete individual phenomena into a whole, aka a ‘unified analytical construct.’ So, a pause, for, as we assess how the devil something *concrete*, and manifesting itself as a *concrete individual phenomena*, can be *more or less* present, we shall also consider how the devil a *concrete* individual phenomena can also *occasionally be absent*. I suppose Weber means that we collect a wide variety of impressions from personal experience, the reading of books, the sharing of anecdotal information, and so on, and then collate those into the ideal type under construction. And so it seems that an enormous number of instances of the phenomena, “field commander,” diffuse yet discrete, are gathered and then bundled into an analytical construct, a typification, an ideal type, Field Commander. Now, nowhere will we find such a Field Commander, as types only exist in a utopia (a *no-place*). However, it is assumed that we can find tokens of types, that is, if we conduct a search for them.

Now, though I am aware that my tone is rising to the level of facetiousness and perhaps even inching towards satire, it is not because I do not lend credence to the notion of typification and even to its utility. I am more wary, however, of Weber’s syntax: a notoriously convoluted stylist, Weber’s prose frequently tangles more than it untangles: “his prose is full of clauses and reservations, in the most scholarly and difficult fashion” (Gerth and Mills 1958: 26); “This is not the first time … that Weber provides ample opportunities to misread him” (Szakolczai 1998: 52). However, if we turn to Schutz and his much more distilled and transparent style, we can gain an appreciation for the usefulness as well as the ubiquity of typification:
The world … is from the outset experienced in the pre-scientific thinking of everyday life in the mode of typicality. The unique objects and events given to us in a unique aspect are unique within a horizon of typical familiarity and pre-acquaintanceship. There are mountains, trees, animals, dogs – in particular Irish setters and among them my Irish setter, Rover. Now I may look at Rover either as this unique individual, my irreplaceable friend and comrade, or just as a typical example of “Irish setter,” “dog,” “mammal,” “animal,” “organism,” or “object of the outer world.” (1971a: 59).

We can envision the problems we would have without recourse to typification if we take a moment to imagine a thought experiment in which the mode of typicality does not exist. Entering a coffee shop, for instance, we’d have no typical Coffee Shop Experience to fall back on; disoriented, without recourse to the assortment of typifications assembled within the ‘horizon of typical familiarity and pre-acquaintanceship,’ we would have to navigate not only without a compass but without any bearings whatsoever. Finally, through the hinged processes of observation and mimesis, we could probably manage to obtain a cup of coffee. But, remember, in such a thought experiment this experience is unique. It cannot be stored and utilized again. The next time we enter a coffee shop, once again we are faced without recourse to ideal types and must proceed from scratch, *ex nihilo sui generis*, as it were. Categories of places – libraries, airports, classrooms, restaurants, and so on – bear with them typifications, which ease our entry into them and pre-empt radical bouts of disorientation. Such typification schemes constitute one of the pillars of the stability of everyday geography.

Typifications also work by the very unreliability of their idealism. In other words, through creating an ideal ideal type, we create an extreme norm by which to gauge its instantiation in reality, an instantiation which always falls more or less short of such an ideal ideal. Michael D. Barber explains this process in his biography of Schutz by
explaining that ideal types are "formed by one-sided accentuation[s] of one or more points of view and synthesizing a great many diffuse, concrete individual phenomena" (2004: 27). Such an extreme delineation highlights actions which depart from the ideal, thus leading to Weber's appreciation of ideal typification: ""The more sharply and clearly constructed the ideal types are - in other words, the more unrealistic they are in this sense - the better they perform their function, which is terminological and classificatory as well as heuristic"" (Barber 2004: 27; Weber's italics). Though this may be a sound assessment in some instances, in others unrealistic typifications can also lead to unrealistic classifications and heuristics, as we shall demonstrate below.

What if we didn't have recourse to ideal types and typifications in our dealings with other people? Insofar as you are a human being, I may not be able to understand you or fathom your intentions and motivations. But insofar as you are a bus driver, a professor, an athlete, or a police officer, I can usually understand you as well as your intentions and motivations. Here, another thought experiment should suffice to make this clear. Imagine a day in which all typifying operations have been divested from our psyches. We would be forced to understand people qua people. In other words, we would have to respond to others insofar as they are human beings, with no attendant typifications to orient us vis-à-vis our expectations of behavior, manner, speech, and so on. In such a scenario, we would have to be able to translate raw human actions without any guidance system to cue us into the propriety of this or that response. We would have to be master psychologists, sociological mavens, and anthropological adepts, simply to make our way through the day. Plus, consider the waste of time involved! If I must

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understand every person I encounter as if they are a tabula rasa, without classificatory schemas in which to slot them, without recourse to the taxonomy of types by which we catalogue people – student, teacher, bus driver, and so on – then I would have to file every person in a unique slot. And if each of us had to present themselves continually in a completely individuated mode, with no fallback position as one of many tokens amongst a type, we would very quickly become physically as well as psychologically exhausted. It is only by being able to present ourselves as bus passengers, students, teachers, mothers, pimps, fathers, wives, husbands, writers, brothers, sisters, bank robbers, drivers, daughters, and sons that we are not overwhelmed by the effort of presenting ourselves as our selves. Navigation through everyday life without recourse to such ideal types would be difficult, if not well nigh impossible.

We should also note the universal use of ideal typifications in signage, the law, and advertising. “Buyer beware” refers simultaneously to every possible buyer and to no particular buyer at all; it references friend and foe, stranger and neighbor, the just-born as well as the unborn, covering buyers of the foreseeable future as well as those of the immediate present: indeed, it is this ubiquitous capacity of universal reference which gives the phrase its potency. The only restriction for belonging to this category is that one must be a potential buyer. Ideal types in advertising can seemingly be open to a broad category of people while also placing a fairly explicit restriction on one’s ability to meet implied criteria; for instance, Amy Laurent International, a tony escort service with offices in Los Angeles, New York, Florida, Chicago, and the UK, proclaims in a print ad that it “is the answer for successful bachelors with busy lifestyles” (Amy Laurent 2011: 145). What is interesting here is the mixture of implicit and explicit criteria in the ad: it
seems aimed at heterosexuals (though many a homosexual of both genders has had need of a “French beard” on occasion), but only of a certain economic standing: the bachelor must be “successful” and have a “busy lifestyle,” both codes for the ability to spend liberally for the services rendered by “the most impressive women in the city” (Amy Laurent 2011: 145). And while the ad is directed at the ideal type, “successful bachelors with busy lifestyles,” one wonders if, given the capacity to pay, this type might be expanded by Amy and her “impressive women” to include married men. The typification of these “impressive women” is not left to chance: we are supplied with glossy photographs of three young, comely, light-skinned women who seem to wearing smiles that will never wear off. And ‘the city’ in which these impressive women ply their wares is left idealized as well, the better to capture the nominalism of whatever city the successful male who requires Amy Laurent’s “personalized, hands-on services” happens to be in, leaving location as a kind of geographic catch-all. But the point here is that the postulation of ideal types is ubiquitous in everyday life: without them, signs of whatever variety could only refer to specific individuals, a most inconvenient method by which to seduce customers, warn prospective traffic violators or guide shoppers to bargain items.

Such typifications assume anonymous referents, even if their criteria excludes entire categories of people, thus transforming one all-inclusive universal classification of the anonymous into a refined taxonomy of anonymity, split into various and sundry demographic parts. Schutz gives anonymity a prime place in the operation of everyday processes; first, by theorizing anonymity:

Our analysis has shown that the synthesis of the interpretations by which I know my contemporaries as ideal types does not apprehend the unique Self of a human
being in his vivid present. It is an act of thought that holds invariant some typical attribute of fellow-human beings and disregards the modifications and variations of that attribute “in real life,” i.e. when embedded in the ongoing experiences of a concrete and unique individual. Hence, the personal ideal type merely refers to, but is never identical with, a concrete Other or a plurality of Others. (1971b: 44; italics, Schutz).

And, secondly, by illustrating this concept through examples of the ideal type in operation, beginning with his favorite example of the anonymity of post office employees:

If I drop a letter into the mailbox, I act in the expectation that certain contemporaries of mine (post office employees) will adequately interpret the wish I signified by writing out an address, attaching a stamp, etc., and will in fact carry it out. The expectation which oriented my action was not directed to specific concrete individuals but to the genus “post office employees.” …. I have acted with the expectation that certain determinate kinds of conduct are likely on the part of others: postal clerks, individuals involved in monetary transactions, policemen. I have a certain attitude toward them: I reckon with them when I plan my actions, in short, I am in a social relation with them. But my partners in these relations do not appear as concrete and specific individuals. They appear as instances of the genus “postal clerk,” “user of the currency,” “policeman.” I ascribe to them specific patterns of conduct, specific functional performances. They are relevant for me as contemporaries only so far as they are typical performers of such functions, that is, as ideal types. (1971b: 44, 45).

Though it may be difficult to conceive of being one half of a social relationship with an anonymous other, this is precisely what we do whenever we adjust our behavior to an unseen anonymous individual or rely on the typified function of someone we never see. They are invisible partners in many of the routine activities of the day: I adjust the speed of my vehicle due to the “presence” of a highway patrol officer I never see on the road; I drop my Netflix envelope into a mailbox, relying on an anonymously construed post office employee to deliver it into the care of an anonymous construed Netflix employee, who, in turn, relies on an anonymously construed post office employee to send me a new
movie, and so on. Here we should note that Hollywood movies routinely subvert the
presumptions upon which the anonymity of everyday life is formulated: the police officer
turns out to be a crook, the post office employee a mass murderer; the currency
counterfeit, and so on.

Typifications are not part of some classificatory scheme which each person has to
formulate independently from scratch. In On Phenomenology and Social Relations,
Schutz says that:

The knowledge of these typifications and of their appropriate use is an inseparable
element of the sociocultural heritage handed down to the child born into the group
by his parents his teachers and the parents of his parents and the teachers of his
teachers; it is, thus, socially derived. The sum-total of these various typifications
constitutes a frame of reference in terms of which not only the sociocultural but
also the physical world has to be interpreted, a frame of reference that, in spite of
its inconsistencies and its inherent opaqueness, is nonetheless sufficiently
integrated and transparent to be used for solving most of the practical problems at

This explanation of typification gives us a direct clue as to how our case in hand, the
misunderstanding surrounding the events of the winter of 1965 in Vietnam, occurred. But
prior to returning to that case, we should unravel Schutz’s referencing of the
`inconsistencies and inherent opaqueness’ of the processes of typification. How and why
are they inconsistent? What is it about typification that is inherently opaque?

First of all, typification schemes can be inconsistent in that, while it may make
sense in one particular domain to understand another person insofar as they are say, a
police officer, and in another domain to understand them insofar as they are a rare book
collector, it may be inconsistent within our preconceptions of ideal types to understand
them insofar as they are a police officer and a rare book collector. And the interests that we invest in one domain may not be consistent with or relevant to the interests we have in another: “The interests I have in the same situation as a father, a citizen, a member of my church or of my profession, may not only be different but even incompatible with one another” (Schutz 1970a: 113). These domains of relevance are not cordoned off from one another into discrete zones; they overlap and intermingle, making for a tangled sociological topography, which of course can lead to inconsistent readings of the terrain:

The terms “zones” or “regions” of various relevance might suggest that there are closed realms of various relevance in our life-world and, correspondingly, of various provinces of our knowledge of it, each separated from the other by clean-cut border lines. The opposite is true. These various realms of relevancies and precision are intermingled, showing the most manifold interpenetrations and enclaves, sending their fringes into neighbor provinces and thus creating twilight zones of sliding transitions. (Schutz 1970a: 113).

With such zones making sliding transitions into one another, is there any wonder that inconsistencies ensue? However, it is frequently the case that the zones of relevance do not intermingle: for instance, if I happen to be teaching, the zone of relevance of say, my self insofar as I am a voter or insofar as I am a father or an uncle or a homo- or heterosexual, may not be relevant, though sometimes, of course, it may enter into the zone at hand, whether that entrance be intentional or not, conscious or not.

Secondly, typification schemes are opaque, and inherently so, due to both their embeddedness within the texture of the everyday and also to the non-rational way in which they are formulated and then reproduced.

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4 This is an example related to me by Michael Curry.
It should be emphasized that the interpretation of the world in terms of types, as understood here, is not the outcome of a process of ratiocination, let alone of scientific conceptualization. The world, the physical as well as the sociocultural one, is experienced from the outset in terms of types: there are mountains, three, birds, fishes [sic], dogs, and among them Irish setters; there are cultural objects, such as houses, tables, books, tools, and among them hammers; and there are typical social roles and relationships, such as parents, kinsmen, strangers, soldiers, hunters, priests, etc. Thus, typifications on the commonsense level – in contradistinction to typifications made by the scientist, and especially by the social scientist – emerge in the everyday experience of the world as taken for granted without any formulation of judgments or of neat propositions with logical subjects and predicates. (Schutz 1970a: 119-120).

Typifications are passed down without any sort of overall systematic organizational structure or Weberian bureaucracy in charge of their reproduction and their pedagogical transfer. However, they can and do change, aligning, if at a lingering pace, with the tempo of social change; e.g. with the various emancipatory movements of the last fifty years, types have evolved to gradually (albeit sometimes glacially) incorporate such changes.

Third, ideal types are inherently opaque because they are not congruent with reality: “Because it is ideal, no type can fully reflect the empirical reality to which it refers” (Poggi 2006: 30). If something cannot by its very nature `fully reflect’ the `reality to which it refers,’ it is analytically opaque. Reality “on the ground” is always messier than its idealistic abstraction, partially due to the fact that “concrete historical phenomena always straddle one or more ideal types, mix them and qualify one with aspects of another” (Poggi 2006: 30). Insofar as she is a police officer, a woman may reflect the Ideal Type Police Officer, yet while acting as a police officer, she is still a Democrat and a Vegan and a member of the National Rifle Association and an ex-banjo player, and so
on, and these Ideal Types may come to the fore, more or less, depending on the circumstances, the personality and character of the police officer, and so on.

Now that we know, as has been stated previously, that “the knowledge of these typifications and of their appropriate use is an inseparable element of the sociocultural heritage handed down to the child born into the group by his parents and his teachers and the parents of his parents and the teachers of his teachers; it is, thus, socially derived,” we are in a position to gauge how the American Administration so misconstrued the motivations and intentions of the field commanders of the NLF in 1965 (Schutz (1970a: 119). Their knowledge of field commanders, being socially derived and being handed down by their teachers (in whatever form these “teachers” may have appeared, whether they come in the form of actual U.S. military field commanders, secretaries of defense, information gleaned from books, or images of such types in films), they only understood the type, Field Commander, as the type is construed and understood within their own group, i.e., the United States of America, circa 1965. Here we should reference the role of custom, tradition and, yes, habitus, in the educational transference of types. Having this typification in mind and basing their estimates of the actions of a typical field commander on such a type, their projected actions of a typical field commander and the actions of an actual Vietnamese field commander were not reciprocal. Furthermore, most likely they could not be reciprocal, as type and reality were so distant spatially from one another that any semblance of reciprocity was nearly out of the question.

Here, Emory Bogardus’s construal of social distance may help us conceptualize what happens when misunderstandings occur.
Social distances are of two kinds. One is due to faulty perception and communication. The other is a recoil from acquaintance and intimacy in which differences in attitudes, sentiments, and beliefs are discovered and in which conflicts are developed. Conflicts thus may arise from an absence of knowledge of the other person’s attitudes, or from a feeling or an awareness of difference. (Bogardus 1940: 468-469).

In other words, in a social sense, we’re so far away from the other, whether that other be a group or an individual, that perception goes askew, communication is abraded and understanding so frayed that misunderstandings ensue. Or we’re too close, and the intimacy of proximity leads to a recognition of differences and those differences lead to misunderstandings and conflicts. “Social distance accounts for the rise of misunderstandings and hence for the real underlying factors which create social problems” (Bogardus 1940: 469). Now, while Bogardus when he states that “All social problems may be thought of in terms of social distance” is writing in the late 1930s, it certainly comports snugly with an analysis of the events of the winter of 1965 (1940: 469). For not only was there a vast social distance between the members of the Johnson Administration in charge of military policy in Vietnam and the field commanders of the National Liberation Front, but there was an immense geographic distance as well.

Schutz implicitly references social distance as well, as he tells us that “the interpretation of other men’s … motives will be the more dubious the farther it stands from the vivid context of a We-relation” (1971B: 36). This aligns with our commonsensical notions of communication: imagine the situation in reverse: motives are clearer the closer they stand within the vivid context of face-to-face interaction: we can easily accept that this is typically the case, though of course misunderstanding in vivid and vividly proximate We-relationships occur all the time as well. In the case presented
by McNamara et al., what we have, are two groups whose proximity is opaquely obscure to one another to the point of an unambiguous blankness. On the part of the Americans, they are reading into the actions of the Viet Cong field commanders’ motivations that, on the part of those field commanders, are non-existent. The Americans seem to have transported their vivid typification of the behavior of field commanders straight from their brains onto their enemies without any consideration of the distance between their own vivid context and the remote context within which the NLF field commanders were operating. Proximity and distance, clarity and opaqueness seem to have collapsed as the Americans took (or, rather, mis-took) their own vivid context for the context of the other. Schutz could have been writing a post-mortem report of these events when he composed the following: “The gradations of experiential directness outside the face-to-face situation are characterized by a decrease in the wealth of symptoms by which I apprehend the Other and by the fact that the perspectives in which I experience the Other are progressively narrower” (1971B: 37). Except in this situation, the perspectives narrowed until they completed vanished. Or, perhaps, more accurately, there was no increase of gradations leading to disappearance because there was no comprehension to begin with; or, to be more precise: the conception of the Other was full, but it was a conception based on an Ideal Type which did not cohere with the situation at hand; or, finally, best of all: it was not a conception at all, but a misconception. Rather than utilizing a typification of field commander which may have cohered more or less with the actual field commanders of the Viet Cong, apparently McNamara, Bundy et al. utilized a typification of a field commander based primarily on the field commanders of then U.S. military; therefore, it bore no coherence with the Vietnamese field commanders. In other words,
their schema of typification was incoherent, in that it did not cohere with the situation on
the ground.

Now, let us turn to a misunderstanding on a much smaller scale. This case is
extracted not from the historical record, but from personal history. It is, in other words,
anecdotal. Let me begin by first narrating the case at hand as simply as possible and then
turn to a Weberian-Schutzian analysis of it.

When my oldest son was attending Carthay Circle Elementary School at the
intersection of Crescent Heights and Olympic Boulevards in Los Angeles, circa 1986, a
woman everyone referred to as “Coach” was in charge of the afterschool playground
activities. Now, Coach seemed to me to be a deeply unhappy person. She did not like
children. She did not like her job. She scowled a lot. She barked at the kids. She was
about forty years old, Caucasian, hair going gray, the narrow brown eyes of someone
who is always wishing they were somewhere else, anywhere but here with these unruly
brats. I took it Coach was a drunk. I imagined an unhappy life. This lowly post was the
only employment she could manage, given her drinking habits and the general rottenness
of her life. When she left at the end of the afternoon, I assumed she went directly to a bar:
she was one of those regulars who sits on a barstool, trying to soothe the bitterness of life
with a beer and a whiskey back. I had her figured out.

None of this was conscious on my part. In other words, I never spent a moment
ruminating about Coach; I never discussed her with any other parents, my wife or my
son; I never exchanged more than the necessary amount of conversation with her; I never
went to a school official and inquired about Coach: my assumptions about her fell into
pre-selected grooves without a second of cognition or even the slightest trace of self-
reflection. I was not even aware that I had typified her. Yet, nevertheless, there she was:
typified. It had been an immediate, subcutaneous judgment, delivered whole-cloth to the
nervous system and its partner in the formulation and construction of Ideal Types, the
brain, performed without the kind of consideration that doubt and hesitation foster.

Some time passed, perhaps two or three years; during this period my son
matriculated from Carthay Circle, moving on to middle school. One day a friend of mine
invited me to his new apartment in Culver City. It was a guest house, he explained, and I
needed to enter through a side gate, walk down a pathway to the right of the main house,
and then knock on his door. Debriefed, I headed for my friend’s place at the appointed
time. Arrived, I undid the hitch on the gate and passed by the main house. Through a
large window, I could see that a number of people were in the house, looking at what
appeared to be exotic artifacts. What was going on? What were these things? It seemed to
be a sale, or maybe a show. I only caught a glimpse of the artifacts, but they had the
appearance of the remote and the unusual: hand-carved wooden serving bowls from
Senegal; prayer wheels from Tibet; temple bells from Cambodia. After I entered my
friend’s apartment, he explained what was going on: his landlady, the woman who lived
and owned the main house, traveled the world and held sporadic house sales. He
suggested we go through the house before I depart so I could peruse the wares she had
brought back to Culver City from the four corners of the globe.

That’s right: my story has telegraphed its punchline: the exotic international sales
lady, the world traveler, newly returned from Borneo or Madagascar or Tangiers or parts
north south east or west, was none other than Coach.
How had my typification of her been so out of whack? What had gone wrong here? How had this gross misunderstanding occurred?

Of course much of this mistaken typification can be attributed to the superficial degree to which I was acquainted with this woman. I had never had what is referred to as a “real” conversation with her: I had quickly slotted her into an ideal type and then limited my dialogue with her to what was necessary insofar as she was the playground director of my son’s afterschool activities and insofar as I was a parent of a child using the playground after school. However, “in consequence of the continuous reciprocal modification” of the components and contours of the “We-relation,” I was forced to adjust my typification schema of this individual who defied my first facile typification of her” (Schutz 1971b: 32). She too may have reciprocally adjusted her typification of me, from father of one of the schoolyard brats to friend of the fellow renting the guest house. But she may not have even noticed me, as she was quite busy. However, her reaction is beside the point.

The problem may lie in the fact that when we construct an ideal type, we characterize the “consciousness” of the typified person as “restricted in its content only to all those elements necessary for the typical acts under consideration. These elements it contains completely, but nothing beyond them” (Schutz 1971b: 17). As Coach, the woman under question is restricted to a certain set of acts; as Drunk, she is restricted to another set of acts. But, obviously, these two ideal types had failed to encompass the full range of her being. And can one align the types Coach, Drunk, and Traveler of the World-Seller of Global Exotica into one compact whole? Or at that point does the person being constructed through a process of layered and laminated typifications, a sort of
bricolage of ideal types, shatter the format of ideal type construction and become an actual individual, specific, unique, and defiant of any and all taxonomic schemes?

Perhaps what is amiss is that we are demanding too much of typification:

Typifications are one-sided. One set of typifications will give us access to only certain features of things and people. And a different set of typifications will have to be employed in order to gain access to other features of the same things and persons. No single group of typifications, in other words, can allow us to grasp all aspects of an object or person. Any given group permits us to comprehend only some aspects of them. We may say, then, that typifications provide only a perspectival apprehension of realities. (Wiggens and Schwartz 1988: 219; italics, Wiggens and Schwartz).

Being innately one-sided and by definition incapable in their very singularity of grasping all of the aspects of a person or an objects, of course they cannot circumscribe the fullness of people or objects. Notice two things here though: Wiggens and Schwartz characterize typifications as operating as an ensemble: in their conception, ideal types perform as sets or groups, not as singular stand-alone entities. In such a construal, does an ideal type consist of bundled singularities abstracted into a whole, or do ideal types roam abroad as loosely organized and discrete typifications, more or less arranged ad hoc-style into a set or a group? Secondly, Wiggens and Schwartz wander closely to, and perhaps in a sense pre-figure, the perspectival analysis of Donna Haraway in which she theorizes knowledge as always partial, consisting of knowledges arrived at from distinct perspectives.

The other thing that may be amiss with our concept of typification is that in a typical situation, we only require a certain limited knowledge of the full range of another’s character as well as their possibilities. In the case under examination, I only
needed to know this woman as Coach in order for me to deal with the situation at hand; the other typification, Drunk, served as a backup default position, informing me that perhaps I should communicate with this woman with a certain wariness or caution. The situation demanded nothing else (or so I thought). Such delimitations are very frequent in everyday life; as Schutz describes it, in “normal” circumstances, we only need access to a limited amount of information in order to function: “Man in his daily life is only partially – and we dare say exceptionally - interested in the clarity of his knowledge, i.e., in full insight into the relations between the elements of his world and the general principles ruling those relations” (1971b: 94). Usually, in such a context, the example utilized is electricity: the vast majority of people know not how electricity works and do not truly care to know how it works, just as long as it does work. But Schutz chooses the example of “a well-functioning telephone service” instead, an example which may seem quite anachronistic to us now, as a well-functioning telephone service seems to have become something at the mercy of so many factors - geography, spatial positioning of human bodies, battery power, and satellite feeds, not to mention the timely payment of phone bills - as to be nearly non-existent (Schutz 1971b: 94).

He is satisfied that a well-functioning telephone service is available to him and, normally, does not ask how the apparatus functions in detail and what laws of physics make this functioning possible. He buys merchandise in the store, not knowing how it is produced, and pays with money, although he has only a vague idea of what money really is…. All he wants is information on likelihood and insight into the chances or risks which the situation at hand entails for the outcome of his actions…. If by reason of a special interest he needs more explicit knowledge on a topic, a benign modern civilization holds ready for him a chain of information desks and reference libraries. (Schutz 1971b: 94).
Now, while of course we need to make some substitutions here in order to bring Schutz up to date (credit cards supplement money while Google and Wikipedia supplement information desks and reference libraries), his point still holds: there is no need in the everyday run of things to have complete knowledge of everything functioning in our proximity. We can perform quite well without possessing that level of knowledge. In fact, that level of knowledge would be a complete hindrance to our daily routines. If we had to make a full stop prior to eating in order to master the knowledge of the chemical composition of every food item we are about to ingest, all eating would swiftly come to an end (or at the least, occur on an extremely postponed basis). However, should we desire to come into possession of such knowledge, we know that it is available. But, as Schutz states, “normally” we have neither the need nor the desire for such a high degree of knowledge about numerous things which we use nearly every day, including electricity, the flow of monetary currency, the intricacies of credit, the chemical composition of food, the inner workings of the combustion engine, or the laws of physics and mechanics involved in making a telephone call. We depend on a disarticulated and unarticulated sociology of knowledge for such things, as a division of labor distributes knowledge throughout society.

For the man on the street it is sufficient to know that there are experts available for consultation should he need their advice in achieving his practical purpose at hand…. Many phenomena of social life can be fully understood only if they are referred to the underlying general structure of the social distribution of knowledge…. This resource alone makes possible a sociological theory of professions, of prestige and competence … and leads to the understanding of such complicated social relationships as those existing among the performing artist, his public, and his critics, or among manufacturer, retailer, advertising agent, and consumer, or among the government executive, his technical adviser, and public opinion. (Schutz 1971b: 123).
Parenthetically, Marx inserts a wry footnote in *Capital* about the social division of knowledge when he states, “In bourgeois society the legal fiction prevails that each person, as a buyer, has an encyclopedic knowledge of commodities” (1994: 221, f.n. 6). However, let us return to Coach before we have digressed right off the page. I merely paused here to use Schutz to fill in some of the blank spots in the workings of the everyday.

By manifesting as an international seller of exotic merchandise, the Coach-Drunk had broken the mold of the two ideal types I had used to define her as well as, in a sense, to contain her. Schutz cautions us that “The application of … [an] ideal type to a future action of another person is something that can only be done with the assumption that it is *probably* correct” (Schutz 1967: 228; italics, Schutz). And how do we reorient ourselves once such a mistake has occurred? “If the person does not act as predicted, we must assume that we have applied the wrong ideal type to the person in question. We will therefore look around for another personal ideal type which *will* make his action comprehensible” (Schutz 1967: 228; italics, Schutz). Schutz also warns us that “the more freedom *N* has, the less anonymous he is, the closer to the We-relationship he stands, the less likelihood will there be that he will behave ‘according to the ideal type’” (1967: 228). Here, it seems that the more proximate and intimate one becomes with another, the more the process of typification malfunctions, breaking down as it butts up against the nakedness of reality. In the face-to-face relationship or the We-relationship, as Schutz calls it, “the partners look into each other and are mutually sensitive to each other’s responses…. the partners are constantly revising and enlarging their knowledge of each other” (Schutz 1967: 202, 203). In a They-relationship, in which the partners
base their responses on “the assumption of a shared interpretive scheme” (Schutz 1967: 203), fixed typifications replace the mobile formulations which occur in the We-relationship, in which the partners “are sensitively aware of the nuances of each other’s subjective experiences” (Schutz 1967: 202-203).

However, these two assumptions – that They-relationships are based on ‘the assumption of a shared interpretive scheme’ and that partners in a We-relationship ‘are sensitively aware of the nuances of each other’s subjective experiences’ – both seem to be based on rather wobbly premises. For isn’t it the fact that we have just outlined situations in which Schutz’s assumptions about such relationships are presumptions or mis-assumptions? Perhaps all we are asking of Schutz is that he preface his remarks with the qualifier that in successful communicative performances of We- and They-relationships, such-and-such are the factors in play.

Underlying our worries about the premises of Schutz’s assumptions is a question about the reliability of the self, an essential operator in both We- and They-relationships. Does not any one partner in any level of a relationship, be it a We- or They-Relationship, have to formulate and maintain a lucid relationship with his or her own self prior to establishing a lucid understanding of his or her partner? In other words, must we adequately construe a successful typification of our selves before being able to communicate adequately with another? And, furthermore, what would constitute such an adequate self-typification? Is there such a thing? Keeping these questions in mind, we will use an example from fiction to investigate this issue.

In Jean-Paul Sartre’s *The Diary of Antoine Roquentin* [aka *Nausea*], the sense of the self of the main character, Antoine Roquentin, completely breaks down. The words he
writes become unrecognizable, his “self” having slipped away from the moorings of the actions that the same “self” ostensibly perpetrates:

I had thought out this sentence, as first it had been a small part of myself. Now it was inscribed on the paper, it took sides against me. I didn’t recognize it any more. I couldn’t conceive it again. It was there, in front of me; in vain for me to trace some sign of its origin. Anyone could have written it. But I … I wasn’t sure I wrote it. (Sartre 1950: 130; italics, Sartre).

So the question becomes: how can one successfully typify one’s self and present this to another, if one has no idea who or what one is? If one’s own words seem to turn against one’s self and devolve into the unrecognizibility of anonymity, doesn’t that portend that the self that wrote the words will become unrecognizable and anonymous as well? And can a self that is so smudgy turn out an ideal type which others can partner up with in a We- or They-relationship?

Sartre does provide some evidence that it is through the essentializing process of typification that the self can be salvaged. A “little man” in a café makes everyone else uneasy due to his own lack of a clear outline: seemingly unrecognizable as a type, his undefined smudginess seems to spread like an infection, causing the other customers in the café to also feel disconnected from their own sense of self, the assurance that their habitualized ideal types are successfully tethered to their bodies. Finally, a doctor enters and puts everyone at ease by typifying this little man: “He’s crazy as a loon, that’s that,” he says (Sartre 1950: 93). This act of typification works, perhaps most especially for the “loon” himself:

He [the doctor] knows that the loony won’t be angry, that he’s going to smile. And there it is: the man smiles with humility. A crazy loon: he relaxes, he feels
protected against himself: nothing will happen to him today. I am reassured too. A
crazy loon: so that was it, so that was all. (Sartre 1950: 93).

Better to be a crazy loon than nothing, seems to be the moral of the story, as at least, once
typified, one is identifiable, and because one is identifiable, one qualifies to be typifiable
in a virtuous circle of belonging. And the typification, when applied to one’s self, eases
the nausea of non-identity. Insofar as I am a crazy loon, I am OK. However, insofar as I
am an unidentifiable smudge, I am not OK. This lesson is imprinted upon Sartre’s
narrator when the ‘loon’ “turns the terrible fire of his eyes on me.

We look at each other in silence for several seconds: he sizes me up, looking at
me with half-closed eyes, up and down he places me. In the crazy loon category?
In the tramp category? (Sartre 1950: 93).

Here, the possibility of fitting into no category at all is the terror dragging one down into
nausea. For, without a category to slot one’s self into, without an ideal type in which to
place one’s ill-defined and formless self, one is left to the mercy of the socio-
psychological elements, merciless to those without shape and form.

The inability to typify objects can jolt Sartre’s narrator into a sense that the self,
along with the things surrounding the self, cannot find a center around which to cohere
and then mold itself into a recognizable form, to locate a type in which to slide one’s
skin. Objects seem to be in league with a free-floating sense of nausea and the formless
quality of the self in order to hurl Roquentin into a contortion of non-identifiable misery,
an angst of disappearance. “This thing I’m sitting on, leaning my hand on, is called a
seat” (Sartre 1950: 168). Here, the very name of the object seems to be in question, as if a
combination of vowels and consonants cannot contain the thing they ostensibly name.
Yet the actuality of the chair in the tramcar remains, as if floating unnaturally above the words meant to encompass it:

They made it purposely for people to sit on, they took leather, springs and cloth, they went to work with the idea of making a seat and when they finished, that was what they had made. They carried it here, into this car and the car is now rolling and jolting with its rattling windows, carrying this red thing in its bosom. I murmur: “It’s a seat,” a little like an exorcism. But the word stays on my lips: it refuses to go and put itself on the thing. (Sartre 1950: 168-169; italics, Sartre).

What seems to be happening here is something which Schutz addresses in *Reflections on the Problems of Relevance*:

We have mentioned that the world is conceived from the outset as grouped under certain types, which in turn refer to atypical aspects of the typified objects of our experiences. Types are more or less anonymous types; and, the more anonymous they are, the more objects of our experiences are conceived as partaking in the typical aspects. But at the same time, the type becomes less and less concrete; its content becomes less and less significant, that is, interpretationally relevant. As regards every type, then, anonymity and fullness of content are inversely related… (1970: 57).

So that, once the chair becomes full of content, that is, once it is fully perceived in all its atypicality, its abstract anonymity falls away, as does the typification under whose name (“chair”) the anonymous object presents itself. And once it is untethered from its name, that series of letters to which it “belongs,” the object, the chair, is set loose and is free to roam, in this case, into monstrosity:

It stays where it is, with its red plush, thousands of little red paws in the air, all still, little dead paws. This enormous belly turned upward, bleeding, inflated – bloated with all its dead paws, this belly floating in this car, in this grey sky, is not a seat. It could just as well be a dead donkey tossed about in the water, floating
with the current, belly in the air in a great grey river, a river of floods; and I could be sitting on the donkey’s belly, my feet dangling in the clear water. (Sartre 1950: 169).

Once “things are divorced from their names,” once they have betrayed typification in a linguistic form, the capacity to typify the self becomes attenuated, as the self disappears along with the names of the objects through which the self attempts to locate its self (Sartre 1950: 169).

Once this state of affairs occurs, unease becomes the norm, alienation the standard, the “Nausea … is no longer an illness or a passing fit: it is I” (Sartre 1950: 170). But instead of leading to an unraveling of the self, this state in which “words had vanished” leads to an epiphany in which “existence had suddenly unveiled itself” to Roquentin (Sartre 1950: 170, 171). The perception of the root of a chestnut tree abruptly opens Roquentin to “this vision” in which the veneer of the appearance of things is ripped away and life itself is revealed:

“This is a root” – it didn’t work any more. I saw clearly that you could not pass from its function as a root, as a breathing pump, to that, to this hard and compact skin … to this oily, callous, headstrong look. The function explained nothing: it allowed you to understand generally that it was a root, but not that one at all. This root, with its colour, shape, its congealed movement, was … below all explanation. (Sartre 1950: 174; italics, Sartre).

However, this liberation from the abstract typification of words as well as the anthropocentric functionality of things doesn’t seem to lead to a liberation from typification itself. As the novel concludes, Roquentin is hoping he can redeem his life through the act of writing a novel; then “there would be people who would read this book and say: ‘Antoine Roquentin wrote it, a red-headed man who hung around cafes,’“ and
they would think of my life as … something precious and almost legendary” (Sartre 1950: 238). So that Roquentin will be recalled through the typifications of writer, red-headed man, man who hung around cafes, legendary member of the demi-monde. This is a far cry from the being who has encountered the core of existence gazing at the root of the chestnut tree: that being had vaulted beyond typifications into life itself; but now Roquentin retreats into a vision of the future tinged with the romantic redolence of the bohemian writer-type whose words have acquired the whiff of legend. Only the sentimental future-oriented nostalgia (a nostalgia situated in a future looking back at a reconstructed present) can redeem the failed project of Roquentin’s life. This vision will allow Roquentin to adopt the typification of red-headed novelist hanging out in cafes: his slot assured by his adoption of this type, his life can continue. Or at least that is the hope. But to return to our original point: in the first place, it is the very lack of identity, the inability to dress the self in an appropriate type, which leads to the nausea which looms over the novel’s main character like the harbinger of doom.

In Albert Cossery’s novel, The Jokers, Urfy the teacher uses marks of typification as well as typification itself to ensure his continued success as a schoolmaster:

Urfy took a handkerchief from his pocket and mopped his prematurely balding head. The bald spot was a mark of his professorial dignity; he never failed to groom and polish it well, like an expensive article in a poor person’s home. It was a local belief that premature baldness indicated wisdom and knowledge, and Urfy liked to encourage this illusion, lifting his hand frequently to his pate – especially when faced with skeptical parents who had the audacity to treat him like a worthless young boy. But baldness wasn’t the only physical mark of his genius: Urfy was also seriously-nearsighted. He wore steel-rimmed glasses with impressively thick lenses that magnified the severity of his discerning gaze. A bald schoolmaster afflicted with myopia – that was more than enough to inspire the confidence of an illiterate population that had been raised with the axiom that a blind man could do no harm. (Cossery 2010: 51; italics, mine).
This is perhaps an opposite reading of the efficacy and utility of typification than Sartre’s – here it is the characteristics of the Ideal Type which are willfully embraced and performed by the school teacher as markers which assist Urfy in maintaining the stability of his status, while in Sartre, typification seems to enter by default, not by the agency of the characters marked with the signs of typification. The little man in the café only assumes the Looney Type after he has been dubbed so by the doctor; Roquentin only assumes the type of red-headed bohemian writer after all else has failed and, in fact, it is this typification is wheeled in by Sartre at the conclusion of the novel as a kind of vehicle on which to end the book on at least a somewhat optimistic note.

So what are we left with here? We have Urfy, dependent on the clarity of the marks signifying his Ideal Type – his bald pate, his myopia – to buttress his appearance as a school teacher and keep his business afloat. Insofar as he is bald and insofar as he is nearsighted, and insofar as these are read as signs of ‘genius’ in the milieu in which he dwells, his appearance supports his typification, insofar as he is a teacher. On the other hand, Roquentin shatters the typification adhering to the chair as well as typification of the exposed root of the chestnut tree and, for a brief illuminated moment, seems to perceive life without the screen of abstraction and typification blocking his “view.” However, Sartre retreats from this unmitigated access to existence, allowing his protagonist (on the final page of the book!) to don the type of red-headed bohemian-novelist (with his success assured by a vision of a glorious future in which his life is regarded by his readers “as something precious and almost legendary”); such a maneuver gives Roquentin the surety of typification, and so he, much like Urfy, can smoothly function, ideal type in hand, his self adjusted into its appropriate slot, and so, now,
finally, he “might succeed … in accepting myself” (1950: 238). It must be added, though, that this hope rings hallow, an almost Hollywood ending to this proto-typical existential novel.

Before moving on, let us visit one other arena in which typifications are utilized. In his essay, "'Landscape' as a Sign: Semiotics and Methodological Issues in Landscape Studies," Tor Arnesen tells us that a "sign user community…. may subsume a non-specific objects [sic] with general qualities - e.g. splendid crag landscapes for climbing - under the same 'landscape'. This allows for development of a landscape typology" (2011: 365, 372). And so discrete landscapes which may be located at a great distance from one another and may have highly differentiated geological histories are 'subsumed' under the same ideal type: "As a sign, landscapes have abstract qualities which makes a basis for a landscape typology; sings that relates [sic] to indefinitely many discrete areas" (Arnesen 2011: 373). Landscapes types such as buttes, meadows, gulches, and plains make for handy abstractions under which to subsume particular places. Landscape typology is commonly used by scientists and planners as they study nature and identify areas worthy of protection. For instance, in St. Petersburg, Russia, the "'the Directorate of protected natural territories'" working under the supervision of "the Committee of Nature Use, Environmental Protection and Ecological Safety of the St. Petersburg Administration" has identified "landscape structures" which have then been classified into the landscape types "Lake and lacustrine-glacial plains, Morainic plains and flat hills, Littorina terrace, Kame and fluvio-glacial hills and ridges, Morainic hills on carbonate till, Peat-bogs, fens and marshes (except for excavated), Former peatersies, Dunes, Landscapes of coasts of the Gulf of Finland (present terrace), Valleys and floodplains of the rivers and streams,
Technogenic surfaces, territories with buildings, and Internal reservoirs, rivers and streams" (Isachenko and Reznikov 2011: 265, 266). Landscape typology, although not theorized by either Weber or Schutz, can easily be brought under the umbrella of their respective schemas of typification, even when it is as abstruse as this Russian exemplar.

And so we have added typification to our arsenal. It is essential to the functioning of the everyday: without it, we would have to present ourselves as is, raw, naked, exposed. Insofar as we are human beings, we are lost. For, after all, what is a human being? That unanswerable question is eased by typification, for, insofar as I am a teacher or a “tough guy,” or a Southern Californian, or an anarchist trouble-maker, or a married man with children, or what-have-you, I do have at least some notion of how to present myself.

For the most part, mundane action is unreflective action: the ordinary individual engages in a typical course-of-action pattern without ratiocination. When reflection is needed as to how, for example, a request should be framed, what is called for is not an epistemology of solicitation. Most often, “wording” is all that needs attention. Yet the actor also has a typification of himself. That self-typification is at once tacit and picturable. (Natanson 1986: 65).

And yet we have seen that self-typification is not always ready-at-hand, available for immediate usage, as sometimes it is absent and unimaginable, not tacit and picturable, as Maurice Natanson avers in Anonymity: A Study of the Philosophy of Alfred Schutz.

But when self-typification is successful, it not only eases the route through the everyday, it also gives “me” some idea about how I will be received when and if I do present myself in these guises, these types. This is the juncture where what Schutz calls reciprocity comes in: we recognize each other through our typifications and then we can
continue with whatever business may be at hand. Which, more often than not, has much
to do with what Marx calls reproduction. Which also happens to be our next subject.
How could this sugar-coated Christmas staple give us any sort of aperture into an authentic version of the everyday? Capra’s fabulist romance about small town life is mere schmaltz, is it not, a tribute on a grandiose saccharine scale to an America which has only existed in the minds of Hallmark card enthusiasts and Hollywood screenwriters hoping to cash in on daydreams of patriotic hoopla.

But that’s just the point. The idealization of American everyday life, its intrinsic virtues and its preordained triumph over the forces of darkness as represented by that arch-ogre of capitalism gone awry, Mr. Potter (played with such scowling bravado and sneering condescension by that excellent hambone, Lionel Barrymore) - this idealization is a product Hollywood tuned to perfection, a sort of propagandistic pick-me-up for those who have lost faith in the American Dream. That it is wrapped in Christmas tidings makes it all the better, as America and Christianity are compressed together into a soothing holiday brew.

What Hollywood does is rip asunder and then recombine the everyday, albeit an idealized everyday that has only ever existed in the mind. From the very start of the picture, there is an extreme and almost operatic oscillation between good and evil at work in Bedford Falls – calamity and good fortune are in the balance and only the homespun virtue of a plain citizen’s insight into the various possibilities of the human heart can save the day.

Near the beginning of the film, there’s a scene that reflects Capra’s emotional audacity. Mr. Gower, the druggist young George Bailey works for, has just learned his
son has succumbed to influenza. When we first see Gower, he is drowning his sorrows with drink in the back room of the pharmacy-cum-soda shop. There’s a ravaged quality to his grief, a fumbling sorrow which allows him to make the potentially fatal mistake of sifting poison into pills for a diphtheria patient. When young George wisely and courageously returns without having delivered this deadly dose, Gower clubs his ears until they bleed. Upon George’s explanation of his actions – the young boy has read the telegram and realized Gower’s error – Gower falls to his knees and clutches the boy, sobbing as he begs for forgiveness. It is interesting to inspect this sequence from the perspective of the evolution of the everyday: who today would continue with their work having just found out that one of their children had died? Wouldn’t a grief counselor be available? What employer would hit an employee until they bleed and not face some sort of consequence besides a stricken conscious? Would a man today hug a child and beg for their forgiveness after having done such a thing? Ah, but this is Hollywood, circa 1947, and this is Capra at his most gloriously sentimental, awash with the flood of emotion, dripping with equal measures pathos and bathos.

For all that, Capra’s sentimental temerity somehow works: going for broke, he pulls out all the stops, turning small town Americana into a kind of Italian-American fantasyland and it’s done with such verve and dash that we merrily go along for the ride. Still, we can’t help but wince when Peter Bailey, George’s father, states in a heart-to-heart with his son that “I feel that, in a small way, we’re doing something important, satisfying a fundamental urge. It’s deep in the race for a man to want to want his own roofs [sic] and walls and fireplace. And we’re helping him get those things;” at the same time we can perhaps glean a marginal satisfaction from knowing that such a racist and
sexist tone is a thing of the past while also demonstrating that what was everyday once
may not be quite so everyday today (Goodrich, Hackett, and Capra).

There’s also a kind of romantic surrealism to some of the dialogue which tears
right across the fabric of the everyday. Walking home from a high school prom, what
starts as flirtatious banter between George and the love interest of the film, Mary Hatch,
narrowly avoids turning into mush by extending what could have been sentimental
hogwash into a realm beyond such travesty:

GEORGE: What do you want, Mary? You want the moon? Just
say the word, and I’ll throw a lasso around it
and pull it down. Hey, that’s a pretty good idea.
I’ll give you the moon.

MARY: I’ll take it. And then...

GEORGE: Well, then you could swallow it, and it would
dissolve, see? And the moonbeams would shoot out
of your fingers and your toes and the ends of
your hair.

This image evokes Cocteau working in tandem with Tesla in the latter’s Long Island
laboratory, hooking up the world to free electricity and spouting lunar poetry while
under the patronage of an incredulous J.P. Morgan; at any rate, it vaults over your
typical romantic drivel and so carries the film beyond the parameters of the everyday.

But it is not until George’s despair has been cured by Clarence, our hero’s
guardian angel, that the everyday is celebrated for exactly what it seems to be: as George
runs through downtown Bedford Falls on a snowy Christmas Eve, he cries out: “Merry
Christmas, movie house! Merry Christmas, emporium! Marry Christmas, you wonderful
Thus the ordinary is rendered extraordinary. Isn’t this at least somewhat akin to Allen Ginsberg in Berkeley, circa 1955, as he rhapsodizes—

…I walked down the sidestreets under the trees with a headache self-conscious looking at the full moon. In my hungry fatigue, and shopping for images, I went into the neon fruit supermarket… What peaches and what penumbras! Whole families shopping at night! Aisles full of husbands! Wives in the avocados, babies in the tomatoes!—and you, Garcia Lorca, what were you doing down by the watermelons? (1960: 181).

- albeit, it may be difficult to imagine Allen Ginsberg and James Stewart arm-in-arm, celebrating the extraordinariness of the ordinary (yet stranger things have certainly occurred).

The resolution of It’s A Wonderful Life is effectuated by adding a sort of homespun nativistic Americana version of communism to its already heady brew of Christianity, astral angelic transportation (Clarence sent down from the distant stars to rescue George and earn his wings), romantic hogwash, and small town capitalism. Bailey must have eight thousand dollars or he will be hauled off to jail, and on Christmas Eve! But his good wife Mary has rousted the townsfolk to the rescue and they show up at the Bailey homestead to toss cash into the basket and save the ‘wonderful old’ building and loan and George’s hide as well. Here we have a bail-out of capital only made possible by the power of communal ties and the virtue of Kropotkinian mutual aid. Never has such an ideological fusion gone down so swimmingly!

So this most American of movies, this celebration of small town virtue and Christmas cheer, this slice of Americana par excellence, is actually a celebration of the
natural communal tendencies of the American middle class. Here the question must be asked: was Capra a KGB agent, a secret secreted burrower into the American psyche? After all, according to Dick Nixon and Ronald Reagan, the Hollywood of the 1930s, 40s, and 50s was flooded with Bolshevik infiltrators: might not Capra’s masterpiece be the culmination of their sabotage, a hidden dagger ripped into the heartland of the all-mighty dollar?

Of course I jest. But is it not odd that when capitalism seems to be on the ropes, and right on the brink of going down to an inglorious and ignominious defeat, it is the collective that charges into to its rescue? Mutatis mutandis, is the communal public spirit that rescued George Bailey the same spirit that rescued Wall Street during the economic meltdown of 2008 and 2009?

Probably not; as most Americans would just as soon have Wall Street lurch to a hideous death than rescue the consummate stock-jobbers who fuel the feats of financial legerdemain facilitating the modern “fictional” economy. And can you blame them? The American public was asked to rescue a collective incarnation of Mr. Potter, not a divine replication of George Bailey. No wonder they were pissed off!
Chapter Six:

What Marx Brought in from the Cold: Reproduction

“Labour-power exists only as a capacity of the living individual,” writes Marx in Volume One of Capital. “Its production consequently presupposes his existence,” he adds. “Given the existence of the individual, the production of labour-power consists in his reproduction of himself or his maintenance” (1994: 268; italics, mine). Self-maintenance, or what we could term the reproduction of the self in order to work yet another day, is one of the primary components of everyday life. Eating and drinking, sleeping and the elimination of waste matter – these constitute the bare minimum of one's circadian reproductive maintenance; that is, unless the laborer’s value has diminished so much to their employer or their master that one's reproduction is deemed unnecessary, as has often been the case with slaves in certain times and places as well as with industrial workers in certain periods. In such instances, production without any subsequent reproduction (or what Flaubert calls the "perpetual resumption of itself" (1972: 39)) is judged to be sufficient, and the death of the laborer is accepted as the elemental principle of maintenance is nullified. But the extent to which even basic needs are met is contingent:

His natural needs, such as food, clothing, fuel and housing vary according to the climatic and other physical characteristics of his country. On the other hand, the number and extent of his so-called necessary requirements, as also the manner in which they are satisfied, are themselves products of history, and depend therefore to a great extent on the level of civilization attained by a country. (Marx 1994: 268).
Yet these factors are also conditioned by “the habits and expectations” with which “the class of free workers has been formed,” placing the value workers put on their own labor within the compass of “the level of civilization attained by a country,” instead of somehow being extraneous to it (Marx 1994: 268). Indeed, one of Marx’s greatest accomplishments is his insistence that the working class be included as a certified component of “civilization,” and therefore worthy of investigation, thought, and even, at least in Marx’s case, valorization.

What I would like to accomplish in this chapter is to add the processes of reproduction to the tools of analysis by which we circumnavigate the everyday. Rather than stipulating such an addition - as if one could simply proclaim: Presto! and one more tool would be added to our analytical kit (a short-cut which may please some shirkers of the obligations subtending scholarship but would hardly please those who yearn for rigor) – at least an attempt at thoroughness is required: thus, we shall proceed. The ’habits and expectations’ of reproduction are crucial components of the everyday world and thus worthy of both our investigation and our inclusion within our study, a conclusion which may seem obvious, and even obvious to a banal degree, but the ramifications of which may prove to be of great interest.

However, before delving into this, we should also acknowledge that it is not simply the people of whatever class that must be reproduced on a day-to-day basis, but the entire society and the built environment as well, and on a temporal and spatial "groundwork" which must be more or less aligned with the flows and the needs of capital, the requirements necessary to maintain the fluid mobility of easy transportation.
and well-orchestrated logistics, as well as the long-term needs of capital for the health, the education, and the discipline (or repression) of the workforce.

Marx tells us in *Capital* that reproduction is a ceaseless process which *cannot* come to cessation in *any* society, no matter what the mode of production may be:

Whatever the form of the process of production in a society, it must be a continuous process, must continue to go periodically through the same phases. A society can no more cease to produce than it can cease to consume. When viewed, therefore, as a connected whole, and as flowing on with incessant renewal, every social process of production is, at the same time, a process of reproduction. (1996: 565).

And Harvey points out in *The Limits of Capital* that in capitalistic societies entire social classes have to be reproduced as well:

*First*, we should note that the reproduction of labour power becomes integrated into the circulation of capital. The worker becomes, in effect, an ‘appendage of capital’, in the sphere of exchange as well as in the sphere of production…. Capital circulates, as it were, through the body of the labourer as variable capital and thereby turns the labourer into a mere appendage of the circulation of capital itself. The capitalist is likewise imprisoned within the rules of circulation of capital, because it is only through the observance of these rules that the reproduction and expansion of constant capital and the production of further surplus value can be ensured. We are, in short, looking at the rules that govern the reproduction on a progressive scale of whole social classes. (1982: 173, 175; italics, Harvey).

Or as he puts it more succinctly in *A Companion to Marx’s Capital*, “The capitalist produces and reproduces the worker as the active but alienated subject capable of producing value. And this, please note, is the fundamental socially necessary condition for the survival and maintenance of a capitalist mode of production” (Harvey 2010b: 251). But Harvey also notes that reproduction must proceed on an individual bio-physical basis as well: "The metabolic processes which permit … internal self-reconstitution to
proceed entail exchanges with my environment and a whole range of transformative processes which are necessary for the maintenance of my bodily individuality" (1995: 6; italics, mine).

Marx ties together production and reproduction by pointing out that workers must produce enough surplus value for the capitalist to create a profit and the variable capital (wages) for their reproduction;

The purchase of labour power for a fixed period is the prelude to the process of production; and this prelude is constantly repeated when the stipulated term comes to an end, when a definite period of production, such as a week or a month, has elapsed. But the labourer is not paid until after he has expended his labour power, and realized in commodities not only its value, but its surplus value. He has, therefore, not only produced not only surplus value, which we for the present regard as a fund to meet the private consumption of the capitalist, but he has also produced, before it flows back to him in the shape of wages, the fund out of which he himself is paid, the variable capital; and his employment lasts only so long as he continues to reproduce this fund. (1996: 567).

Without such an arrangement, workers will not be employed by the capital class and they will either have to find other means for their own reproduction or die.

Lefebvre, too, acknowledges the importance of reproduction, especially as extended in order to formulate a Marxian analysis that is thorough and complete: "For Marx, of course, the reproduction of the means of production and the continuity of material production do not take place without the reproduction of social relations, any more than life itself takes place without the repetition of everyday motions and actions" (1976: 9).

Furthermore, roads and railroad lines, bridges, and schools, and, indeed, the entire built environment, once constructed, is also subject to reproduction. Typically, the
capitalist, being a capitalist, attempts to download as much of the costs of this
reproduction as possible on to the state (the public), while reserving the right to collect a
maximum of the benefits accruing to such communal outlays: “Individual capitalists find
it hard to make such investments as individuals, no matter how desirable they may regard
them” (Harvey 1985: 8). Capitalists must also “as a class … if they are to reproduce
themselves, continuously expand the basis of profit” (Harvey 1985: 1), meaning that they
must continuously produce as well as reproduce buyers for their goods. But besides
continuously expanding the basis of profit, capitalists must also reproduce themselves,
both individually and as a class. And the cyclical patterns of capitalism tend to reproduce
themselves as well: here is Robert Brenner outlining precisely such a financial-economic
self-perpetuating cycle in *The Economics of Global Turbulence*:

As a consequence of the continuous, precipitous fall in profit rates that resulted
from the worsening of global over-capacity and intensifying international
competition between the later 1960s and early 1980s, there emerged, in classical
fashion, a dual problem of weakening aggregate demand and weakening
productivity growth, which tended to be self-perpetuating. In order to restore
profit rates, firms across the advanced capitalist economy moved immediately and
decisively to reduce the growth of real wages, while governments cut back
sharply on the increase of social spending. Because, as an expression of reduced
profitability, firms could secure only declining surpluses for any given increase in
their capital stock, they were simultaneously obliged to reduce the growth of investment, as well as employment. As a result, the growth of consumption,
investment, and government demand were all forced down, leading to the reduced
growth of purchasing power economy-wide. Meanwhile, because firms, in the
face of declining profits and prospects, neither wished to nor could expand their
plant, equipment, and software as rapidly as before, a decline in the rate of growth
of productivity naturally resulted. Of course, the slower growth of productivity
further threatened profits, leading firms to exert further downward pressure on
wages and, thereby, aggregate demand, especially as each additional person hired
brought a declining addition to aggregate purchasing power. Slower growth of
aggregate demand itself undermined profit rates further and firms responded by
reducing capital accumulation and wage growth even more, leading to the further
reduction of productivity and aggregate demand growth, and, in turn, profitability
Without pausing to plumb the depths of Brenner’s analysis, I believe we can safely stipulate it as an example par excellence of a non-virtuous capitalistic circle of reproduction within the economic sphere.

Reproduction at a greater and greater scale merely in order to "maintain position" has been a necessity from the very inception of capitalism:

In marked contrast to feudalism and earlier rank-redistributive and primitive subsistence economies, merchant capitalism was a self-propelling growth system in which the continued expansion of trade was vital; without it, neither merchants nor those dependent on their success - producers, consumers, financiers, etc. - could maintain their position, let alone advance it (Knox, Agnew, & McCarthy 2008: 103; italics, mine).

But this necessity created its own contradictions:

Mercantile success required the merchants to buy as cheaply as possible, and to sell as expensively as possible; it also demanded that they trade in as large a volume of goods as possible … This created a contradiction, however, for the producers were also consumers (though not of the goods they produced), so that if the prices they received were low, they could not afford to buy large quantities of other goods and thus satisfy the demands of the merchant class as a whole. A consequence of this was a great pressure on producers to increase the volume of goods for sale, which meant increasing their productivity, while merchants put pressure on consumers to buy more, even if this meant borrowing money in order to afford their purchases. Both processes … involved producers raising loans which they had to repay with interest [thus ensuring the reproduction of the financiers]; to achieve the latter, they had to produce more (or, if they were employees rather than independent workers, to work harder). (Johnston 1980: 33-34).

From this, we can gather that reproductive loops, whether of a "positive" or a "negative" nature, were an elemental part of capitalism from its get-go.

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1 Cited in Know, Agnew, and McCarthy's The Geography of the World Economy, 103.
Furthermore, we should add that the three circuits of capital - commodity capital, money capital, and productive capital - are continually reproducing themselves as they are transformed into one another; as Marx puts it:

One part of capital, continually changing, continually reproduced, exists as a commodity capital which is converted into money; another as money capital which is converted into productive capital; and a third as productive capital which is transformed into commodity capital. The continuous existence of all three forms is brought about by the circuit the aggregate capital describes in passing through precisely these three phases. (1997: 109).

So the entire loop that aggregate capital makes is equivalent to all three phases as they operate together: capital, production, and commodification in a continuous reproductive cycle, tied together by their capacity to reproduce one another. Its instigator or catalyst is profit, of course: "The direct process of the production of capital is its labour and self-expansion process, the process whose result is the commodity product and whose compelling motive is the production of surplus value" (Marx 1997: 349).

Reproduction, economic cycles, and the like can also be linked, to a certain degree at least, to what can be termed the efficacy of multiplier effects; is it too poetic to stipulate that reproduction is simply multiplier effects multiplied on a more or less continual basis? Here is Harvey on the effects of multiplier effects:

Investment in the built environment has a significance far beyond the direct investment that it absorbs. First, these investments generate certain multiplier effects because the subsequent use (and hence the value) of an urban infrastructure depends upon the commitment of further resources. Under private property relationships and a capitalist mode of consumption, these multiplier effects can be quite substantial (most households are heavily over-equipped relative to their needs). The construction of housing, for example, requires complementary investments in transportation, household equipment, community facilities, and the like, while it also imposes a variety of recurrent operating costs.
(energy inputs being a prime example)…. In addition, construction activity has certain multiplier effects in the employment sphere. (Harvey 1974: 4).

So this might be termed a virtuous circle of the capitalistic variety, wherein housing construction catalyzes transportation outlays, expenditures on durables (cars, refrigerators, washing and drying machines, etc.), construction of Little League parks and senior centers, and so on. Of course, housing developments can go south as well; for instance, by the willful neglect of arranging for such effects to multiply: quite a number of tracts (in the Southwest of the United States in particular) have been built in the middle of the desert with no logistical networks in place whatsoever: prospective home-buyers may purchase homes with no connecting roadways to “the outer world,” no schools, no electricity, no linkage to water systems and gas networks, etc.

We will expand on some, if not all, of these points throughout the course of this chapter; I simply want to indicate the vast scope of reproduction in a capitalistic society before proceeding. Our investigation must (once again) be both swift and of a piece-meal quality, as there is neither time nor space to fully explore this crucial component of the everyday (much of which is precisely what makes the everyday everyday); however, by landing here and there as we delve into some of the aspects of reproduction, we should be able to at least give a cursory review of this subject.

But our process will not be either random or arbitrary, as if we were playing theoretical hop-scotch with no end in mind. We will proceed down three disparate avenues, one for the working class, one for the middle class, and one for the ruling class. In the first case, we will demonstrate how members of the working class in China are reproducing themselves in a manner that defies the expectations of both communism and
capitalism; in the second case, we will show how one branch of the middle class, that of the United States of America, is teetering on the brink of being unable to reproduce itself; in the final case, we will display the excesses upon which or through which the global ruling class is reproducing itself, or, perhaps more accurately, over-reproducing itself. And, though we may neglect to mention the everyday as often as we might (or as we should), we need to bear in mind that all these delineations of abstract groups and classes can be distilled down to the everyday actions of people working, sleeping, dwelling, eating, defecating, drinking, urinating, and so on.

The Surplus Army of Labor and the Working Class

“The flight of serfs into the towns continued without interruption through the entire Middle Ages,” writes Marx in *The German Ideology*.

Arriving separately, these workers were never able to gain any power because if their labor was of the guild type and had to be learned, the guild masters put them in subjection and organized them according to their interest. If their labor was not of this type but rather day labor, they never managed to organize themselves and remained unorganized rabble. The need for day labor in the towns created the rabble. (Marx 1994: 134; italics, mine).

However, “the rabble” ended up fulfilling much more of a role in the history of feudalism and capitalism than merely being available for day labor, though they certainly fit that bill and at cheap prices as well. As members of what Marx calls the reserve or surplus army of workers, the rabble has also stood as markers or signals to “ordinary” workers that there is a group of desperate men and women willing and at least somewhat able to readily take their jobs, should ever that need arise. In fact, to fulfill the function of
serving as a sign to workers that other things being equal, things could be much worse, the rabble doesn’t even have to be employable, they merely have to survive. Then they can exist as living symbols, human sign-posts, of what can happen to those who somehow slip from the halter and either cannot or will not work. Engels, writing of Manchester and Birmingham in the 1840s, describes this semiotic operation thusly:

While I was in England at least twenty or thirty people died of hunger under the most scandalous circumstances…. Of course, only a few [of the poor] actually die of hunger. But what guarantee has the worker that this will not be his fate tomorrow [sic]? Who will give him security of employment? If for any cause, reasonable or unreasonable, his employer dismissed him tomorrow, who will be responsible for maintaining the worker and his family until he finds fresh employment? Who will guarantee a man ‘the right to work’ if he is willing to work?…. The worker knows only too well that employment and food today do not mean employment and food tomorrow. (1958: 32; italics, mine).

Moreover, the reserve army can be counted on whenever capitalists require or simply desire a quick influx of cheap labor, depressing wages as they flood into the workforce, a positive by-product of their recruitment as far as the capitalist is concerned: “The role of the Reserve Army is to provide a pool of available labor to satisfy sudden bursts of activity characterizing expansion phases of the business cycle.…. That inadequate labor supply does not constitute a constraint upon the ‘elasticity’ of the system is accounted for precisely in terms of the operation of the Reserve Army” (Hollander 2008: 100; italics, Hollander). This army of available labor is a necessary ingredient for the capital class to ensure themselves against economic stagnation:

Perpetual accumulation at a compound rate depends on the permanent availability of sufficient accessible reserves of labour power…. This reserve army needs to be accessible, socialized, disciplined and of the requisite qualities (i.e. flexible,
docile, manipulable and skilled when necessary). If these conditions are not met, then capital faces a serious barrier to continuous accumulation. (Harvey 2010a: 58)

But then the question arises: how are these people to be maintained until they are needed? What are the means of their reproduction until that point in time? Frequently, this is the nexus in which capital welcomes government into the equation, as the state can be used to pick up the slack, offering up such benefits as food stamps and unemployment insurance to reproduce this sector until its members are needed by capitalists. However, when the workforce becomes a global entity, then the requirement for the reserve army to be maintained and reproduced at a local, regional, or even national scale can become problematic or even unnecessary. Perhaps that juncture is when the reserve army becomes dispensable, only able to fulfill a role as a living cautionary tale on a massive transnational scale to those who may be entertaining the thought of refusing to abide by harsh austerity measures and the slashing of wages and benefits. And, from its earliest days, capitalists perceived that a barely sufficient wage created the most efficient means to keep workers alive while simultaneously ensuring that they were forced to return to work, day after day; as Mandeville so sweetly articulates this operation in *The Fable of the Bees* (published in 1728 and cited by Marx in the first volume of *Capital*), such processes work thusly:

> It would be easier, where property is well secured, to live without money than without [the] poor; for who would do the work?... As they [the poor] ought to be kept from starving, so they should receive nothing worth saving.... It is the interest of all rich nations, that the greatest part of the poor should almost never be idle, and yet continually spend what they get.... Those that get their living by their daily labour ... have nothing to stir them up to be serviceable but their wants which it is prudence to relieve, but folly to cure. The only thing then that can
render the labouring man industrious, is a moderate quantity of money, for as too little will … either dispirit or make him desperate, so too much will make him insolent and lazy…. From what has been said, it is manifest, that, in a free nation, where slaves are not allowed of, the surest wealth consists in a multitude of labourious poor; for besides, that they are the never-failing nursery of fleets and armies, without them there could be no enjoyment, and no product of any country could be valuable. (1996: 610).²

Though this almost refreshing frankness on the part of Mandeville seems to be a quaint relic of the past, the sentiment has surely been revived: after decades of struggle led to some concessions on the part of capital and the state to guarantee the welfare of the poor and the working class, following the triumphalism of Thatcher and Reagan, a reverse course has been set, as if Mandeville’s standards once again had become the norm and any socio-economic progress that had been achieved was to be nullified by an ascendant upper class elite. It should also be noted that for Mandeville to claim that, say, his ‘free nation’ of England is surviving and even thriving without recourse to slavery is a bit disingenuous, as English merchants and the nation as a whole were heavily invested and involved in the slave trade: we should notate their support of the Confederacy during the American Civil War: Marx, in a footnote to Capital, states that “during the [American] civil war … every ‘noble’ English heart beat for the slaveowner” (Marx 1996: 720, f.n. 1).

The movement of European serfs into the towns during the Middle Ages and the subsequent formation of the “rabble” from which day laborers could be extracted serves as a harbinger of the eradication of English peasants from their small plots of land during the long series of enclosures stretching roughly from the late 1500s to the mid-1800s, with “the years between 1760 and 1820 … the years of wholesale enclosure” (Thompson

1963: 198); it is also a foreshadowing of a trend that Harvey reminds us is still occurring, as capital relentlessly seeks out cheap pools of labor:

In the last thirty years … some 2 billion wage labourers have been added to the available global workforce, through the opening-up of China and the collapse of communism in central and eastern Europe. All around the world the integration of rural and hitherto independent peasant populations into the workforces has occurred. Most dramatic of all has been the mobilization of women, who now form the backbone of the global workforce. A massive pool of labour power for capitalist expansion is now available. (Harvey 2010a: 58-59).

A long wave of eradication and enclosure has encircled the globe during the last five to six hundred years, a wave which is still removing farmers from their land and forcing them into the industrial work force at cut-rate wages. While it is true that this process may have started in Western Europe, particularly in England, it has metastasized since then to encompass nearly every corner of the globe. This wasn't always accomplished through literal enclosure; for instance, in El Salvador "all communal lands were abolished" in 1882, leading "to a redistribution of about 40 percent of all agricultural land" (Nugent and Robinson 2010: 68). This concentration and "control of land" by the elite "created a large proletariat and semi-proletariat of agricultural wage laborers… Through the use of force, squatting was held in check and the landless … became dependent on coffee growers for survival" (Nugent and Robinson 2010: 68-69). In this case, subsistence farmers were forced off the land to become coffee workers rather than factory laborers; however, the commonality between English peasants and their Salvadorian counterparts lies in the coercive removal from the land itself and the formation of a low-wage work force openly available for exploitation. Moreover, in the El Salvador case the judicial

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3 In a footnote, Nugent and Robinson concede that this percentage may be as low as 25%.
system was recruited to keep workers on the plantations: "A system of 'agricultural judges' was created in 1881 to enforce restrictive vagrancy laws intended to impede labor mobility and trap workers on coffee estates" (Nugent and Robinson 2010: 69).

In the following passage, Williams describes the situation in England in *The Country and the City*:

Much of the real history of city and country, within England itself, is from an early date a history of the extension of a dominant model of capitalist development to include other regions of the world. And this was not, as it is now sometimes seen, a case of 'development' here, 'failure to develop' elsewhere. What was happening in the 'city,' the 'metropolitan' economy, determined and was determined by what was made to happen in the 'country'; first the local hinterland and then the vast regions beyond it, in other people's lands. (1973: 279).

So that what happened from 1760 to 1820 to the "old rural hand weavers with hearth and home" in England is now being replicated in, say, Vietnam, as new sources of cheap labor are pressed to leave the subsistence economies of their villages and enter into the wage-earning economies of the factory (Engels 1979: 26). When we also factor in the recruitment of women into the workforce, the global reserve army becomes a massive repository from which capital can draw when and where it will. Many of these people of course become employed at the lowest levels of the working classes in the factories of China, Southeast Asia, and Latin America. But others exist at the margins between starvation and reproduction, a surplus army of the unemployed, the under-employed, millions upon millions living in *favelas* and shanty towns, millions and millions

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“houseless,” as Engels calls those without shelter in *The Condition of the Working Class in England*.

So members of the reserve army cannot afford to be unskilled and immobile, as to “properly” fulfill their role they must remain skilled (or perhaps even develop new skill-sets) as well as be willing to relocate anywhere and at any time the possibility of employment beckons. The other factor depositing prospective workers into the repository of the urban reserve army are the magnets of familial attachments and personal relationships continually drawing rural-based relatives, friends, and neighbors into “the great towns” (Engels 1958: 30). As Farha Ghannam puts it, writing about migratory patterns in contemporary Egypt, there is a “flux of families from rural Egypt who move to Cairo to improve their living conditions; a network of connections draws relatives, neighbors and friends from the countryside…” (2008: 275)

This nudges us to retrieve a question posed above, how does this reserve army maintain itself until it is needed? True, governmental assistance abetted by odd jobs within the enormous sector of the informal economy can more or less reproduce the reserve army until its services are required by the capital class. But how can members of the surplus army retain their skills (given that they had skills to retain in the first place) if they are not employed? Here, in Cossery’s novel, *The House of Certain Death*, set in the Egypt of the late 1940s, Ibrahim Chehata, an unemployed carpenter, demonstrates that one can work, or at least engage in the pretense of working, and still be a member of "the rabble:"

The carpenter had set up business in a corner of the courtyard, since he was too poor to rent a shop. One could always see him working furtively at some small
job, but this continuous labor only served as a pretext to conceal his tragic condition. If the truth must be told, the work which the carpenter produced was never ordered by any customer: it was merely a narcotic. By keeping his mind occupied with his thankless task, he tried to forget his terrible poverty, and above all, the insatiable hunger which was devouring him. Ibrahim Chehata had reached the limit of human resistance to the degrading forces of misery. He went through life like a sleepwalker. His clothes were in rags. He looked just like a mummy, an extremely old mummy that had come out of a distant and barbarous past. (1949: 18-19).

However, the entire question of the retention of a skill set by an individual worker or the maintenance of a reserve army on a national scale becomes nugatory if the workforce is accessed on a global scale: then it becomes some other country’s problem by a default of the pass-the-buck variety. Obviously, any sense of national obligation for the reproduction of surplus labor will be tenuous at best if the reserve army is being recruited from outside the nation’s borders. Any appeal to a sense of national shame is of course unavailable if the nation no longer contains within its boundaries the workers being exploited and the destitute being immiserated, i.e. if the workers are laboring in another country. Many of the appeals concerning amelioration for the poor and the working class in England in the mid-eighteenth century are at least partially based on such a patriotic sentiment; Engels cites a Dr. Hawkins, who implicitly invokes a certain sense of national pride as he describes the lot of the “factory classes” of Manchester who fall far short of the “national standard” of typical English folk:

I believe that most travelers are struck by the lowness of stature, the leanness, and the paleness which present themselves so commonly to the eye at Manchester, and above all among the factory classes. I have never been in any town in Great Britain nor in Europe in which degeneracy of form and colour from the national standard has been so obvious. The married women fall remarkably short of the usual characteristics of the English wife; in fact, in addition to the labour of
twelve hours daily, they have other cares which engross almost the undivided attention of married women in many other classes of life. (1958: 178).^6

Apply a multiplier effect to the abandonment of national shame about the condition of the working class, the working poor, and the destitute with one country after another relinquishing whatever sense of national responsibility it may have felt to be due to the marginalized (that is, if there had ever been such a sense to begin with), and the reproduction of the reserve army becomes no nation’s job. Hence the globalization of responsibility into a virtual zone which turns out, of course, to be a void.

One of the motivations for the writing of *The Condition of the Working Class in England* seems to have been Engels’s wish to delineate the scabrous state of affairs in which the workers and the destitute were living, and he must have hoped that his book might lead to an improvement of such conditions, if not an outright revolution against such conditions. Yet he expected nothing from the “middle-classes” of England; addressing the “working men” of “Great-Britain [sic]” in the preface, Engels states that “Having … ample opportunity to watch the middle-classes, your opponents, I soon came to the realization that you [‘working men’] are right, perfectly right, in expecting no supports whatever from them” (1958: 7). Still, the English ruling class, pressured by demands from “below” and exhortations from some of their more enlightened peers, found it best to slowly improve the conditions of the workers, if only to avoid a revolution: “Many of the gentry were themselves appalled at the extent of unemployment and distress, while they were also anxious as to the insurrectionary temper of the

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unemployed” (Thompson 1963: 782). But sympathy with the workers only went so far: even one of the most enlightened of the English “radical” reformers, Robert Owen, did not cotton to “the notion of working-class advance, by its own self-activity towards its own goals” (Thompson 1963: 781). Those who advocated for social amelioration, imposed from above and intended to be effective only within certain circumscribed limits, were pitched against those who saw no need for any amelioration whatsoever.

What we can see now is that in the last thirty to forty years, that is, from roughly 1973 to the present (2011), the working class and much of the middle class have been driven into the ranks of the reserve army, or at least they have been pressed into proximate alignment with those ranks. In The Enigma of Capital, Harvey cites Alan Budd, “Thatcher’s chief economic officer, who confesses “that ’the 1980s policies of attacking inflation by squeezing the economy and public spending were a cover to bash the workers’ and so create an ‘industrial reserve army’ which would undermine the power of labour and permit capitalists to make easy profits ever after” (2010a: 15). In The Boom and the Bubble, Brenner pushes this downward pressure on wages back to the 1970s:

Supported by increasingly sympathetic governments, employers across the advanced capitalist world unleashed an ever more aggressive attack on workers' organizations and workers' living standards. They succeeded, moreover, with surprising speed in asphyxiating the growth of real wages and social spending, very much alleviating, already during the 1970s, pressure from the growth of direct and indirect labour costs on profits. (2002: 24).

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7 Harvey provides no sourcing for the citation of Budd.
This proved especially "successful" in the case of the United States, as "manufacturing real wages in Germany and Japan increased by about 35 per cent over the decade 1985-95," while "in the US they inched up little better than 1 per cent" (Brenner 2002: 61).

This engrossment of the reserve army, along with the concomitant depletion of the working class, has produced a situation in which the reproduction of both the surplus army and the working class has become a tenuous affair, one in which some one out of five children in the United States is officially living in poverty, a statistic that doesn’t seem to have caused any great outburst of national shame, or even the slightest quiver of patriotic alarm on the part of their fellow Americans. Yet at the same time, potent forms of ideological persuasion, broadcast via a combination of the allurements of advertisements, the “thinking” of the punditry, the exhortations of the political class, and the ravings of talk-show hosts and bloggers. has at least partially convinced many members of the working class that there is no such thing as the working class and that even if there was such an entity, its members would have nothing in common with members of the surplus army.

But much of this is the fault of thinkers on the left as well, as they have steadfastly clung to a definition of the working class that is antiquated; while such a definition (basically equating the working class with factory and mine workers) may have made sense in the England of Marx and Engels’s era or the Detroit of Henry Ford’s epoch, it no longer makes any sense today and has long been in need of a complete overhaul. As Harvey puts it,

This fixation on factory labour as the locus of the ‘true’ class consciousness and revolutionary class struggle has always been too limited, if not misguided…. 
Those working in the forests and fields, in the ‘informal sectors’ of casual labour in the backstreet sweatshops, in the domestic services or in the service sector more generally, and the vast army of labourers employed in the production of space and of built environments or in the trenches (often literally) of urbanization cannot be treated as secondary actors… The conventional left has been plain wrong to ignore the social movements occurring outside of the factories and mines. Class consciousness is produced and articulated as much in the streets, bars, pubs, kitchens, chapels, community centres and back yards of working-class neighborhoods as in the factories. (2010a: 242-243, 244; italics, mine).

For confirmation of this need to expand the definitional parameters of the working class, all we need do is turn to Los Angeles and the campaign to organize maintenance and carwash workers, resulting in the Justice for Janitors and the Clean Carwash campaigns. It is safe to say that janitors cleaning up corporate headquarters and carwash workers wiping down Escalades were not the primary target of the call for working class revolution issued by Marx and Engels in the middle of the nineteenth century; yet it is also hard to imagine Marx and Engels not agitating for just such campaigns, which target the “working poor,” including health-care providers, maids, nannies, house-keepers, as well as the aforementioned janitors and carwash workers (Soja 2010: 111). Obviously, at least some members of the working class understand this, as it was the leadership and the rank-and-file of L.A.’s Local 399 of the Service Employee International Union which organized janitors and led them on a successful strike in 1990. Primarily undocumented immigrants from Latin America, the janitorial workers of Los Angeles “effectively symbolized the New Economy in Los Angeles.

Like the expanding army of gardeners, housecleaners, day laborers, and others swelling the ranks of the working poor, the janitors served multiple purposes. They were a vital part of the massive infusion of cheap and manipulable labor into the regional economy, certainly one of the major factors behind the economic expansion of the unusually rapid growth in jobs and office space of the 1980s and
1990s. This enlarged labor pool was used as an effective tool to weaken union power not just in the service sector but in manufacturing as well. Immigrant workers provided an important lubricant for the deep restructuring of the regional economy. (Soja 2010: 140; italics, mine).

Members of the United Steelworkers understand this as well, as they represent the carwash workers at Bonus Car Wash in Santa Monica, which in October of 2011 signed a labor agreement with its employees, the only union contract with carwash workers in the United States.  

So in Los Angeles, the ranks of the working poor were used exactly as Marx predicted, not only in an absolute sense as a source for cheap labor, but also in a relative sense as a tool to discipline and immesirate other workers and knock them out of the ranks of the middle class or even the ranks of the lower middle class. That ‘the expanding army’ hailed from deeply poverty-stricken regions of the globe only added to their capacity to perform these functions. However, their immigrant status also aided in their predilection to unionize, as many members of the Los Angeles contingent of the surplus army arrived from countries rich with histories of union activity: “Traditions of militant labor organizing were particularly intense in the Korean community and among the nearly one million immigrants from El Salvador, Nicaragua, and other Central American countries” (Soja 2010: 140). In the highly successful Justice for Janitors campaign, the stereotypes of the docile apolitical immigrant and the superficial apathetic Angelino were turned on their heads, as militant workers drew support from almost every layer of the population of Los Angeles, from Beverly Hills dowagers to East L.A. busboys: what had been perceived as a highly manipulable sector of the populace were demanding an

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8 For more on this, see cleancarwashla.org/index.cfm?action=article&articleID=f51c2693-cf61-4583-abf8-cf150e72293b.
upgrade from the lowest ranks of the working poor. In the process, the janitors improved their own quality of reproduction, as rising wages and better working conditions ameliorated obstacles to their own reproduction.

But to return to our original question, how does the reserve army as well as the working class reproduce itself? Obviously, this is a question much too expansive to answer in the present study, even in a limited manner: an ethnography of reproduction at a local scale requires intensive research and incisive thought, and multiple volumes could be written about any one region’s reproduction. We are making a much broader inquiry, of course, but perhaps we can attempt to suggest the range of ways in which such reproduction happens. Of course, such processes will vary widely, depending on where we position our lens; so let us survey only one variety of socio-geographical milieus in hopes of at least partially indicating the ways in which reproduction is occurring amongst the reserve army and that sector of the population which Marx so valorized, the working class, a sector stretched thin by the restrictive powers of neoliberalism and its concomitant corollary, the parsimony of privatization, its ranks frequently existing in conditions “cheek by jowl” with the surplus army. And so, due to the restraints we face, we will investigate only case of the reproduction of the reserve army, as it is manifested in contemporary China.

In the “urban villages” of China, the residents of rural villages which have been gradually “surrounded or encroached upon by urban expansion” are reproducing themselves through a means which runs counter to the story I have been telling about rural folk being absorbed into the urban workforce or the ranks of factory laborers (Zheng et al 2009: 426). As cities across China have expanded during the last twenty-five years
or so, the cities have “acquired” villages, but the village collectives have maintained “ownership” of their land, making for an odd hash of cockamamie forms of capitalism and communism subsisting cheek by jowl, as it were, a twist on the “odd couple” formulation so common in contemporary China and so resistant to facile classification as either strictly capitalistic or staunchly communistic.

While farmland in villages on city fringes may have been acquired by city governments, land for housing continues to be owned by village collectives and is allocated to village residents. However, many urban village residents have given up farming and have instead built or expanded housing to rent to migrants. To these villagers, rent has replaced agriculture as the main source of income. (Zheng at al 2009: 426).

So while the village itself is owned by the circumambient city and, ultimately, by the state itself, the ‘land for housing’ is owned by the residents of the village. And what do these villagers do? They abandon agriculture and become landlords! Well, this would surely be a puzzle to Marx and Engels! Not to mention Chairman Mao. And these are not isolated cases, occurring only in one or two cities: such cases are occurring in nearly every major Chinese metropolis. Urban villages as well as urban villagers renting out their land as housing are common in China. In their article, “Urban Villages in China: A 2008 Survey of Migrant Settlements in Beijing,” Siqi Zheng, Fenjie Long, C. Cindy Fan, and Yizhen Gu inform us that

Hundreds of urban villages exist in large cities such as Guangzhou and Shenzhen. According to You-tien Hsing, there were 139 urban villages in Guangzhou in 2006, and urban villages in Guangzhou and Shenzen make up more than, respectively 20 and 60 percent of their planned areas providing homes to 80 percent of migrants in these cities…. These urban fringes surrounding Chinese

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cities have been referred to variously as urban outskirts, peri-urban areas, and suburban areas. (Zheng et al. 2009: 426).

For their study, Zheng et al. randomly selected 50 urban villages “from the total of 687” of such villages in the Beijing Metropolitan Area (2009: 428). In these villages, migrants outnumbered “natives” by 478,525 to 91,656, a ratio of approximately 5:2. (Zheng et al 2009: 429); they also conclude that:

Facilities in the urban village units are inadequate and poorly maintained. More than 90 percent of the surveyed units do not have bathrooms or kitchens. Dwellers of these units use public bathrooms and cook in public spaces. Despite the cold winters and summer heat in Beijing (daily minimums in January average 15.1 [degrees - superscript] F and daily maximums in July 87.4 [degrees - superscript] F), 86.0 percent of these units we surveyed have no heating and 93.3 percent no air conditioning. Almost all of the surveyed units do have electricity, however, and in fact television is the most popular electrical appliance (though most are old sets) – 77.6 percent – in the surveyed units; only 22.2 percent of the units have a refrigerator. (2009: 435).

Moreover, they report that urban villages, despite “their positive role in providing housing to migrants,… are of great concern to city governments. High crime rates, inadequate infrastructure and services, and poor living conditions are just some of the problems in urban villages that threaten public security and management” (Zheng et al. 2009: 426) In the villages surveyed by Zheng et al., migrants dwell in a “mean per capita living space” of 8.2 square-meters (2009: 434). However, “housing expenditure accounts for only 19.5 percent of migrant’s household income [sic],” leading Zheng et al to the

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10 The Beijing Metropolitan Area is “1,086 km [squared] in size…and consists of four urban districts (Dongcheng, Xicheng, Chongwen, Xuanwu) and parts of five suburban districts (Chaoyang, Haidian, Fengtai, Shijingshan, and Changping)” (Zheng et al 2009: 427).
conclusion that “from the housing affordability perspective these migrants can not only
afford their current rental units … but actually can afford even better housing.

Nonetheless, migrant workers do not choose to improve their housing
collection. Instead, they save almost of their earnings, which are customarily
sent back as remittances to their rural homes. The above suggests that migrant
workers live in crowded and cheap urban village houses not because they cannot
afford better housing accommodation, but because they are not willing to spend

This leads us to C. Cindy Fan and Wenfei Winnie Wang’s insight that a more
expansive conception of the “international circulation of labor and international labor
markets” as well as a more expansive approach to overall migratory patterns are required
if we are to comprehend the subtleties of contemporary processes of reproduction (2008:
207). Rather than simply emphasizing “net personal” economic gains to interpret
migratory options vis-à-vis employment opportunities, a more multi-level understanding
of reproduction, especially as it is manifested in rural-urban migratory patterns, is
required:

An approach that focuses on economic calculations alone … risks downplaying
the social relations that underlie household economic decision-making.
Increasingly, researchers are highlighting the non-economic factors of migration
decisions…. Inasmuch as migration involves the collaboration of and division of
labor among household members, the social and hierarchical power relations
within the household are crucial for understanding decision-making and outcomes
of migration. (Fan and Wang 2008: 206).

The contention here is that reproductive strategies are not undertaken solely on an
individual basis: frequently, the unit that is the focus of reproductive efforts is the family
not the individual. And such strategies are not solely undertaken with economic goals in
mind: frequently, the primary focus is on the survival of family structures and not on the engrossment of individual savings accounts; of course, family structures and economic well-being are (or can be) intimately connected, but their connection can also be de-linked, at least to a certain degree. And, while Fan and Wang are making this case about China, a country often thought of as consisting of individuals more influenced by communal concerns than the individual goals which provide incentives for those living in the “West,” it would be interesting to revisit, say, Italian immigration patterns to the United States in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and ascertain to what degree those patterns were also impacted by motivations which extend beyond purely individual concerns. This could go some way to a debunking of the myth of the individual utterly disconnected to anything else except her own immediate survival and eventual flourishing as the model par excellence of demography and economics. And, though it may be true that, as Foucault puts it, "Migration is an investment; the migrant is an investor," a much more expansive definition of "investment" is needed to encompass the wide variety of motivations underlying modern migratory patterns, one that includes economic motivations, of course, but also includes familial, political, and cultural motivations as well (2004: 230).

Fan and Wang, citing interviews conducted in 1995 and 2005 by China’s Research Center for Rural Economy of the Minister of Agriculture, reference the following, which bolsters the contention that the reproductive necessities of the extended family play a major role in decisions regarding processes of reproduction:

Three years after Chen Guowei … began migrant work, in 1990, he was injured and became paralyzed. His wife’s farming activity then became the only source of
Pacific Palisades 17219 Avenida de la Herradura 3/5/11 9am-2pm High end
furniture/rug, electronics, woman’s designr clothes/shoes, ski clothes, boys sz 7, boys
Sorel sz 3, kitchen/mixer, Cuisinart, mounted deer, sports eq, best seller/kids books / toys

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livelihood. She, at the same time, had to support the two sons’ education, pay off a debt, and take care of the disabled husband. According to the couple, the family did not have enough to eat, until the two sons were old enough to do migrant work, the oldest son beginning at the age of 14 and the younger son at the age of 17. (Fan and Wang 2008: 234).

So in this case, reproduction on an individual basis is subsumed within the exigencies of reproduction on a familial basis. The contingencies of a disability, the reversal of traditional gender roles, and the introduction of young people (children) into the labor market also play roles within a reproductive process more complex than the model offered by a sole individual economic unit (a person) striving towards personal enhancement vis-à-vis financial independence.

To continue with the account of Chen Guowei’s family:

In 2005, Chen Guowei’s two sons are, respectively, 21 and 19 years old. The second son is married and his wife is also doing migrant work. Chen Guowei’s wife is now taking care of an eight month-old grandchild…. The family does not have a telephone but they can use one that belongs to a relative in the same village. Chen Guowei and his wife’s dream is that both sons will make enough money to build their own houses in the village…. This household intergenerational division of labor is mutually beneficial: migrants send back remittances that benefit the entire household, and grandparents that stay behind take care of the grandchildren so that the migrant workers can earn as much as possible to build up their economic security. (Fan and Wang 2008: 234).

Of course part of the effort to ‘earn as much as possible’ in order ‘to build up their economic security’ consists of living as cheaply as possible while working in the city: thus, the choice of renting living space in a crowded house in an urban village fits into an overall plan, which it is hoped will lead to the fulfillment of the dream of the parents to construct homes in the village for their sons and their grandchildren. From this we can
gather than an intergenerational division of labor may lead to *intergenerational* rather than *individual* reproduction. For such an intergenerational “dream” to come to fruition each individual must play their part; however, as already stated, the entire effort is postulated on a familial rather than an individual basis.

Let us refer to You-tien Hsing’s *The Great Urban Transformation: Politics of Land and Property in China* in order to set urban villages and their role in China’s housing nexus within some sort of context. Land speculation was instituted in China in 1988, when “the country’s land leasehold market was formally established, thereby separating land ownership from land-use rights” (Hsing: 5). A chronic shortage of housing in urban centers was coterminous with both a massive influx of rural migrants into the city and a profligate building spree, set loose by the combination of China’s rapidly expanding economy, speculative desire (i.e. greed), and the perceived requirement to catalyze urban spaces into the sort of financial legibility (e.g. the skyscraper, the corporate headquarters) which goes in tandem with the status of world cities such as New York, Tokyo, and Paris. Urban villagers, making a transition from a livelihood based on agriculture to one based on the fact that they controlled land use within a certain segment of the rapidly enveloping city, leveraged their position within the governing metropolis:

In the rapidly expanding southern metropolises like Guangzhou and Shenzhen, for example, land-owning village collectives have skillfully bargained with urban governments. Taking advantage of the urban government’s desperation for high-speed and low-cost urban expansion, villagers in the urban fringe have managed to stay in their village homes and share the fortunes of the growing urban real-estate market. (Hsing 2010: 17).
The amazing thing to notice here is that if we focus both on Fan and Wang’s concentration on familial rather than individual interests as incentives for migration and Hsing’s construal of urban villagers as participants in the wild speculations of China’s burgeoning and still-being-defined real estate market, what we discover is that in the urban village reproductive milieu we find essential contradictions to the foundational principles underlying both capitalism and communism. On the one hand, self-interest, that Smithian cornerstone of both liberalism and classical economics, is trumped by the larger interest of the family as migrants, organizing their reproductive activities along familial rather than individual dimensions, rent space in urban villages; and villagers, having derived their rights to lease out space from their status in a communal property model, turn around and lease out space in a thoroughly capitalistic mode of self-interest (as Gertrude Himmelfarb explains this mode, “modern society is presumed to have no higher aspiration than the gratification of economic appetites and no higher principle than self-love and expediency” (1984: 23)). So in the urban village, the two primary models of reproduction, the individual mode and the communal mode, come together and switch places. Still intact though nearly fragmenting, these reproductive modes subsist immediately adjacent to one another in China’s inchoate communistic capitalism. And all this must be placed within the larger context of international economic competition, in which China is of course playing a larger and larger role, as well as the intra-competition between Chinese cities to become major urban players in the race to be one’s of the country’s leading world cities. For, “Since the mid 1990s,” writes George C.S. Lin, “China’s urban spaces have been reproduced through a process of city-based and land-centered urbanization in which large cities have managed to reassert their leading
positions in an increasingly competitive, globalizing and urbanizing economy” (2007: 1846; italics, mine). And of course China has been economically reproducing itself at an unprecedented rate: “Its immense labor force” accounts “for some 29 percent of the world’s total labor pool” (Lee 2007: 1); this labor pool has helped to catapult China into a leading position in the world’s economy:

For 30 years, China has enjoyed average annual growth of about 10 per cent. In 1990, its income per capita was 30 per cent lower than the average for sub-Saharan Africa – today, it is three times greater, more than $4,000. By 2030, if China reaches a per capita income of $16,000 – a reasonable possibility – the effect on the world would be equivalent to adding 15 of today’s South Koreas. (Zoellick 2011: 9).

That this focus on urban reproduction and urban expansion has come at the cost of the loss of agricultural land is not lost on Lin, who reports that even before the most recent wave of urban expansion in the China of the twenty-first century, the greatest wave of urban expansion in the history of the planet, Chinese agricultural acreage was vanishing at an astonishing clip: “Official Chinese statistics indicate that, between 1978 and 1995, the total cultivated land shrank substantially from 99.39 to 94.97 million hectares” (2007: 1828). As China moves from a rural to an urban economy, it will be interesting to track how they secure that most vital element of reproduction: food.

Returning to the topic of the urban village per se, Hsing relates the manner in which the party secretary of one such village shepherds the interests of his particular domain:

On December 27, 2006 in Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong Province, I found myself in the office of the party secretary of Shuping Village. Mr. Deng and I met
in his spacious office on the ninth floor of a twenty-two storey building in Zhujiang New City, an emerging new commercial center to which Shuping Village has contributed much of its land. In return, Shuping was granted development rights to a piece of land in the New City. I asked Deng what his goal was as party secretary of the village, which was now called Shuping Group Company. A bright-eyed, shorthaired, stocky man in his late forties, his answer was brief and clear: to increase the value of the village-shareholding company from 300 to 500 yuan per share, and to successfully see through the redevelopment of Shuping village. (2010: 122; italics, Hsing).

While it may be seem odd and even bizarre to hear a party secretary of a village in a nominally communistic state hitch his village’s economic star to a rise in share values, it should be added that “share values of the shareholding company are central to the livelihoods of the villagers, after 98 percent of the village’s land was lost to urban expansion” (Hsing 2010: 122). Reproduction must proceed on some basis, and with only two percent of their land remaining following the incessant onslaught of an omnivorous urbanism, Deng’s strategy makes eminent sense. Here I should dispel any notion that all Chinese urban villagers are sitting pretty on top of ever-increasing share values. Many urban villages have simply been bulldozed and their former villagers relocated as “the urban government uses its administrative and planning power to grab premium land from the village and forces villagers to move;” in this process of expropriation and relocation, “villagers who live along the inner ring of the urban fringe are moved to the outer ring of the urban fringe where land is even cheaper; and villagers at the outer ring are relocated to even more remote areas at the rural fringe of the metropolis” (Hsing 2010: 191). These demolition and relocation “drives” are frequently met with resistance: “Between 1990 and 2002, an estimated 50-66 million peasants lost all or part of their farmland and homes to local government land grabs and development projects. Protests by aggrieved peasants

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11 Hsing adds a footnote to the effect that she has changed the name of both the village and the party secretary.
have been on the rise since the late 1990s. In 2005, the Ministry of Land and Resources recorded 87,000 protests related to land grabs, a 6 percent increase from 2004” (Hsing 2010: 17).

Referencing David Harvey’s *The Urbanization of Capital*, Hsing goes on to note that “from the perspective of the expansionist urban government and development powers, the multiple rings or urban expansion create a chain of what urban geographers call a ‘spatial fix’” (2010: 192). The positive effects of this chain for developers and real estate speculators (who often are city officials as well) creates a reciprocal negative chain of effects for the less fortunate: as the displaced villagers move to the urban fringe, they drive up housing prices, and push other residents further out into the fringe, and so on and so forth. Here the deterioration of the average villager’s chances of adequately reproducing herself align with the average capitalist’s chances of reproducing herself at a grander scale; the spatial fix works to the advantage of the capitalist “fixing” her capital in space while the same fix works to the disadvantage of the villager losing her space:

From the perspective of the urban and rural relocates caught up in this chain of relocation, the economies of demolition and relocation entail a continuous slide down the socioeconomic scale. While the chain is a spatial fix for accumulation projects, it is a chain that creates poverty for the dispossessed. (Hsing 2010: 192).

Here something should be inserted about the population density of these “villages.” In 1993, the government attempted to limit the upward expansion of houses in the urban villages to a “maximum of three stories or 80 m in height” (Hsing 2010: 128). Villagers, taking these regulatory regimes as cues to expand quickly before the new codes could be enforced, jumped into action and increased the height of their “houses” to eight and even ten stories. To grasp the density of these villages, Shuping Village, for instance,
has “reached a population density of 174,450 per square kilometer,” which is “about 200 times higher than the national average for urban areas.” This can be compared to that of “New York County, the most densely populated in the United States” which stands at “27,267 residents per square kilometer as of 2007, about one sixth of Shuping’s density” (Hsing 2010: 129).

Urban expansion in China has created the by-product of an exponential expansion of the reserve army: “between 1980 and 2003, somewhere between 50 and 66 million Chinese peasants lost all or part of their farmland and houses” as a result of urban extension into the countryside (Hsing 2010: 182). China has a “‘floating population’” which “stood at 221 million in 2010 and is projected to increase to 350 million by 2050” (Fan 2011: 1). This “floating” surplus army of workers has settled into a pattern of more or less permanent circulation between the country and the city:

“Floating” and “floaters” connote also a state of fluidity and of not settling down. Rather than settling down permanently in the place of migrant work, the vast majority of rural-urban migrants in China circulate between the city and their home village, many for years and even decades. It is the long-term circulation of veteran migrants, along with a new generation of migrants who grew up fully immersed in the notion that migrant work is the only way to make a living, that contribute to the growing size of the floating population. (Fan 2011: 1).

Such an enormous amount of people become prime fodder for exploitation as they funnel into the immense ranks of low-wage workers that have attracted so many Western firms to China.

And such a process of reproduction through demographic patterns of more or less permanent circulation obviously destabilize the Marxian dichotomy between the town and the country as well as the demographic assumption of a teleological account of
migration as leading to some final destination. Reproductive patterns such as these can be found in many other places as well, especially in what is now called the South: “Research on rural-urban migration in Africa, Asia, and Latin America has indeed noted the prevalence of temporary, circular migration between home and the place of migrant work” (Fan 2011: 3-4). And a version of such circulation, a form of “bilocality,” is reflected in the situation of many Mexican immigrants to the United States: “Mexican immigrants to the U.S. … may continue to use the farmland in rural Mexico as an economic asset and a basis of household activities” (Fan, Sun, and Zheng: 2). As C. Cindy Fan notes in “Settlement Intention and Split Households: Findings from a Survey of Migrants in Beijing’s Urban Villages,” such patterns seems to ensure the highest chance for successful reproduction for the members of this floating population:

By straddling the city and the countryside, migrants can earn urban wages as long as they have jobs, support the rest of the family at a rural and lower cost of living, and return to the home village or rural town if migrant jobs dwindle. In this light, circulation, rather than permanent migration, allows the migrants to obtain the best of both worlds. To them, therefore, settling down in the city is not inevitable and may not be the best choice. (2011: 3).

So here we have migration as “not just a one-way move from the origin to the destination but as an activity that engages both origin and destination societies” (Fan, Sun, and Zheng: 1). And here we also have the basis for a housing market in China’s urban villages resulting in the situation in which urban villagers are being “outnumbered” as much as 5:2 by the temporarily relocated rural villagers renting space from them. Such a form of reproduction accrues benefits to both parties and, to risk positing a tautology, as long as it does so it will continue to be a factor in Chinese reproduction.
After this brief survey of one aspect of the reproduction of the surplus army, we turn next to the middle class and the story of the rise and fall of their reproductive status in the United States of America.

Middle Classes

“Our best-grounded expectations of an increase in the happiness of mass of human society are founded in the prospect of an increase in the relative proportions of the middle parts.” Thomas Malthus, *Essay On Population.*

Approximately 125 years after the first edition of the Malthus’s *Essay on Population* was published in 1798, Henry Ford came to the conclusion that paying wages sufficient enough to turn his workers into consumers would not only create hundreds of thousands of new purchasers of the automobiles rolling off his assembly line, but would also have the felicitous by-product of quelling the militant passions of the working class which had been stoked by the firebrand ideology of such militant organizations as the Industrial Workers of the World and kindled by the insufficient wages workers had received and the immiserating conditions under which they had labored until Ford’s deft maneuver. Co-option of the worker through at least a *seeming* entry into the middle class – the purchase of a Model-T being the ticket in to that status – was rightly viewed by Ford as being both a boon to business as well as a bounty to the workers. The transformation of the working class into the middle class in the United States from 1920 to 1970 was one of the greatest economic tour de forces in the history of capitalism and seemed to deflate any need for a revolutionary movement along Marxist lines, at least in the United States.

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However, in 1973 the bottom dropped out of the American economy due to the realignment of various factors, including but not limited to the creation of OPEC and the Nixon Administration's move away from the economic ground rules drawn up at Bretton Woods in 1944. The decades following this transformation have witnessed a slow erosion of the middle class in the United States: “From the start of the long downturn [in 1973], real wage growth throughout the advanced capitalist world had progressively decelerated, and shrank toward disappearance as the 1990s progressed” writes Brenner in The Economics of Global Turbulence (2006: 193).

Of course Brenner did not stand alone in such an analysis, nor were such comments as his confined to the retrospective viewpoint afforded by the passage of time. In The Deindustrialization of America: Plant Closings, Community Abandonment, and the Dismantling of Basic Industry, first published in 1982, Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison were already sounding the tocsin for the implosion of America’s middle class: “By the beginning of the 1980s…. The system that seemed so capable of providing a steadily growing standard of living during the turbulent 1960s had become totally incapable of providing people with a simple home mortgage, a stable job, or a secure pension” (1982: 4). In The Great U-Turn: Corporate Restructuring and the Polarizing of America, published in 1988, Harrison and Bluestone write that “In key sectors throughout the economy, workers have lost jobs numbering in the millions, and those fortunate enough to hold on to theirs have often had to submit to substantial reductions of wages and benefits” (1988: 35-36). And in Paul Krugman’s The Age of Diminished Expectations: U.S. Economic Policy in the 1990s, first published in 1990, Krugman reports that “the real wages of blue-collar workers have declined fairly steadily for the

> It would take a lot of optimism to put a positive spin on the jobs report for September, released on Friday by the Labor Department. Employers added 103,000 jobs last month, allaying fears, for now, of a double-dip recession. But even if the economy avoids another contraction, the numbers confirm that the job market is in a deep rut that is, for all purposes, indistinguishable from recession. There are still 14 million people officially unemployed, and nearly 12 million more who have given up actively looking for work or who are working part time but need full-time jobs. (2011: 1).13

And so the Long Downturn has matched the Long Upturn in its effects on the overall economic conditions in the U.S. and the stability of its middle class, effects that had long been at least somewhat concealed by bubbles of various kinds, whether they be of the military spending, dot.com, housing, or credit card debt variety.

For instance, the real estate bubble of the early 2000s managed to veil the overall downward trend of the post-Golden Era downturn, at least to a certain degree, but the Great Recession of 2008 ripped that veil asunder, opening a raw and transparent window upon the inconvertible fact that for the vast majority of Americans, and certainly for the

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13 The September report from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics adds that "Among the major worker groups, the unemployment rates for adult men (8.8 percent), adult women (8.1 percent), teenagers (24.6 percent), whites (8.0 percent), blacks (16.0 percent), and Hispanics (11.3 percent) showed little or no change in September. The jobless rate for Asians was 7.8 percent, not seasonally adjusted" (http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm: accessed October 8, 2011).
great vaunted middle class of the United States, the economic promise of the American Dream had disintegrated. Describing the housing bubble, Brenner states that "between 1997 and 2005, housing prices increased by 51 percentage points more than did rental prices, an entirely unprecedented divergence. This is a clear indication that housing prices are not being driven up by fundamentals - such as rising incomes, population growth, or a change in consumer preference in favor of housing - which would equally affect rental and housing prices, but by what is in essence speculation" (2006: 320). Meanwhile, "aggregate real compensation in the private economy (real compensation per employee, multiplied by employment) … increased between 2000 and 2005 at the lowest rate of the postwar epoch - at half the rate recorded between 1980 and 2000" (Brenner 2006: 332).

And of course the US employment figures from 2008 through the first quarter of 2012, despite a slight uptick in the first three months of 2012, manifest a continuing trend to the negative, thinning out the ranks of the already thin American middle class.

What I want to do in this section is focus on the story of the rise and fall of the American middle class. I take this as my present subject matter for three reasons: first, it complicates Marxian class analysis by torquing the definitional boundaries of the working class and the middle class, for as the working class in the United States gained entry to at least an ostensible status as bona fide members of the middle class during the boom years of the 1950s and 60s, the veracity and integrity of Marx’s strict demarcations between the middle and working classes seemed to fray, straining Marxian class analysis while simultaneously bolstering a kind of utopian vision of capitalism in which all boats rise from here on in to eternity. Secondly, we will use the decline of the American middle class as our focus because its endgame seems, at least from the perspective of the present
moment, to swivel upon a globalized redefinition of the middle class, one that pivots away from the constraints of “our own Anglo-American society,” as it incorporates a newly constructed middle class of consumers from such former Third World countries as Brazil, India, and China (the BIC nations). Such an incorporation has the tangential and serendipitous by-product of serving our long-term project of globalizing this present study. Finally, the story of the ascension and declension of the American middle class will allow us to examine a case in which the requirements necessary for reproduction as a member of a certain class become so strained that they snap, leaving those whose reproductive status as members of a certain class had seemed to be secure dangling in a bankrupt void.

Social ascension (“climbing”) in the United States through the acquisition of symbols of status did not originate in the postwar boom of the 1950s:

In the Connecticut River Valley, threatened elites of the 1760’s and 1770’s enacted “a drama of class dominance” by either building Georgian homes in the style of public buildings, thus symbolically conferring public authority on their private spaces, or, less expansively, constructing elaborate scrolled and pilastered doorway facades over rather ordinary homes as barriers against threats to the “natural” social order. However, the artisans employed to create these class markers themselves acquired so much liquid capital that by “1768 a tailor, a shoemaker, and a joiner has placed elaborate doorways on their own houses.” (Fliegelman 1993: 112).  

What we witness in this example can serve as a foreshadowing of a process repeated throughout the history of the United States, as status symbols are developed by the upper class, maintained as markers of social and economic prestige for a more or less extended

period of time, and then “purloined” by other classes as symbols of their own ascending status: "The lower groups often imitate the trends, styles, fashions, and practices set by their betters; the stratification system maintains and nurtures itself by this imitation" (Fernandez 2003: 100; italics, mine) Typically, however, by the time such markers of Bourdiean cultural and social capital\(^{15}\) have trickled down to the middle and lower classes, new markers have been formulated, produced, marketed, acquired, and set into position as signs of status by the upper class, leading to a continuous looping action of status symbol acquisition and appropriation, which of course bolsters primary processes underlying both capitalism and class demarcation. Class demarcation and capitalism are in league in such a process, two drivers of a single perpetual consumeristic motion machine.

Jumping from the Connecticut River Valley of the 1760s to the ubiquitous American suburban tract development of the 1950s may seem like a vault too far to be performed; however, what we discover in the explosion of home-buying during the 1950s and 60s in the United States and its “necessary” corollary, an explosion in the purchasing of household durables, serves as a distant mirror to the same process which was occurring in Connecticut doorways in the 1770s: i.e., liquid capital being exchanged for symbols of status.

The story of the 1950s suburban home can of course be told via a manifold of narrative devices and from perspectives as dissimilar as feminist wrath at the cloistering of women in kitchens and supermarkets to the hailing of those same women for staying in

\(^{15}\) Oddly enough (or perhaps not so oddly at all), the credit for the term "social capital" seems to have gone to Bourdieu by some form of default of attribution, much as is the case with habitus: in *The Whole Creature*, Wendy Wheeler reports that the term "social capital" was "first invented in 1916 by Judson Hnifan" (2006: 119). Wheeler cites R.D. Putman's *Democracies in Flux: The Evolution of Social Capital in Contemporary Society* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2002) for this.
the kitchen and shopping at the supermarket by conservatives nostalgic for the “golden age” of the (white) middle class American family, mom and dad intact, children disciplined to respect and obey parental authority, and nary a whisper of dissension in the air. However, I want to stick with a more constrained economic story, so let us begin with President Hoover’s response to the first wave of the Great Depression. Though Hoover “called for accelerated construction spending by public authorities and for increased capital outlays by the major private investors” in order to boost the economy, neither the sufficient amount of liquid capital nor the public institutional financial infrastructure to administrate such an outlay were in place to deliver any relief in the form of say, low-interest loans for home-buyers (Barber 1985: 189). Housing construction declined throughout Hoover's term as president, despite perorations from the White House which were intended to stimulate home construction, such as Hoover's remarks in March of 1930 that "one direction which is always economically and socially sound is in home building, in which there is large consumption of labor directing and indirectly through producers' and consumers' goods. Increasing improvement in housing conditions is of the utmost social importance" (Barber 1985: 96)\textsuperscript{16}, and the creation of the Home Loan Discount Bank in July of 1932.\textsuperscript{17} Hoover had envisioned a market oriented solution to the Depression, with every American family purchasing a home and every American home needing durables such as the already tried and true automobile as well as such new-fangled items as washing machines, vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, and so on. Hoover

\textsuperscript{16} Barber cites a letter from Hoover to Roy A. Young, governor of the Federal Reserve Board, March 24, 1930, Presidential Subject Files, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library.

\textsuperscript{17} It is interesting to note, in light of today's politics, that Hoover was not adverse to using the federal government as an employer of last resort, at least to a certain degree. In fiscal year 1931 "The number of men employed, directly and indirectly, in federal construction and maintenance work had been expended to about 760,000 from 180,000 in January 1930" (Barber 1985: 133).
had the right idea (that is, if rightness coincides with capitalism practiced on a mass consumer scale), but the wrong time: twenty years later, his vision was percolating along quite nicely, as America’s economic predominance following World War Two and the creation of such institutions as the FHA (created in 1934) and Fannie Mae (created in 1938) created perfect financial vehicles for individual (family) economic units to utilize in order to acquire national economic prime drivers such as houses, cars (two in every garage!), stoves (first gas-fueled and then electric ranges) televisions, swimming pools, and so on.

The creation of the ambience in which such levels of mass consumption could flourish led to the “golden years” of American suburbia in which the working class of the United States was transformed into its middle class: status symbols such as private homes, automobiles (one for the mister and one for the missus!), and color TVs were no longer merely items of the upper class. Indeed, as Barbara Ehrenreich points out in *Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle Class*, babies and child raising were not immune from the drive to turn everything into a mass market item and everyone into a mass market consumer:

At a time when businessmen were trying to figure out how to make hedonism seem moral and thrift seem misguided, it made little sense for childraising to be an exercise in mutual deprivation. In the more permissive childraising literature of the postwar period, the baby was even conceived of as a tiny consumer: its impulses were valid, its wants legitimate…. The ultimate test and measure of the parent-child relation was pleasure…. This was the permissive ideal: mother and baby enjoying each other, consuming each other, moving from one tiny gratification - a smile, a meal, a bath - to the next. (1989: 88-89).
Just as the shoemakers, joiners, and tailors of the Connecticut River Valley of the 1760s and 1770s had performed their entrance into the middle class through the artisanal elaboration of their doorways, factory workers, plumbers, and schoolteachers were able to now perform at least the appearance of being solid members of the middle class by elaborating their economic position through the purchase of mass-produced markers of middle class status. That these markers could never catch up with the symbolic capital of the wealthy is beside the point (and, indeed, as previously noted, is a primary function of the entire reproductive process of both capitalism and the class system which capitalism both feeds off of and fosters); the point is that – at least for a few decades – the working class counted itself and was tallied by others as being certified members of the middle class.

If this indeed is not class structure as formulated by Marx and Engels, it also contrasts sharply with other classical formulations of the middle class, such as Tocqueville's and Weber's. Let us quickly survey those respective formulations and the types of workers they were based upon, simply to demonstrate how far removed Tocqueville's and Weber's formulations are from the constitution of the middle class of America during the mid-twentieth century.

In *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, Tocqueville states that in the pre-revolutionary era:

> Most official posts were staffed by men belonging to the middle class, which had its own traditions, its code of honor, and its proper pride. This was, in fact, the aristocracy of the new and thriving social order which had already taken form and was only waiting for the Revolution to come into its own. (1955: 63).
Here is at one and the same time a statement that could be construed to prefigure Weber’s insertion of the middle class into a slot labeled “bureaucracy” (‘official posts’) as well as a confirmation of the widely accepted idea that the French Revolution was an upheaval that vaulted the bourgeoisie into power. Further on in *The Old Regime*, Tocqueville assigns a tighter definition to the pre-revolutionary middle classes, identifying them with the legal system: “One might almost say that the whole middle class was concerned in one way or another with the administration of justice” (1955: 193). This of course does not square with the American definition of the middle class circa 1960, when carpenters, plumbers, and stevedores were tallied as certified members of the middle class; however, this may also testify to a more strictly egalitarian and more purely economic (and capitalistic) American definition of the middle class, in which a sole reliance on quantity of income is used as criteria for entry into the middle class rather than such items as family lineage or even profession. But then neither does it square with Tocqueville's own description of class structure in *Democracy in America*. In the United States, at least as witnessed by Tocqueville in the 1830s, a middle class practicing the crafts of government and administration was conspicuous by its absence: "Nothing strikes a European traveler in the United States more than the absence of what we would call government or administration….The hand directing the social machine constantly slips from notice" (1969: 72). But then in Tocqueville's version of America the rich and the poor are pretty much absent as well:

I realize that among a great people there will always be come very poor and some very rich citizens. But the poor [in the U.S.,] instead of forming the vast majority of the population as is always the case in aristocratic societies, are but few…. The rich, on their side, are scattered and powerless. They have no conspicuous privileges, and even their wealth, being no longer incorporated and bound up with
the soil, is impalpable, and, as it were, invisible. As there is no longer a race of poor men, so there is not a race of rich men; the rich daily rise out of the crowd and constantly return thither. (1969: 635).

Here it is a bit difficult to decipher whether Tocqueville was merely too blinded by the "democratic" expanse of the American scene so as not to be able to perceive the class stratifications already in place in the mid-1830s or whether the United States has changed so dramatically since that "egalitarian" era that his depiction of an America without either the rich or the poor strikes us as so alien as to be fatally flawed by an ignorance about the actual economic conditions of the United States circa the 1830s or circa any other decade. Perhaps the truth lies somewhere between those two poles. Or perhaps what appears to us as a misperception of the American scene vis-à-vis class structure, is, on the part of Tocqueville, simply a clear statement of his belief that, as Poggi articulates the point in his study of the Frenchman, that though "Economic disparities between individual citizens may be great, … the population at large shares a relatively high degree of economic security and a relatively comfortable standard of living. It thus shares a feeling of partaking, however diversely, in a vastly successful cooperative endeavor, an increasing mastery of the whole people over its environment" (1972: 56). However, even retrospectively it is difficult to accept this sunny panglossian estimation of the Unites States as a 'cooperative endeavor' sustaining a 'relatively high degree of economic security.' To accept this as an accurate portrayal of the United States today would be ludicrous to a laughable degree.

Weber's signal contribution to the theorization of the middle class was not simply his identification of the middle class with the members of the bureaucracy, but also his insertion of the importance of social esteem and status markers as equal in significance to
financial status and economic markers in the formation and maintenance of that class:

"Whether he is in a private office or a public bureau, the modern official … always strives for and usually attains a distinctly elevated social esteem vis-à-vis the governed" (Weber 1968: 959; italics, Weber). With the modern official's "social position … protected by prescriptions about rank order and, for the political official, by special prohibitions of the criminal code against 'insults to the office' and 'contempt' of state and church authorities," the status of middle class professionals and office holders was also buttressed by the creation of a "system of specialized examinations or tests of expertise (Fachprüfungs­wesen) increasingly indispensible for modern bureaucracies" (Weber 1968: 959, 999). And since "office management … usually presupposes thorough and expert training," such training becomes a prerequisite of attaining positions within the hierarchy of office management of whatever kind (Weber 1959: 198).

Tracing bureaucratic structuration to "the consistent patrimonial-bureaucratic administration" (1969: 1044) of ancient Egypt and bureaucrats themselves to Egyptian scribes, Weber links the "middle class" functions of knowledge storage and decree regulation with a certain amount of power, e.g.:

The absolute monarch … is powerless in the face of the superior knowledge of the bureaucratic expert - in a certain sense more so than any other political head. All the irate decrees of Frederick the Great concerning the 'abolition of serfdom' were derailed in the course of their realization because the official mechanism simply ignored them as the occasional ideas of a dilettante. (Weber 1968: 993)

In such a construal, both entrance in to and the function of the middle class appear to be completely at odds with what we know of the American middle class. However, we can retain much of Weber's analysis when we recall that union membership and certificates of
expertise (for school teachers to court reporters to auto mechanics) are frequently an entrance requirement to the ranks of the American middle class and that despite the flood of information made available by the Internet, bureaucrats still hold key positions within the systems that hold as well as distribute knowledge.

Marx and Engels of course took a very distinct view of the middle class. In *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels identify "the lower strata of the middle class" as "the small trade people, shopkeepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants," but then make the claim that all these are:

sinking gradually into the proletariat, partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which Modern Industry is carried on, and is swamped in the competition with the large capitalists, partly because their specialized skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. (1994: 165).

However, in the long run (or at least in the "medium run") this is not what has occurred, as members of the proletariat rose into the middle class. That this may have been only a temporary ascension, confined to one "golden era" in the history of capitalism, does not make it any-the-less interesting from an analytical outlook: what happened to turn at least one feature of Marxian analysis on its head? We will return to this question after our brief survey of the definitional criteria of the middle class, according to Marx and Engels.

Engels and Marx seem to split the middle class in two; on the one hand, there are those members of the class who are proximate to the upper class: these are referred to in *The German Ideology* as the "Big bourgeoisie … big merchants and manufacturers" and the "petty bourgeoisie" which had been "concentrated in the guilds" (1994: 138) during the Feudal mode of production but which in the late 1840s (*The Communist Manifesto*
first being published in February of 1848) under the capitalist mode of production are identified as "the lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant" (1994: 167). The petty bourgeoisie, according to The Manifesto, "fight against the [big] bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class.

They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history. If by chance they are revolutionary, they are so only in view of their impending transfer into the proletariat, they thus defend not their present, but their future interests… (1994: 167).

It's difficult to discern what the "middle" of the middle class consists of in a Marxian sense. Those who fall in between the "Big" and the "petty" bourgeoisie seem to be either in ascension or declension, slipping through the cracks and falling into the ranks of the working class or groping upwards into the status of the "Big Bourgeoisie," with their sights set, perhaps, on eventually gaining entry into the ranks of the ruling class.

Now that we have sketched out the ways in which Tocqueville, Weber, and Marx and Engels conceived of the middle class, we can begin to appreciate the startling nature of the American middle class circa 1960. These were essentially proletariats, workers risen into the middle class; they certainly were not members of the judicial, administrative, and/or bureaucratic orders of society. In no way should the impression be left that this massive ascension was simply due to largesse on the part of the owners of industry: Ford's initial insight that mass producers must also be mass consumers did help in creating the conditions for a massive take-off for the American middle class, but the demands and struggles of workers, especially during the 1930s, also played a key role in
the corporatism underlying the golden era; with labor, government, and industry cooperating as three (more or less) equal partners, labor peace was guaranteed, profits secured, as the government managed to catalyze, through assistance programs (such as GI college loans and federally guaranteed mortgages) as well as financial and monetary policies, an economic "miracle," the likes of which the world had never seen.

Skipping over any further discussion of the Golden Era's collapse while also cutting short any further narrative detailing the succeeding thirty-some years of middle class economic disintegration, yet still keeping in mind those two events as prime milestones in our larger story, I want to focus on a series of articles which appeared in the news media in the summer of 2011, articles which forecast a new international constituency of the middle class, while also articulating the dispensability of the American middle class to corporate economic planning.

On August 8, 2011, Don Lee of the *Los Angeles Times* reported that "Many major U.S. companies are making big plans to expand overseas even as some of them announce new layoffs at home" (2011: 1). Being that such 'big plans' had been pretty much typical since the dawn of American de-industrialization in the early 1980s, why was this newsworthy? Lee continues as he explains why U.S. companies are making these moves at this particular time: "They're beginning to give up on the American consumer as a source of future growth.... In effect, as many corporate executives look ahead, the United States has a diminishing place in their thinking" (Lee 2011: 1). Lee cites as an instance of this trend "one of the biggest marketers of children's car seats," Newell Rubbermaid, Inc., which is "expanding in Brazil instead of the United States" (Lee 2011: 1). And the stated reason for this, in addition to whatever tax breaks and/or wage differentials may be
gained by locating the production side of the economic coin in Brazil rather than the United States, is that "while young Americans are putting off having children, in part because of the poor economy, Brazil's middle class is growing, and many more young couples are starting families. So more Brazilians have the money to buy new, upscale car seats while more U.S. parents are making do with cheaper brands or hand-me-downs" (Lee 2011: 1). This growth in South America's middle class is also reflected in a *Los Angeles Times* article of March 9, 2012, "Latin American air travel soars," in which Chris Kraul, reporting from Bogota, informs us that "the region [Latin America] led the globe in air travel last year, with 10.2% more passengers than in 2010, more than double the 4% jump in North America," according to statistics gathered from the International Air Transport Association (2012: B1). "Stoking the expansion is a boom in Latin American exports, including oil, coffee, copper, and soybeans. That has boosted incomes and helped expand the middle class," which, in turn, has served as a fillip for air travel (Kraul 2012: B1). This booming growth rate of course bears directly on middle class reproduction, on both the scales of the individual and the class, bridging the gap between the connotations of the word: generative sexual reproduction in the U.S., Lee suggests, is not occurring at least at previous rates, due to a sluggish economy, and, therefore, class reproduction is effected.

So here we might stipulate that while the first Post-Fordist wave of Late Capitalism, sometimes called the period of Disorganized Capitalism, instantiated production on a globalized scale, a second wave is instantiating consumerism on the global scale.
In the targeting of potential customers, companies such as Newell Rubbermaid are not simply abandoning the U.S. market, as the domestic market remains "stable" and "remains huge, but it's not growing significantly and prospects - reflected in the downgrading of the nation's debt … - are similar for the next few years" (Lee 2011: 1). However, markets such as Brazil, India, and China are expanding exponentially, and are, at least to a certain extent, replicating the consumeristic process that the United States went through in the 1950s and 60s: not only must (or should) there be a proverbial chicken in every proverbial pot, but millions upon millions of these newly instantiated members of the middle class want the durables as markers of their recently attained status: refrigerators, dishwashers, one car for mom and one for dad, fancy car seats for the children, and so on and so forth. And U.S.-based firms are also simply responding to economic signals: when "developing economies such as Brazil's are projected to grow 2 to 2 1/2 times faster than those in the U.S. and other industrial nations," of course companies will zero in on them as potential customers. And the economic turmoil roiling the United States and EU could lead to a long-term refocus of the market, in which the (former) industrialized nations are caught in a financial tailspin powered by perpetual negative feedback loops: "A downturn in the rich countries [the U.S. and the members of the EU], of course, would dampen growth around the world and could lead to a new global recession. Gripped by such worries," companies could be motivated "to pull back further in the U.S. and look even harder at investing overseas to protect their profit margins" (Lee 2011: 1).
Lee's assessment is buttressed by an article written by his colleague, Henry Chu, and published in the *Los Angeles Times* on August 21, 2011: "Emerging economies faring better in downturn." Chu asks us to:

> Look at the state of the economy from anywhere in America or Europe these days and all is gloomy: Governments deep in debt. Consumers reluctant to spend. Businesses afraid to hire. But gaze out from the vantage of some of the world's emerging economies and the picture gets brighter. Although few will pretend that their fates are immune to the ripples of a globalized economy, new players such as China, Brazil and India [the BIC nations] see their rising prosperity as less dependent on the credit cards of Western consumers. Their governments are also less burdened by debt, and they retain confidence that better days lie ahead. Globalization means that people and economies are connected more than ever, but it doesn't necessarily mean that everyone swims or sinks together. (2011: 1).

And even though China's economy has slowed down from its mercurial 10% annual rate of growth to a still quicksilver 8% growth rate, that far exceeds Germany, the "shining star" of the developed countries, whose "economy grew by just 0.1% in the second quarter" of fiscal 2011 (Chu 2011: 1). And, in fact, in "2009 the PRC overtook Germany to become the world's largest exporter of goods, with 34 firms in the Fortune 500," with "the market capitalization of Chinese firms in the FT 500 … second only to that of American firms, while in the banking sector, the top three positions were occupied by Chinese institutions" (Nolan and Zhang 2010: 97). However, Nolan and Zhang qualify this when they state that:

> the international operations of China's leading banks remain far behind those of the Atlantic core. China does not have a single bank among the world's top fifty, ranked by geographical spread…. It requires a huge leap to progress from being a powerful domestic bank, operating in a heavily protected home market, to one that is globally competitive and able to finalize large-scale international mergers and acquisitions. (2010: 106, 107).
So China still has some distance to cover before it is a bona fide member of the core, at least according to an analysis based on Nolan and Zhang's criteria.

Returning to Brazil, its burgeoning relationship with China is helping to create what is beginning to look like a Latin American economic juggernaut:

Brazil is now an agricultural superpower and natural-resources giant, shipping vast quantities of commodities to China, the world's workshop. Both countries' domestic consumption levels are rising, enticing foreign investors, including Western companies, in search of opportunities no longer available at home. Their governments have more flexibility to act, unburdened by crippling debt levels. (Chu 2011: 1).

But Brazil isn't just supplying China and other countries with raw materials and agricultural products: on August 22, 2011, United Press International announced that Brazilian aircraft manufacturer Embraer had "delivered the first of its E-190 jets to China's CDB Leasing Co., Ltd. …. CDB Leasing Co., also known as CLC, has ordered 30 Embraer E-190s, including 20 firm orders and 10 options, all of which will be operated by China Southern Airlines" (UPI 2011: 1). And while twenty "firm" orders with ten options as an add-on does not add up to a major manufacturing agreement, it does signal that the potential for such an agreement is there, the possibility of which further frays the "First World's" hold on high-end products and the middle class incomes that go along with producing such products.

Despite the numerous misfires of Marx and Engels' prognosticative powers, precisely such a turn was predicted by them in The Communist Manifesto; as Michael Watts points out in his Hettner-Lectures of 1999: "Whatever its predictive failures as
regards politics and revolution, the Manifesto [sic] was remarkably prescient as regards capitalism expansion, circuits of accumulation and what we would now call globalization" (2000: 52). Watts cites *The Manifesto* to buttress this claim:

The need for constantly expanding markets chases the bourgeoisie all over the surface of the globe. It must settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere. … The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. … In place of the old wants, satisfied by the production of the home country, are new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion, universal interdependence of nations. … [The bourgeoisie] draws even the most barbarian nations into civilization … the cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it *batters down all Chinese walls*. (Marx and Engels 1998: 39; italics, mine).18

The fact that a communist revolution first happened in the backwater of Russia instead of the industrial powerhouse of Germany would have surprised Marx and Engels, but the fact that capitalism has spread its tendrils into nearly every corner of the globe would not have shocked them in the least; the concomitant fact that different national subsets of humanity are replacing others as members of the middle class would not have shocked them either, as capitalism requires 'constantly expanding markets' and the customers to feed those markets as well, and whether they be Americans, Chinese, Brazilians, Kenyans, Peruvians, or Outer Mongolians makes not a whit of difference to the essential requirements of capital expansion.

The demise of the American middle class and the ascension of the middle class in the BIC nations has not gone completely unnoticed by the American punditry. In his Labor Day column of 2011, E.G. Dionne of *The Washington Post* wryly suggests that the

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18 Watts is citing *The Communist Manifesto* (London: Verso, 1998), I follow the Verso pagination in this citation.
holiday's name be changed to "Capital Day" in order to commemorate a society in which "We tax the fruits of labor more vigorously than we tax the gains from capital … and we hide workers away while lavishing attention on those who make their livings by moving money around" (2001: 1), while his colleague at The Post, Harold Myerson, opines on the same holiday that

Today, the economy that arose on manufacturing’s ashes has turned to ashes itself. The Wall Street-Wal-Mart economy of the past several decades off-shored millions of factory jobs, which it offset by creating low-paying jobs in the service and retail sectors; extending credit to consumers so they could keep consuming despite their stagnating incomes; and fueling, until it collapsed, a boom in construction. (2011: 1).

Myerson references a stunning study written by Michael Greenstone and Adam Looney of the Hamilton Project, published in the Milken Institute Review, reveals that the median earnings of men ages 25 to 64 declined 28 percent between 1969 and 2009. Within this age group, the median earnings of men who completed high school but didn’t go on to college fell 47 percent, while the median earnings of male college graduates also declined, if only 12 percent. (2011: 1).

In their study, Greenstone and Looney add that "The median wage of the American male has declined by almost $13,000 after accounting for inflation in the four decades since 1969. (Using a different measure of inflation suggests a smaller, but still substantial, drop in earnings.) Indeed, earnings haven’t been this low since Ike was president and Marshal Dillon was keeping the peace in Dodge City" (Greenstone and Looney 2011: 12).

We will conclude this section with the case of one German Morales, a house-painter who "emigrated from El Salvador [to Northern Virginia] at age 12 in the late
"1980s" and by 2005 seemed to have earned the status markers of entrée into the middle class, with purchases of a "personal watercraft" and a home in Woodbridge, Virginia (Saslow 2011: 1). However, by 2007, Morales and his wife, Illiana had foreclosed on their house (which had been financed by one of the notoriously toxic adjustable-rate mortgages which had partially led to the collapse of the American economy in 2008), and drained their son's college fund of $35,000. German was reduced to staying busy by painting and repainting his new house until work picked up, which also served as a way to maintain his skill-level as a nominal member of the reserve army of labor. "When he was on a job, he sometimes painted past midnight to compensate for his lack of manpower. When he had nothing, he drove from Richmond to Baltimore to drop off business cards, sometimes pulling over to nap in his truck" (Saslow 2011: 1). And so we might want to add that even the immigrant's version of the American Dream as well as the middle class version of that Dream might be in danger of toppling.

The Ruling Class

"Dreamland is but one of Cairo's many new luxurious residential areas, which include projects such as Beverly Hills and California." (Farha Ghannam, "Two Dreams in a Global City").

In this section, we will focus on the reproduction of the world's elite of this brave new economy, the one-percenters who have been exponentially increasing their financial returns during the last few decades while the middle class shrinks and the lower class expands. I especially want to highlight several construction projects, either newly built or in the planning or construction phases, occurring in China, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and London. Again, we are taking a hop-scotch metonymic approach, substituting parts for
the whole, but since at any rate it is impossible to depict the whole, it seems a method not only worth exploiting but perhaps the only one exploitable.

First, though, let us reference Marx and Engels on the ruling class. In *The Communist Manifesto*, the ruling class is figured as "the modern bourgeoisie," a "most revolutionary" class, "itself the product of a long course of development, a series of revolutions in the modes of production and exchange" (1994: 160, 161, 160). The advance of capitalism runs parallel to or, perhaps better, is linked inextricably with the advance of the bourgeoisie:

Modern industry has established the world market, for which the discovery of America paved the way. The market has given an immense development to commerce, to navigation, to communication by land. This development has, in its turn, reacted on the extension of industry; and in proportion as industry, commerce, navigation, railways extended, in the same proportion the bourgeoisie developed, increased its capital, and pushed into the background every class handed down from the Middle Ages. (Marx and Engels 1994: 160).

In its relentless drive to reproduce wealth and reproduce itself as the holder of that wealth, the bourgeoisie "has resolved personal wealth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom - Free Trade" (Marx and Engels 1994: 161). This expropriation of freedom and the substitution of 'Free Trade' for 'the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms' leads to a situation in which "liberty" is understood as the freedom of the bourgeoisie to exploit the working class and to do so in the manner depicted by Marx and Engels in their allusion to Hobbes's famous invocation of the original state of nature: "naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation" (1994: 161).
A singular focus on accumulation is necessary for the capitalist class if they are to reproduce themselves: "The essential marxian insight … is that profit arises out of the domination of labour by capital and that the capitalists as a class must, \textit{if they are to reproduce themselves}, continuously expand the basis for profit," writes Harvey in "The Urban Process under Capitalism: A Framework for Analysis" (2002: 116; italics, mine). After making this remark, Harvey follows up with a slight feint, stating that "We thus arrive at a conception of a society founded on the principle of `accumulation for accumulation's sake, production for production's sake'' before realigning the argument by connecting it to the reproductive imperative: "This may sound rather 'economistic' as a framework for analysis, but we have to recall that accumulation is the means \textit{whereby the capitalist class reproduces both itself and its domination over labour}'' (Harvey 2002: 116; italics, mine). Reproduction, which perhaps could be conceived of as a kind of ur-form of survivalism, is thereby retrieved back into the center of Harvey's analysis, right where it belongs, in my estimation.

Lefebvre puts his own anti-structuralist spin on the ruling class:

Many people are inclined to forget that capitalism has yet another aspect, one which is certainly bound up with the functioning of money, with the various markets, and with the social relations of production, but which is distinct from these precisely because it is dominant. This aspect is the \textit{hegemony} of one class…. Hegemony implies more than an influence, more even than the permanent use of repressive violence. It is exercised over society as a whole, culture and knowledge included, and generally via human mediation: policies, political leaders, parties, as also a good many intellectuals and experts. It is exercised, therefore, over both institutions and ideas. (2002: 132; italics, Lefebvre).
This aligns nicely with Marx and Engels, especially their assertion in *The Communist Manifesto* that "The executive of the modern State is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie" (1994: 161) and Marx's observation that whosoever has power controls the narrative of history and the dissemination of information. Lefebvre, continuing, then throws in an anti-structuralist sentiment:

The ruling class seeks to maintain its hegemony by all available means, and knowledge is one such means. The connection between knowledge (*savoir*) and power is thus made manifest, although this in no way interdicts a critical and subversive form of knowledge (*connaissance*); on the contrary, it points up the antagonism between a knowledge which serves power and a form of knowing which refuses to acknowledge power. (2002: 132).

Here, the structure is never so overpowering that subversion from below cannot penetrate and upend it, a principle that may not align with Althusser but certainly aligns with Marx.

Marx didn't intend his attack on the bourgeoisie to be misunderstood as an attack on bourgeois individuals per se, for he was a materialist to such a degree that he viewed members of any class as subjects of historical forces well beyond their control. In the preface to the first German edition of *Capital*, Marx writes that:

To prevent possible misunderstanding, a word. I paint the capitalist and the landlord in no sense *couleur de rose*. But here individuals are dealt with only in so far as they are the personifications of economic categories, embodiments of particular class relations and class interests. My standpoint, from which the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history, can less than any other make the individual responsible for relations whose creature he socially remains, however much he may subjectively raise himself above them. (1996: 10).
Here, we can add two things. One is that Engels himself was the scion of a prosperous factory owner, which fact certainly didn't prevent him from being the co-founder of a movement quite counter-productive (anti-reproductive, that is) to his own class interests, to say the least. And, secondly, the inclusion in this statement of the categories of "capitalist" and "landlord" goes some way to differentiating the "Big" bourgeoisie identified with the middle class in *The German Ideology* and the bourgeoisie as identified in *The Communist Manifesto*. In the former, the Big bourgeoisie had been matched with "… big merchants and manufacturers" (1994: 138); in *Capital* the capitalist and the landlord have taken their place, revealing perhaps a more nuanced analysis of who is actually constitutive of this class. Of course some of this may be due to the evolution of Marx's thinking, as *The German Ideology* was first published in 1845 while the preface to *Capital* was first published in 1867. Still, the individual member of the bourgeoisie could take little solace from Marx's caveat in the preface to *Capital* when in the very same preface he prophesizes thusly: "In England the progress of social disintegration is palpable. When it has reached a certain point, it must re-act on the Continent" (1996: 9).

But more simply put, in Part VII of Volume One of *Capital* ("The Accumulation of Capital") Marx says that "we treat the capital producer as owner of the entire surplus value, or, better perhaps, as the representative of all the sharers with him in the booty" (1994: 565). This fragmentation of 'the booty' to its 'sharers' is derived from that capital producer "who produces surplus value - i.e., who extracts unpaid labour directly from the labourers, and fixes it in commodities, is, indeed, the first appropriator, but by no means the ultimate owner, of this surplus value. He has to share it with capitalists, with

Still this leaves out the landlord who is not involved in the splitting up of surplus value immediately attendant upon its extraction of profit by the capital producer. Those who profit from what Marx calls absolute rent and/or a monopoly upon a property (meaning that any discrete piece of land must have a particular owner or owners in the private property regime typically subtending a capitalistic mode of production) must also be inserted into the ruling class. Marx's theories of absolute rent have caused much confusion (a confusion we have neither the time, the expertise nor the inclination to untangle); it is sufficient for our purposes to merely stipulate that such people who profit from such property arrangements must be included in that class to which Marx confirms that he does not paint in a couleur de rose. Included in that class will also be all those whom Shakespeare's Falstaff declaims have the "good wit" to "make use of anything " to turn a profit and will even "turn diseases into commodity," i.e., those who know how to turn crises to advantage, e.g. those who sell umbrellas in a rainstorm at marked-up prices or those who force-feed bail-out austerity packages to debt-ridden countries (Shakespeare 1936: 589). With that cursory and all-too-brief depiction of the ruling class in hand, let us make a Shakespearean exeunt to Dreamland, post-haste.

In her description of Cairo's Dreamland, Farha Ghannam tells us that this luxurious housing development, which includes its own "theme park [Dreampark], golf courses, tennis courts, horse-racing tracks, residential areas, conference facilities, a hospital, health resorts … a hotel … shopping centers" and its own television station (2008: 271), was constructed "to provide a mini-America on the Egyptian desert" (2008: 271), was constructed "to provide a mini-America on the Egyptian desert" (2008:
Though Ghannam warns her readers not to buy into a narrative which reduces this desire for a "mini-America" to a mere story of "notions such as 'neocolonialism,' 'McDonaldization,' 'cultural imperialism,' or 'Americanization'" as "not all classes in Egypt desire these forms or aspire to acquire them," it is difficult if not impossible to avoid reducing the Dreamland case into just such an instance of precisely these notions (2008: 274). This seems especially to be the case when we factor in Ghannam's own contention that "Projects like Dreamland are based on what I call the 'refusal to indigenize.' They reject the Egyptianization, Arabization, or Islamicization of the new forms they are introducing" (2008: 272). That this "refusal to indigenize" is moving forward by appropriating Baudrillardian simulacra of America does not negate the integrity of this refusal; it simply demarcates it as one more instance of reproduction via reproducing whatever the dominant cultural model happens to be at any particular point in time, whether it be the Romans imitating the Greeks circa 200 BCE, the Americans imitating the English in the 1700s, the Russians imitating the French in the 1800s, or the Egyptians and the Chinese imitating the Americans in the twenty-first century.

And it certainly does not demarcate the first instance of replication of metropolitan forms by a colony or a former colony, as this once constituted a primary component of the grand "civilizing" mission of colonialism and still constitutes a primary component of the grand modernizing mission of development. Partha Chatterjee outlines an instance of the former following the death of "Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay, the most renowned modernist literary figure in nineteenth-century Bengal … on April 8, 1894" (2000: 35). Upon Chattopadhyay's death, a European-style memorial was organized by the Chaitanya Library and the Beadon Square Literary Club, but
Nabinchandra Sen, "one of the most respected senior figures on Bengal's literary scene" refused an invitation to preside at the "condolence meeting," condemning the entire event as an artificial and alien import from the metropole and transforming the memorial into a dust-up between leading Bengali literary figures about the relative roles and comparative significance of English and colonial cultures:

"Imitating the English, we have now begun organizing `condolence meetings,'" Nabinchandra wrote. "As a Hindu, I do not understand how one can call a public meeting to express one's grief. A meeting to express grief, think of it!".... "Our" grief, he claimed, was "sacred"; it drove one into seclusion. "We do not mourn by wearing black badges round our sleeves." A meeting in a public auditorium could only create, he thought, the atmosphere of a public entertainment; this was not "our way of mourning for the dead." (Chatterjee 2000, 35, 36; italics, mine).19

Arguing the other side of the dispute was the poet, Rabindranath Tagore, who admitted that:

It was true … that the practice was hitherto unknown in the country and that it was an imitation of European customs. But, like it or not, because of our European contacts, both external conditions and subjective feelings were undergoing a change. New social needs were arising, and new ways would have to be found to fulfill them. Because of their unfamiliarity, these might seem artificial and unpleasant at first. But merely because they were European in origin was not a good reason for rejecting them outright. (Chatterjee 2000: 36; italics, mine).

Here, what seems to be at issue is the meaning and appropriation of "our," with Sen wanting to retain a strictly Bengali connotation for the collective possessive pronoun, and Tagore wanting to link Bengali consciousness and self-consciousness to ongoing transformations occurring through contacts with Europe. However, what is important for us is that we clarify that imitation of the West did not abruptly arise with the planning of

Dreamland in Egypt. And disagreements about such imitative forms did not arise with the residents of Dreamland and their "refusal to indigenize;" this is well-worn territory, playing out across many lands as Europe, the United States, and the USSR, and now the North recreates its forms across the colonies, their respective spheres of influence, and now the South, with various constituencies battling over the meaning of "our," with sometimes surprising and counterintuitive results, especially as the "creative class" in the North has recently come to valorize indigenous cultural forms.

Indeed, when Forrec, the American architectural design firm hired to create Dreamland, "suggested `ancient Egyptian archeological themes, the Egyptian manager of the project `preferred a North American Style … influenced by the kinds of Hollywood television programs and movies that most of the world watches and understands'" (Ghannam 2008: 273). Here we might want to notice two things: first, that Hollywood is serving in this construction as a metonym of the `North America Style;' and second, the assertion that the world (or, rather, most of it) watches and understands Hollywood TV programs and films masks an assumption that "the world" watches and understands them in the same way. Which perhaps is true, but is not argued as such by Ghannam. Nevertheless, Ghannam's claim that "American forms, designs, and names is part of a wide interest in the Western that one encounters among the upper class [in Egypt] and in segments of the middle class" seems to be borne out, especially when this claim is globalized, a task we take up later in this section. "Having Western clothes, eating at Western restaurants, using Western furniture, speaking Western languages, and listening to Western music are all signs of distinction" in Egypt (Ghannam 2008: 273) as well as

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the primary sartorial, culinary, decorative, linguistic, and aesthetic form in which the
world's ruling class appears to be reproducing itself.

However, such a staunch refusal to indigenize is a topic of negotiation and
perhaps even contention, at least amongst architects and their clients in the "Third
World." For instance, the Cityspace Global Conference, which took place in Riyadh,
Saudi Arabia in December of 2011, hosted a presentation titled "Rediscovering
traditional design to create alternative solutions and maintain cultural identity" Among
the items bullet-pointed for discussion in this presentation were:

• Examining methods of preserving architectural heritage forms in new designs
• Applying traditional architectural design to various projects
• Assessing the challenges of applying traditional design to contemporary
  architecture in the Middle East
• Capitalising on local talent to produce authentic and culturally-significant design
  solutions (http://www.cityscaperiyadh.com/Conference/WAC/Agenda/).

Jacob Kurek, principal architect of Henning Larsen Architects of Copenhagen, is leading
this discussion, and he faces this task armed with the fairly hefty resume of the firm with
which he is associated: among other projects, Henning Larsen has designed the Female
Branch of the Prince Naif Centre for Health Science Research - the Female Branch is "an
extension" of King Saud University, located in Riyadh. The new research center has been
described as "a modern interpretation of Islamic architecture"
(archello.com/en/project/female-branch-prince); its modernity is of course highly ironic
given that it will house the "Female" branch of the "Prince" Naif Centre for Health
Science Research, the very name managing the trick of entailing two attributes of what
has come to be viewed by most of the "modern" world as residue from another age: gender segregation and royalty. Nevertheless…

Henning Larsen also has other projects in the works throughout the Middle East, including the Institute of Diplomatic Studies for the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Massar Children's Discovery Center in Damascus, Syria (henninglarsen.com/projects.aspx), all of which, at least to some degree, seem to be attempts to integrate "Western" and "Middle Eastern" architectural styles, judging from the images available on the firm's website. So it seems that at least some projects are being designed in what might be described as an amalgamation of indigenous and metropole forms. Perhaps the best examples of such an attempt are the various airport terminals of the Middle East, whose architectural lines sometimes suggest the arcing, wind-blown stays of Bedouin tents.

Now, while it may be tempting for Westerners to denigrate as "pretentious" any Egyptian appropriation of a "North American Style," or to mock such an appropriation as yet one more example of a classical faux pas on the part of the parvenu, the right to even the tackiest of Hollywood fashions (or developments) should not be sectored off as something that only "real" Westerners can "enjoy." It is also exactly what has been done on the part of many a Westerner as she or he has attempted to ascend the hierarchy of status: remember that those homes in the Connecticut River Valley circa 1776 were modeled after the latest in Georgian design, and that those in the "Mother Country" may well have looked askance at the pretentiousness of American colonists believing that they could assume such specifically English markers of class distinction.
The ubiquity of Hollywood products and the desire for marks of a Southern California lifestyle are not confined to high-end developments on the outskirts of Cairo such as Dreamland, as well as other Cairo developments, which happen to be called California and Beverly Hills. Pico Iyer, wandering through the upscale suburb of the Zona Sur in La Paz found a karaoke parlor called "America" and a shopping mall called "San Diego." Indeed, "as I sat one night in a pizza joint, which boasted prices higher than Miami, a high-school girl at the next table, soignée as Catherine Zeta-Jones, shut her eyes and sang along, transported, to 'Hotel California' on the sound track" (2004: 96).

This transposition of the West onto the "rest" is occurring in the East as well. Lifescapes International, a landscape design firm located in Newport Beach, California, has created gardens for such places as the Mirage Hotel, the Bellagio Hotel, and the Wynn Resort, all in Las Vegas, as well as The Grove shopping mall in Los Angeles. The landscape design firm is now finding much of their employment opportunities in China; for instance, they are now designing the landscaping for the massive Greentown Orchid Project in Hangzhou. Commenting on this project, Lifescapes International's CEO Don Brinkerhoff says that "Thousands of years ago, the Eastern gardens first appeared in the West. We will try to implement classical European gardens back to the East" (2011: lifescapesintl.com/news-events-orchid-garden/). So here we have the notion of cultural reciprocity deployed in a trope that vaults both time and space: just as 'thousands of years ago' Eastern gardens 'first appeared' in the West; so we in the West (in the case of Lifescapes International, Newport Beach, about fifty miles southwest of Hollywood) will now 'implement' European gardens 'back to the East.' So a form that went through many transformations on its journey from ancient China to Europe to the West Coast of the
United States is now being shipped back to China. Though there is a strong urge to mock both the alleged history and the actual diction of Brinkerhoff's statement, the invocation of an almost karmically-hued transcultural debt that is being repaid by Lifescapes International's landscaping of the Greentown Orchid Project perhaps should not be dismissed so lightly. Is it not yet another instantiation of this universal desire of the global elite to frame their economic transactions in a cultural mode? And does it not also laminate what is essentially an urge to appropriate a North American Style (aka Hollywood) into that more distinctive marker (for Americans at least) of Europe? Just as the residents of the Connecticut River Valley looked to Europe for design inspiration, which would have the vital by-product of verifying their social capital, Lifescapes International is cloaking their landscaping aesthetic in a European veneer, which may serve to verify to the designers at Lifescapes as well as to their clients a signification of social capital extending from China to Europe to the Eastern littoral of the USA and eventually to Southern California and then back to China, albeit in a bastardized form. So simultaneously this serves as a symbol of China's desire for something American (and European) as well as America's desire for something European (and the European desire for something Chinese).

So this form of design, evoking the American-Hollywood-Dreamland lifestyle, reproduces, or at least attempts to reproduce, status markers (homes, gardens, real estate developments, airports, "female" branches of research universities) which signify inclusion within a certain valorized milieu, a milieu perceived to be exemplary of the nation, which, despite whatever economic crises it may be undergoing, is still assumed by many around the globe to be the lodestar of status.
A very different method of conferring status is at work amongst the supra-wealthy of London. In the August 31, 2011, edition of the *New York Times*, Sarah Lyall reports that:

In a city that has some of the richest people and most expensive real estate in the world, well-off homeowners who have exhausted the traditional methods of home expansion — build up, or build out — are enthusiastically branching out the only other way possible: down. Far beneath London’s surface, and to their neighbors’ considerable chagrin, they are using enormous machines to remove thousands of tons of dirt and replace it with new structures extending as many as four floors down. They are building not just swimming pools, but also cinemas, recreation centers, gyms, wine cellars, bowling alleys, squash courts, climbing walls, servants’ quarters, saunas, waterfalls, Jacuzzis, hair salons and multicar garages with special elevators to shuttle vintage car collections up and down. (2011: 1).

In this newly gilded age, it is rather bracing to know that there are those who are spending fabulous amounts of money on the creation of subterranean waterfalls and the construction of shuttle-loom garages in order to shift vintage automobiles up and down cavernous wombs.

Chthonic household designers and architects are also breaking new ground, if you'll excuse the pun, in the fabrication of reality, that is, in virtuality: "One London homeowner," Lyall informs us, "installed an outdoor camera that projects real-time images of the changing sky onto the pool ceiling … around his new basement swimming pool … to compensate for the lack of natural light" (2011: 1). Yet another underground pool includes "a film of moving sharks … projected on the walls while the `Jaws' theme song plays, and another covered in hand made golden ceramic tiles embedded with tiny lights that twinkle and give swimmers the feeling of being enveloped in the night sky" (Lyall 2011: 1).
So here, in London, in what could be called the metropole of metropoles, there seems to be a frantic desire to flourish in a style whose social capital exceeds minting, for here are status symbols so outlandish that their very creation, or, rather, the very desire for their creation, becomes a token of curiosity. That is, the pressing question becomes not, `My, I never knew you had such a large amount of money, how did you get it?' to `How in god's name did you ever conceive of spending your money in that particularly spectacular way?' And maybe that's the point: in this spectacle of reproductive opulence reproduction supersedes itself so much that "simple" luxury becomes unworthy. One's wealth must be so ostentatiously displayed that money becomes not merely a non-factor, but utterly worthless, the spending of it accomplished on such a gargantuan yet frivolous scale that its value depreciates to nothing. And what is this done in emulation of? Where is the model upon which this proceeds? Whose form and style of reproductive nonchalance does such excess descend from? Or is it merely objectionable because it's done in such bad taste? Again, the parvenu comes to mind. Here I must make a personal intervention to notate a member of the class of the blissfully eccentric rich I was once acquainted with who re-painted the colors of her Alexander Calder mobile because the original hues did not match the color scheme of her Santa Barbara living room!

If we retrieve Mauss's description of the display of wastage that seems to be much the point of those rituals, we may gain some insight into these "imaginative" feats of spending. Referencing "the Tlingit and Haida of Alaska, and the Tsimshian and Kwakiutl of British Columbia" (1967: 22), Mauss writes that during the winter:

There is feast upon feast, some of long duration. On the occasion of a marriage, on various ritual occasions, and on social advancement, there is reckless
consumption of everything which has been amassed with great industry from some of the richest coasts of the world during the course of the summer and autumn. (1967: 23; italics, mine).

He also adds that:

In some potlatch systems one is constrained to expend everything one possesses and to keep nothing. The rich man who shows his wealth by spending recklessly is the man who wins prestige…. Consumption and destruction are virtually unlimited. (Mauss 1967: 35; italics, mine).

Here what is interesting is not only the superficial similarities between the reckless expenditures of contemporary wealthy Londoners and "pre-modern" Americans, but the explicit connection Mauss makes between consumption and destruction. It is through the very consuming, the actual shredding of wealth, the very destruction of plenty, that one gains prestige as one who is so wealthy they can destroy wealth and still retain it. Perhaps the court of Louis XIV and Nero's Rome were other milieus in which this kind of destructive consumption was elevated to a sort of maniacal art. And, in fact, we do find such an articulation in the Roman euergesia, described by Mitchell Dean as being "the desire to show unfailing goodwill to one's city through acts of civic benefaction and ostentation manifest in the provision and restoration of public buildings, baths, and stadia, and the giving of banquets, festivals and gladiatorial games" (1996: 216). In "Techniques of the Body," Mauss also relates a story which turns "our" assumptions about luxury and what has come to be called conspicuous consumption on its head:

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You will remember the story Herald Hoffding repeats about the Shah of Persia. The Shah was the guest of Napoleon III and insisted on eating with his fingers. The Emperor urged him to use a golden fork. `You don't know what a pleasure you are missing,' the Shah replied. (2006: 91)

Yet perhaps it is the very economy of mass consumption which inherently bears excess inside of itself. In a sense, this is an anti-reproductive regime, as conspicuous consumption proceeds to the point of destruction. In such an economy, every commodity must carry within it its own elimination, so that it be destroyed and replaced, leading of course, ironically, to its own reproduction. Planned obsolescence is an economy of reproductive consumerism powered by commodities that deliberately cannot be reproduced and so must be re-purchased as a whole, thus reproducing exchanges which exceed practicality, functionality, and need. Instead of a commodity reproducing its own functionality, commodities that cannot reproduce their own functionality reproduce new exchanges, thus reproducing buying and selling over and over again. And planned obsolescence is given many a fillip by the quicksilver pace of change in fashion, fads, and trends, many of these anointed with their fashionability by the constantly wielded prods of advertising and marketing, of course.

Conclusion

Now that we have explored reproduction in three distinct fashions: in the urban villages of China, as "circular" migrants and entrepreneurial "villagers" combine to form a strange hybrid of communism and capitalism to further their reproductive possibilities; in the case of the American middle class and its declining capacity to reproduce itself; and, finally, in the excessive reproduction of certain members of the ruling class, we need
to move on to spatial secretion, another tool we can use to probe the everyday. In a sense, in our discussion of construction projects such as Dreamland, we have already been engaging with spatial secretion. But now we must be explicit about it, so on we proceed to Henri Lefebvre and his work.

But first, I want to add one more note on reproduction by way of Yi-Fu Tuan as well as Robert Sack, and that is that it is the very processes of everyday behavior, repeatedly reproduced, that reproduces both places and whatever forces have inserted those behaviors in those places in the first place. As Sack puts it in *Homo Geographicus:* "Daily activities in space unconsciously reproduce the particular forces that have helped shape those routines" (1997: 159). Though Sack is quick to note that such routines and customs allow us to not have to worry about entirely reconstructing our world anew every day, they can also serve as props which can allow patterns of injustice to continue: "If these very routines are somehow too limiting or unjust, spatial routinization of actions and conformity to rules … help perpetuate these limits and injustices, as well as making us unaware of them" (1997, 159). And everyday routine activities maintain as they reproduce and reproduce as they maintain the definitional parameters of the social relations taken for granted in those activities: "Each visit to a bank, store, airline, and vacation further instantiates the system…. Factories or offices … are places in which the social relations of workers and capitalists (and also the products they make) are produced and reproduced each and every moment" (Sack 1997: 76). And in “Rootedness versus Sense of Place,” Tuan delineates ways in which places are not only created but also maintained, among which the everyday routine activities of "speech, gesture, and the making of things are the common means” (Tuan 1980: 6), so that reproduction of a place
as that particular place depends on the reproduction of speech, gesture, and the making of things for its own ongoing maintenance as that particular place.
Place Three: Work-Site/Movie Studio

We have been given walk-on passes to the lot via an obscure connection (along the lines of a cousin of a friend of a friend of a cousin). Once through security, we take a left down Mulberry Street, the studio’s mockup of a downtown Manhattan intersection.

So where could the everyday be here, in this mockup of reality? Well, a painter is putting a coat on the exterior of what appears to be an old-fashioned five & dime store. The sign outside the store reads: Finnegan’s Notions. So my question is: who is this Finnegan and what exactly are his notions? But there are no clues here to the answers to those questions, just a painter brandishing his brush. Inside, the dime store is empty. Or, rather, filled with nothing (which turns out, oddly enough, to be the same thing). A bare concrete floor: no shelves, no counters, no candy, no Finnegan, no notions. Apparently, Finnegan’s is a false front, intended to convey the mere exterior of a working establishment and not the operational interior of the same. So what is being constructed here is a mockup of a given scene some 3,000 miles east of here and some seventy-years or so in the past. This construction is being formulated in order to shoot a given scene, a scene which we can assume without too much risk is a recreation of the everyday, a recreation which as it exists now only exists in the imagination, but which one day will exist as a series of images relayed into the eyes of everyday movie-goers world-wide.

So what is given here on this Mulberry Street mockup, this movie set caught mid-construction (a fabricated fabrication in media res, as it were), this scene in which a lone painter wields his brush in preparation for the moment when the scene as it is given (in
the screenplay, in the director’s head, in the actress’s words and gestures, in the camera’s eye) will be shot to be given (well, sold) to its viewers?

However, every movie must be an infiltration of the given, an insurrection against the everyday. This is so even if the film in question is the most saccharine red-white-and-blue depiction of normative All-Americana; it still must rip asunder pre-given givens simply to enter the everyday eyeballs of those watching the film. Movies are by definition infringements on the everyday. If they were simply replications of the everyday, they would not exist. It is by re-shuffling the boundaries of the everyday that a given story upsets the coordinates of everyday givens, giving the audience a new (or renewed) appreciation of the everyday. Technically, of course, film is only visible because it realizes itself at thirty-two frames per second, thereby generating the illusion of things as if they are seen, catalyzing the trick of making visible a continuous reality and a real continuity. But, aesthetically (as well as technically), film must undermine reality in order to recreate it. It must create coordinating conjunctions within invented story lines as well as lend credibility to incredible coincidences, coincidences the depiction of which would famously never be believed if they were in a movie!

Perhaps the real legerdemain of a great film is that as it unfurls itself in a complete upheaval of pre-given givens, it does so in a way that seems to exist within an absolute set of givens. It gives itself its own givens. But how can ‘it’ give anything to anything, let alone give itself its own given set of givens? Does the film itself assume a sense of agency? Does it become an independent entity divided from its parts (what is an “entity” anyway?)? Does a film transform itself into its own Prime Mover? Does it have a life of its own, separated from the deliberations and machinations of directors, producers,
marketing executives, distributors, customers, and so on? It seems that works of art, whether in the form of films, paintings, or novels indeed do assume something akin to a life. As they are launched into the world, they assume at least a semblance of agency and declare their own order of the everyday, whether that order be a transgression against normative givens (whatever those may happen to be) or an embrace of the same. With a film, once the lights dim and the movie begins, its first order of business is to enunciate its set of givens and then move against those givens. This is called drama.

This disruption (or irruption or interruption) of the everyday by the corrosive effects of filmic givens (corrosive in the sense of displacing or replacing (or misplacing?) the normative givens of the everyday) is exactly what makes movies such a thrill. Despite the stark and obvious disparities in their genres, the Marx Brothers tossing bags of peanuts and hurling baseballs over the heads of bewildered opera aficionados in *A Night at the Opera*; J.J. “Jake” Gittes pulling the covers on big city corruption and incest in *Chinatown*, and Jason Bourne trying to recover the boundaries of his original givens in *The Bourne Trilogy* (*The Bourne Identity*, *The Bourne Supremacy*, *The Bourne Ultimatum*) are all examples *par excellence* of film’s relentless unhinging of the everyday.

To return to Mulberry Street. The odd thing here, in watching this painter put his coat on to Finnegan’s Notions, is that this creation of an alternative set of givens entirely consists of a long series of what seem to be everyday actions: A man paints. Someone else sweeps up dust. A man carrying a clipboard walks by, talking on a cell-phone. And so on.
Further down Mulberry, let us suppose that a crowed has gathered. Let us imagine that as we approach, we hear that famous trio of cries: “Speed! Rolling! Action!” A woman walks across a street. A man rides by on a bike. The woman opens her purse, takes out a gun, and shoots. The man falls, writhing, bleeding on the pavement. There is a moment of stillness as the man lies there, apparently in the throes of death, and then someone cries “Cut!”

Well, then the conceit of the everyday will not hold. None of this is everyday. The man is painting a false front. The woman walking across the street is an actress: though she actually does walk across the street, simultaneously she pretends to walk across the street (of course since we are supposing this scenario, we must be pretending that she pretends as well). It’s not an everyday street and it’s not an everyday woman and that’s not an everyday gun either. The bullet’s not everyday (are any bullets everyday? – not if they are peeling back your skin), the blood is fake (the everyday cannot be faked, can it?), and the actor jumps up after ‘Cut!’ is cried out. What kind of a world is this?

It must be given here that the given is something to be taken, reconfigured, packaged, and then re-given. The actress, from her standpoint, has a task at hand, the job of fitting certain actions within the strictures of the set of givens of this given scene. This is her everyday job, to align fictional acts within the structure of everyday reality, to tuck these acts between the folds of the reality that is being created for this particular set of givens, which happens to be a film. But did it just happen to be a film? Reality was rolling pleasantly along and BOOM! a film just happened to intervene, interrupting the flow of more or less usual events. No, a very particular set of givens had to be carved out
of an inchoate reality: a script had to be written, money had to be raised, actors and
actresses hired, sets fabricated, cameras focused, actions blocked, and so on.

Still, at various levels, everyday realities continue: as the actress walks across the
street, her stomach gurgles: she thinks to herself: 'That’s those fucking roasted peppers I
ate last night, what a pig: I knew I shouldn’t’ve had them,’ this everyday thought nudging
against her concentration which is supposed to be focused on the given at hand: the
action of walking across a street, opening her purse, pulling out a gun, and shooting a
man on a bike. As she walks, she is aware (possibly) of the bright lights shining on her
back, of the director watching her (a director whom (possibly) she detests), of her gait
(perhaps she has modeled her walk on the gait of a woman she saw once for a split
second on what seemed to be an everyday May evening in 1999 in New York City but for
this woman walking with what seemed (at least to our actress) to be a thick layer of
murderous intent down Fifth Avenue appeared to be anything but an everyday evening as
she walked along with such a vicious intensity that it seemed (at least to the actress) that
balmy evening in May that the woman might have a gun in her purse and was only
looking for the appropriate man to shoot (but perhaps the actress has modeled her gait on
nothing in particular at all and is merely walking across the street with the kind of
concentrated fury that she imagines would be required to suggest to a given audience
member that she, the actress, might take a gun out of her purse and shoot the man on the
bike), of the man on the bike, an actor she (possibly) had an affair with at one time and
had been jilted by and had (actually) fantasized about murdering and now here she is,
pretending to kill the man she had once only imagined killing (a “real” sort of
pretending? that is, more real than acting?). But none of this will be known (will it?) by a
person (an innocent person? a lonely person? a bored person? what exactly are the given theoretical psychological and emotional conditions of this given theoretical audience member? What are the demographic constituents of its collective character?) of a person sitting ten months from now in a movie theatre in Kansas City San Francisco London Toledo (of Spain and of Ohio) Shanghai or Bogotá.

It is the everyday order of things here that extraordinary things are done. In a sense, this turns reality inside out. Putting a series of images on film, creating a story, produces a reflexive set of givens, a spool of cinematic givens that are doubled above the set of realistic givens: by these maneuvers, parallel everyday universes are fabricated and put up for sale. Pay admission and observe as an extraordinary set of givens (mirroring the given set of givens? replacing them? misplacing them? merely providing temporary relief from reality’s everyday demands through the manifestation of an alternative set of givens?) unravels in front of one’s eyes! The old carnival barker’s cries…

We stroll on as the imagined director huddles with the imaginary cinematographer to discuss the imaginary given shot, the given composition of the given shot, the given light as it shines on the given composition of the given shot, the given refraction of the given light as it shines on the given composition of the given shot. And so on. Meanwhile, the actress checks her gun and the actor is re-costumed as he must have an unbloodied suit for the next given take of the given shot. And then the given is re-given again, as take follows take and an extraordinary everyday shooting commences once again.

As we pass another fabricated neo-Americana establishment, the Royal Diner (“Since 1948 The Best Burgers in the District”) and turn left onto Avenue D, a sign states
that the speed limit is eight miles per hour. Streets run between huge hulking stages. Inside them, screw guns and electric saws wail as carpenters construct sets. A young woman drives by in a golf cart as an old man walks the other way, reading pages from a script. And, though this particular woman will never drive by again while this particular man walks the other way, at least not at this particular time, it all seems so everyday, so plain, so ordinary, so given, as it there’s nothing to fuss over (that is, unless something emerges to cut through the equilibrium of the given and upset the stasis of the everyday)

But isn’t this the condition (its given condition) of any and every instance of reality? That is, that though every particular instance of reality is usually taken as given and assumes the shape of the plain and the ordinary, the mantle of the everyday, that it is quite extraordinary that anything takes place at all? Given this perspective, nothing partakes of the everyday; or reality only assumes the mantle of the everyday as a kind of disguise for its essentially extraordinary character. Concealed within the drab and ordinary costume of the everyday, the extraordinary goes parading. It must hide itself within the ordinary: if it did not, nothing could be done. We would continually be stunned, blinded by the singularity of every instance of reality. The assumption of the everyday, its ascension, allows a certain sense of normality to surround us with its givens.

This lack of singularity also serves to connect disconnected slices of reality. For if every moment was unframed and suspended by its own idiosyncratic singularity, discrete moments would remain absolutely discrete; in effect, there would be no present because there would be no past against which to define each passing moment, the present requiring a reflection of itself for purposes of identification. Or, rather, there would only be present moments, but each instant would be sui generis and therefore unidentifiable.
So the given, that which goes unquestioned in its normative everydayness, gives the present to us; out of the given each moment emerges, and it is only against this backdrop of the continually ongoing given that moments can be classified, categorized, put into place, witnessed, experienced, touched, seen.

But how is the everyday manufactured? Or, rather, is it manufactured? Or does it simply create itself through distinct processes of social evolution (a variety of pathogenesis), any given set of givens not truly given at all, but “selected” for optimal survival value. But wait: aren’t we walking through a place, this movie studio, where instantiations of the everyday are created? However, didn’t we previously claim that films are defined by their ability to puncture and perforate the given: so how can film simultaneously instantiate the everyday yet also sunder the given? But this is exactly what they set out to do as they knock over one set of givens only to establish another. Some films take another route, questioning a set of givens to the point of abandoning them, only to return to them with a renewed appreciation of their value. Isn’t that precisely what happens in, say, *The Wizard of Oz*? Dorothy leaves that prime exemplar of the everyday, a family farm in Kansas, to travel to Oz, that prime exemplar of the extraordinary, only to return to Kansas with a reinvigorated sense of appreciation for its given set of givens. This type of story – a variation on the return of the prodigal son – serves to buttress faith in the already established order of everydayness. It doesn’t so much create the everyday as renew our faith in its virtues of veracity and integrity.

On the other hand, some films do seem to create everyday reality. They are taken as templates from which to imitate everyday behavior. Young men copy the diction and gestures of screen heroes, thereby disseminating the actor’s style into mannerisms seen
on everyday streets. Thus the givens of a certain actor or actress become reflected as refractions in the behavior of millions of people; such massive alterations in behavior patterns, in turn, inevitably alter the contours of everyday reality. Such patterns can loop back self-reflexively and influence young actors who then reflect this reflection of a reflection back onto the screen (which is just another reflection).

Product placement, the inclusion of merchandising in films by the more or less discrete placement of products in scenes, acknowledges the power of movies to instantiate everyday behavior: multinational corporations don’t spend money for nothing. In films, therefore, what seems to be given is actually placed. A thorough process of vetting precedes what is meant to be taken as spontaneous deeds. Everything is crafted, dressed, blocked: with the exceptions (perhaps) of certain religious ceremonies and political events, the articulation of the given instantiations of behavior has never been as controlled as it has in the Hollywood Film. What is meant to be simply given is not given so simply after all. Whether it’s a colossal explosion or a handshake, everything filmed is done so with the highest degree of calibration.

But how does anything so finely calibrated as a Hollywood Film find a place within the domain of the everyday, a realm that exists without notice in a zone that is given and assumes its place without assumption? Is this stealthy insertion of a film into the assumed due to the illusion of film? Its stealthiness rendered invisible by the craftiness of its appearance, interjecting itself into everyday life as if it had always belonged. Perhaps this quality is what lies at the root of the suspicion about film: its sneaky replication of the given, its assumption that it can duplicate or even make an improvement on that which is truly given? But what is “truly” given? Isn’t any and every
construal of the given a “take” on the given, and therefore doesn’t that amount to a contingent interpretation on what is given? But doesn’t the very act of making a construal of the given nullify the given as given? Once taken up into the mind, the given is no longer given but taken. And taken in a certain way, contingent upon who is doing the taking. So could that particular take or any particular take on the given be the take that is “truly” given? But isn’t the given only given as a given if it is collectively taken as given? If the given was constituted solely by individual interpretations (takes), then how could the given form a continuous and indivisible field? But is the given continuous and indivisible? Or are there rifts and gaps in the given, places where the given is punctured and leaks? Isn’t that exactly what accidents, coincidences, and serendipitous events are: sudden rifts and unexpected conjunctions in the seams of the given? And if there are such things as miracles, they must be inexplicable reversals of the given, abrupt and incomprehensible inversions of the everyday. However, if such a thing occurred, then the everyday could no longer sustain its status as the everyday, for it would be characterized by the miraculous and not the routine.

But, to retrieve the immediate question, must not the given be collectively taken, its parameters and perimeters assumed as given by a given population; for if the given was not assumed to be the given by a critical mass of participants in the routine events of the day than one person’s given would be another’s reversal of the same. This might lead to extraordinary, if not miraculous, events. So is the taking of the given a collective endeavor? But “endeavor” connotes an act or a set of acts that are deliberately taken whereas the given is delineated by the very opposite: it becomes given via a process that is precisely defined by a lack of deliberation.
But is that true? Take traffic patterns, for instance. They seem to be simply given, as if they arose naturally out of nowhere. However, upon closer inspection, this doesn’t seem to be true, as the rules of the road are articulated in various codes, regulations, and laws. But is their legal articulation a simple codification of pre-existing rules or instead an imposition? Or are such rules an admixture of that which is antecedent of and that which is consequent to their own institution? A brew of that which is naturally given and that which is given by those who are given authority to construct and impose laws?

Take the speed limit on the Fox lot, for instance. Eight miles an hour: did that idiosyncratic speed come to be because drivers imposed that limit on themselves or did some executive mandate it? Either option seems credible, as that appears to be the rate of speed at which trucks and golf carts could safely navigate around each other on the tight squeezes of such narrow lanes, and so that may have been the speed which had naturally came to be accepted on the lot and only then came to be instantiated as the regulated speed limit; or, on the other hand, were people driving at all kinds of speeds, from, say, two miles per hour to fifty, leading to the establishment of a normative speed? Or did these two processes merge: at the same time that drivers seemed to be naturally settling on the common speed of eight miles per hour, this limit was encoded and signage indicating that speed was then posted?

But regardless of the process by which it was established, the lot’s speed limit is now a cog in its givens. And perhaps the mechanical allusion is spot on, for the fields of givens which make up what could be called the composite given (the field of the whole) might be best understood as a mechanical device, invisible cogs, pulleys, winches, cranks, and handles operating the entire contraption from some secret off-sight location.
But no, that’s not it: there’s something much too frictionless about the givens of the everyday for it ever to be aligned with a mechanical trope. Pieces of the given seem to glide in and out of place noiselessly, as if suspended by threads, fields woven together while we’re looking the other way. But no, that’s not it either, for we as receivers of the given are also creators of the given: the given, to fully come into being, requires our agency, our active participation, for do we not uphold the given by our daily acts? But the mere upholding of the given, our adherence to it is not tantamount to an act of will (whether on an individual or collective basis (but can there be a collective will?)) which keeps the givens of the given going. For, after all, is such an adherence to the given done (given) on a completely unconscious basis? Do we systematically adhere to the strictures and structures of the given: do we do so without thought? Is such adherence embedded in our very DNA, as they say, or does our alignment with the given emerge out of a series of decisions each of us makes, the taking of the given the result of acts of agency effectuated countless times on a daily basis across the globe? In other words, do we renew our adherence to the given every time we walk out of our houses and apartments in the morning, or is our compliance with the given simply given, without any need for acts of will?

But how could we not comply with the given? Could that even be done? If so, what would it consist of? What would we do to do such a thing? Walk backwards all day long? Wear a mask? Talk in gibberish? Dance on our desks? Expose ourselves? Drive at one mile an hour? Or one hundred? Scream? Cry? Wail? Bray?

It all seems silly, not to mention impractical, and it’s the sheer impracticality of it which may be the paramount reason that the given is so rarely transgressed. Though
walking backwards might be intriguing as a novelty, and may even have some therapeutic value, both physiologically and psychologically, walking backwards all day would be well, rough. Wearing a mask is illegal, except on special occasions such as Halloween; so is exposing oneself. Gibberish does not work too well when one is trying to order a Chai Vanilla Mocha, though gibberish in tandem with gesticulations can result in efficacious acts of communication. Dancing on desks is fine, though it’s hard to imagine anyone getting much work done this way, that is unless one is a stripper at a racy office party. Driving one mile an hour will get you where you want to go, eventually, and it will cut down on fuel expenses, but the pace would be excruciating and the loss of time involved incompatible with the heavy demands of our schedules. Speeding up to one hundred would be unsafe, illegal, and costly, as speeding tickets are among the costliest of traffic infractions.

So is our adherence to the givens of the everyday merely a matter of practicality and nothing else? The gift that is the given merely taken so the given keeps on giving? But the stability of the everyday, its solid equipoise, provides a foundation to everyday life, the assumption of which should not be taken lightly. For without it, things fall apart and the center cannot even be located, let alone hold. But does its assumption exceed the bottom line of allowing us to assume a collective set of tacit guidelines (held together by an invisible set of guy-lines) to the ongoing sustainability of everyday life? Does it serve as a stand-in for a ritual act? In other words, can the assumed conditions and settled behavior patterns of the everyday be conceived as a tacit ritual, an unacknowledged ceremonial act, enacted on an unrecognized massive scale? The entire population following pre-given steps that continually re-enact the silent instantiation of those acts
themselves? Collective adherence to the everyday a self-perpetuating machine solely
dedicated to its own perpetuation? But isn’t that an analytic conclusion, as self-
perpetuation can only be dedicated to its own continuance? So, once again, is that the
only by-product of this adherence to the everyday: the continuance of the everyday? And,
yet again, is that such a trivial result, as without the centripetal force of such adherence,
centrifugal forces would spin the assumed set of givens into a splattered remnant of
themselves. And, so it seems, we are caught in a self-perpetuating argument, the
continuance of the everyday justifying the continuance of the everyday.

Right about then we almost walk right into an Athens Services dumpster. A sign
on the blue flanks of the dumpster proclaims that this container can be used for Waste
Collection, Recycling, Transfer-Disposal, and Street Sweeping. So this is part and parcel
of the given: a dumpster company with the name of Athens! Perhaps a Greek runs the
company, a transplanted Thessalonian, a migrant from Thebes, an exile from Delos. Or
perhaps the dumpster company’s name is a tribute to the Greek tragedians, homage to
Euripides and Sophocles, or maybe it’s a method by which Hollywood salutes its roots in
the Orphic mystery plays. Or maybe it was picked out of the proverbial hat, the other
options being Hong Kong, Philadelphia, Calcutta, and Johannesburg. No matter, the
garbage goes in and comes out and is replaced and recycled once again, the inflow and
outflow of waste well circumscribed within the strictures of what is given.

But of course this is just the point: the receptacles of Athens don’t simply appear
out of nowhere (the blue), as if ordered up, transported and set into their locations by the
naturally occurring prescriptions of the givens of the everyday. Dumpsters must be
designed, manufactured, and purchased; deals must be negotiated, contracts drawn up,
payments made, drivers hired, and dumpsters transported into pre-arranged locations: none of this happens accidentally or incidentally: it all occurs out of consciously-derived thoughts and instantiated actions, resulting from decisions and directives. And what we wind up with is one small piece of what is given: that waste will be collected and disposed. Such a system inserts itself into the everyday, iterates and reiterates itself, and we become inured to it, as if it had always been so, until we stop and notice it, due to the idiosyncratic musings of a wayward social scientist or the disturbances of a garbage strike. And of course waste collection and disposal is only one small but significant sub-system within the massive logistical superstructure which perpetuates the ongoing givenness of the given, maintaining it so that everyday structures can be renewed and reproduced on a daily basis. A highly-crafted, multi-layered, finely-grained, self-perpetuating organism, the presence of which we are so accustomed to that we are usually ignorant as to its very existence; is that what the everyday is?

And when we do notice the everyday, turn our attention to it and attend to its presence, bringing the habitual absence of its presence into presence, as it were: what then? Does not that very act impinge upon the everyday and through that act of obtrusion evacuate us from its continuity? But such an action would presuppose that one could step outside the everyday, and such an action might be inherently or analytically impossible. Does access to the everyday demand ignorance of the everyday? But wait, what is “access to the everyday”? Is it a gate by which we enter the given? Is it a code secreted throughout the body which allows ingress to the set of givens that happen to be prevailing at the time? But such a construal returns us to one of our primary questions: does the everyday just “happen” to be there or is it a result of contingent yet collective
constructions resulting in the superstructure of a particular instantiation of a set of

givens? And this might lead us to consider the possibility that particular instantiations of

the given are coming in and out of existence at breathtaking speed, variations of the given

continually creating themselves (how could they create themselves?), each instantiation

conditioning its consequent, superseding each other at such a quicksilver pace and with

such subtle gradations that they occur without notice.

Just then Marilyn Monroe makes her entrance. She looks down on us from on

high; blonde hair and golden smile radiant, breasts seeming to promise everything, not

only relief from the caterwauling manifold of sexual frustration, but also escape from the

daily grind and, perhaps, an answer to our questions about the nature of the everyday. Or

at least the promise that once was buried in her bosom, all anxieties about the given will

disappear in the deep luxuriance of her soft flesh. Marilyn has made her abrupt entrance

onto the stage of our monograph via a mural of The Seven-Year Itch: she sits on a couch

next to her befuddled co-star, the sexually titillated Tom Ewell, stand-in for the common

man circa 1957. The mural covers the entire side of a sound stage, consecrating one of

Fox’s hits and Marilyn’s soft purr star power.

Perhaps now is the time to mention that Fox does not simply exist as this set of

ongoing activities on its lot at Motor and Pico. It also exists as what is termed its library

of movies: in a sense, Fox is these films, including The Seven-Year Itch, Star Wars, and

The Ox-Bow Incident (among numerous others of course) as well as Executive Building

88, the Mulberry Street mock-up, the Athens Dumpsters, the lone painter, Craft Building

99, and the lot’s 22 sound stages. The studio is also an asset of News Corp, Rupert

Murdoch’s media empire, and is thereby merely one among many assets (including The
Wall Street Journal, Blue Sky Studios, The Times, MySpace, Harper Collins Publishers, British Sky Broadcasting, and The New York Post)\(^1\) and can be conceived as merely numbers on a piece of paper. Such an abstraction is part of the given as well, at least to corporate accountants, stock-jobbers (as they once were called (in that particular terminological instantiation of the given)), business executives, and readers of The Financial Times and The Economist, not to mention the aforementioned Wall Street Journal.

We have reached the commissary and deserve lunch, food being a necessary prerequisite for the perusal of the given. On a hedge outside the commissary, an artist in topiary has sculpted the conjoined faces of Tragedy and Comedy out of the thickness of the green hedge. Attic roots, once again. Let’s go get a turkey on rye before we take off for our next stop on this tour of the everyday.

Chapter Seven:

Spatial Secretion: The Nigerian Case

In this chapter, we add spatial secretion to our utility bag, our tool kit, our handy brew. Just as we added the verticality of time (the depth of history), now we add the horizontality of space (the width of geography). We will do this by inserting Henri Lefebvre's notion of socio-spatial secretion into our astructural structure. Then we will apply this analytical tool to the case of the Nigerian oil assemblage, using the work of geographer Michael Watts to focus our analysis.

Spatial practice is described by Lefebvre in *The Production of Space* in the following manner: “The spatial practice of a society secretes that society’s space; it propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction; it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it” (1991b: 38). Lefebvre foresaw the difficulties of analyzing spatial secretion due to disciplinary fragmentation and the resulting (and inevitable) fragmentation of the theorizing of space and its practices: “The dominant tendency [of studying space and spatial practices] fragments space and cuts it up into pieces.

It enumerates the things, the various objects, that space contains. Specializations divide space among them and act upon its truncated parts, setting up mental barriers and practico-social frontiers. Thus architects are assigned architectural space as their (private) property, economists come into possession of economic space, geographers get their own ‘place in the sun’, and so on. The *ideologically* dominant tendency divides space up into parts and parcels in accordance with the social division of labor. (1991b: 89-90; italics, Lefebvre).
So, spatial secretion must be studied holistically: its geographical features cannot be studied separately from its economy, its history, its society, its politics, etc. According to Lefebvre, works of fiction which have been composed about or in the secreted space should also be included in spatial analysis. So a spatial analysis of New York City should include a spatially-inflected analysis of the work of such writers as James Baldwin, Kathy Acker, Edith Wharton, Joel Rose, Norman Mailer, Chester Himes, Henry James, Philip Roth, Grace Paley, Saul Bellow, E.B. White, Henry Miller, and Isaac Bashevis Singer, among others.

It must also be noted that embedded within Lefebvre’s conception of space is a Marxian construal of space as a means of production and as forms of use and surplus value or, rather, a Marxian-Hegelian construal, as Lefebvre's conception of Marxism has more than a touch of Hegel's analytic tossed in for good measure. “Space is a means of production: the network of exchanges and the flow of raw materials that make up space also are determined by space” (1979: 287). So this is odd, in that space is both that which does the determining and that which is determined; but such is the import of space to Lefebvre that it can apparently perform this double-duty while it also reflects Lefebvre's debt to Hegel. How could that be possible, this doubling up of space as that which does the determining and that which is determined?

In order to comprehend such a possibility of space being that which is being produced and that which is also doing the producing, both the active agent and the passive patient of this production, we must first understand that by "space" Lefebvre means social space and that "(Social) space is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products" (1991b: 73). Well, what is it then? In The Production of
Space, Lefebvre' answers this by initially casting social space in a Hegelian dialectal mold: "It [space; i.e. social space, aka `(social) space'] subsumes things produced, and encompasses their interrelationships in their coexistence and simultaneity - their (relative) order and/or (relative) disorder" (1991b: 73). So subsumption, that simultaneous retention and elimination which Hegel terms Aufhebung and which is usually translated into English as either "sublation" or "overcoming" is that "mysterious something" of dialectics which creates itself while destroying itself, maintains itself while shattering itself, preserves itself while obliterating itself.

Using Venice as an exemplar of his conception of social space, and, following Lefebvre as he trains his lens on his subject matter and uses the "space of the canals and streets, where water and stone create a texture founded on reciprocal reflection" as his exemplar of the City of Venice itself, Lefebvre asks his readers if these canals and these streets are a work or a product, and then answers his own question with the Hegelian response that it is both an ongoing work and a product of that work: "Here, everyday life and its functions [on the canals and in the streets] are coextensive with, and utterly transformed by, a theatricality as sophisticated as it is unsought" (1991b: 74). In other words, the canals and streets of Venice are functioning as transportation routes, that is, they work as such, that is, they are working as those who work upon them intend them to work; yet they also are products, in this case, products with a great degree of theatrical, aesthetic, and economic value, which as products (the product: a canal of Venice; and the other product: a street of Venice) translate into a great deal of surplus value for Venice and her residents. So that the streets and canals of Venice are able to maintain this socio-spatial equipoise of work and product through functioning as both work and product.
Lefebvre, being Lefebvre, is not content to let it rest at that, as into this already robust stew, he adds certain festal spices, tossing elements of the spectacle and the festival into the kettle: "All the same, every bit of Venice is part of a great hymn to diversity in pleasure and inventiveness in celebration, revelry and sumptuous ritual…. There is even a touch of madness added for good measure" (1991b: 77, 74). It is important to add this, if simply to indicate that Lefebvre is a thinker whom, much like the everyday itself, cannot be held captive: he eludes our grasp as he continuously persists in staking out new and (sometimes) contradictory material for inclusion in his analyses. So that, with any given analysis of any given conception of Lefebvre's, the stipulation must be submitted that any given analysis of any given conception of Lefebvre's will end up falling short of any conclusive resolution, as the goalpost marking resolution shifts through Lefebvre's own feints and parries down the field as he takes the ball along with him. With that caveat fully noted, let us proceed.

What Lefebvre is suggesting is that we construct a way of studying spatial production (or the production of things in space) "which would analyze not things in space but space itself, with a view to uncovering the social relationships embedded in it" (1991b: 89). Or, as M. Gottdiener puts it in *The Social Production of Urban Space*: "Urban science in general rests on a basic premise that the spatial patterns of settlement space correspond to the action of deep-level forces of social organization," a judgment which can be accepted if we stipulate that 'settlement space' corresponds to all built urban space, including office buildings, government institutions, museums, parks, roads, homes, stores, etc. (1985: 8). "If a qualitatively new form of space has developed … this implies that the very mode of social organization has changed" (Gottdiener 1985: 8).
Such a method would "help us to grasp how societies generate their (social) space[s]"
(Lefebvre 1991b: 91); for instance, Lefebvre asks us to "consider a house …

The house has six storeys [sic] and an air of stability about it. One might almost see it as the epitome of immovability, with its concrete and its stark, cold and rigid outlines…. Now, a critical [socio-spatial] analysis would doubtless destroy the appearance of solidity of this house, stripping it … and uncovering a very different picture. In the light of this imaginary analysis, our house would emerge as permeated from every direction by streams of energy which run in and out of every imaginable route: water, gas, electricity, telephone lines, radio and telephone signals, and so on. Its image of immovability would then be replaced by an image of a complex of mobilities, a nexus of in and out conduits. (1991b: 92-93).

We can, Lefebvre tells us, extrapolate this analytic structure out to the street in front of the house, and then beyond to the city in which the house sits, and then beyond the city to the governance of the city and the state itself, and so on. However, Lefebvre warns us that there is an "error - or illusion - generated here," consisting "in the fact that when social space is placed beyond our range of vision in this way, its practical character vanishes and it is transformed" into "fetishized abstract space" instead of "space as directly experienced," a space (or spaces) in which people are living, working, sleeping, thinking, dying, making love, and so on (1991b: 93). Wrenching space away from its abstract monetized commodity form and inserting it into its use value everyday form is Lefebvre's primary goal, as he perceives this as forming the plexus of revolutionary praxis: "For Lefebvre, the revolutionary transformation of society requires the appropriation of space, the freedom to use space, the existential right to space (le droit a la ville) to all be reasserted through some radical version of sociospatial praxis"
(Gottdiener 1985: 128). Here, as initial exemplars of this we could cite the events of May
1968, the passage of the national right to the city legislation in Brazil (Fernandes 2007: 201-219), and the recent Occupy Wall Street protests. Perhaps if we wish to understand the basic practices of socio-spatial secretion itself, it may be best to turn to a more extended delineation of a "real world" example in order to illuminate this. So instead of six-storey house, concrete, cold and rigid, let us consider the complex assemblage of Nigerian oil.

*Secreting an Oil Industry*

We shall commence with a brief and necessarily cursory overview of the history of oil in Nigeria - its discovery, its exploitation, and its role as "resource curse" and prime hub in both the political and the economic nexus of Nigerian society. In a draft of a 2010 working paper titled "Forgotten Crimes: Life, Death and Illusion on the Nigerian Oil Fields," Michael Watts tells us that

Nigeria is a relative latecomer as an 'oil state'. Unlike the first wave of oil discoveries in the Middle East, Russia and South America in the early part of the twentieth century, and the major North African discoveries somewhat later, Nigeria only delivered its first oil exports to the world market in 1958. (2010: 2).

Nigeria gained its independence from Britain in 1960, formed a federated government, and then "fell into a civil war in which oil - Biafra which succeeded from the federation in 1967 was the heart of the fast growing oil industry - played its part" (Watts 2010: 3). Following this infamous and bloody civil war, in which Biafra was defeated, "the oil sector came to dominate the economy and polity and protecting oil assets militarily was the hallmark of a long and dark period of military rule," (Watts 2010: 3), which lasted "from 1966 to 1979" (Ajayi 1991: 414). However, the return to a civilian government
was brief, lasting only four years until 1983, when military leaders once again took over the government and ruled till 1999 at which time, once again, democracy was restored.

Yet, whether a military or a civilian government has been in charge, a reign of "petro-violence" and oil-stoked corruption has been on the increase since the initial "black gold" strike in 1958.² Despite some seven hundred billion dollars worth of oil extracted during the last fifty-odd years, per capita income is less today than it was in 1958. In the Niger River delta itself, with its "606 oilfields," which "supplies 40% of all the crude the United States imports and is the world capital of oil pollution,…, [l]ife expectancy in its rural communities, half of which have no access to clean water, has fallen to little more than 40 years over the past two generations" (Vidal 2010: 1). As Watts recounts this "salutary and dismal" tale:

A half century of oil wealth … has propelled Nigeria into the ranks of the oil rich at the same time as much of the petro-wealth has been squandered, stolen and channeled to largely political, as opposed to productive, ends…. 85 percent of oil revenues accrue to 1 percent of the population…. Around $300 billion of the $700 or so billion in oil revenues accrued since 1960 have simply ‘gone missing’…. In 2003, 70% of the country's oil wealth was stolen or wasted; by 2005 it was 'only' 40%. Between 1970 and 2000, the number of income poor grew 19 million to a staggering 90 million. Over the last decade GDP per capita and life expectancy have, according to World Bank estimates, both fallen. According to the UNDP (2006), Nigeria ranks in terms of the Human Development Index below Haiti and Congo. (2010: 2-3).

In terms of petro-violence, Watts reported in 2004 that "since the 1990s, there has been a very substantial escalation of violence across the [Niger River] delta oil fields,

² In The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power, Daniel Yergin reports that "A joint venture between Shell and BP, which had begun exploration in Nigeria in 1937, finally in 1956 hit the first signs of oil in the swamppy delta of the Niger River" (1991: 527).
accompanied by major attacks on oil facilities" (2004: 7). In his working paper of 2009, Watts reported that the situation had only gotten worse:

The oil-producing region in the south-east of Nigeria, Africa’s most populous and arguably most important country, is ablate, and for the most part ungovernable…. According to a report leased in late 2008 – prepared by a 43 person government commission and entitled The Report of the Technical Committee of the Niger Delta – in the first nine months of 2008 the Nigerian government lost a staggering $23.7 billion in oil revenues due to militant attacks and sabotage. (2009: 2).

To fill out this thumbnail sketch, we need to insert the existence of the Nigerian resistance movement, a movement which has arguably embodied both the best and the worst aspects of such movements, the best being represented by the Ogoni movement, whose "influential and charismatic leader Ken Saro-Wiwa" was murdered in November of 1995 (Watts 2009: 2), and the worst being represented by warlords such as Ateke Tom, leader of the Niger Delta Vigilantes, which is, according to Watts, nothing but "a vehicle for political thuggery and organized crime rather than any political project" (Watts 2010: 11-12). However, these extremes do not seem to be very representative of the overall resistance movement itself, which is perhaps a tautological statement, as most extremes, by definition, are not very representative of whatever movements to which they are conjoined. Neither are they representative "of the organized criminal syndicate involving high ranking military, politicians and businessmen" who "by some estimates" bunker up to 100,000 barrels of oil a day, though the insurgent groups "are funded in part by their local control of the oil 'bunkering' (theft) trade" (Watts 2010: 12).

Whatever its merits, a certain portion of the resistance movement in the Niger Delta has certainly become a force to be reckoned with, as well as a force which, at least
to a certain degree, can claim to legitimately represent the will of the people: Watts bolsters both these claims in his working paper of 2009:

In late 2005, a new and well organized militant group the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) exploded out of the creeks of the western delta promising to close down the oil industry. Within a matter of days close to one third of national output was shut-in. According to a report leased [sic] in late 2008 … in the first ninth months of 2008 the Nigerian government lost a staggering $23.7 billion in oil revenues due to militant attacks and sabotage…. [A] recent survey poll released in 2009 … shows clearly that local communities have no faith whatsoever in the state and local government …. The incontestable fact … is that there is overwhelming popular sympathy across the Delta for what the militants are doing and saying. (2009: 2,4).

What seems to have happened in Nigeria is that "the shift from non-violent protest to militancy, and ultimately to armed struggle, was in many respects the inevitable result of the Nigerian government’s brutal repression of the Ogoni movement" and the murder of Saro-Wiwa (Watts 2009: 2). And there seems to be no abatement to the violence, as in May of 2009 "federal troops launched a full-scale counter-insurgency" against the insurgents, to which MEND responded in July 2009 with "an audacious, and devastating assault attack on Atlas Cove, a major oil facility in Lagos;" by the end of 2009, Shell (the primary oil extraction company operating in Nigeria) had "closed its western operations completely," abandoning its Delta facilities while keeping its "barely producing" eastern facilities running" (Watts 2010: 4).

Now that we have sketched out this admittedly rudimentary history of oil production in Nigeria, I want to turn to the primary focus of this chapter, which is the organization of the Nigerian oil complex itself. Through this examination, we will be able to trace the secretion of space in a mode which will reflect Lefebvre's notions about the same.
The Oil Complex in Nigeria

In the draft of his 2010 working paper, Watts hurls a huge net around what he calls the oil complex, seemingly drawing everything into its encircling reach:

In seeing oil as a complex (rather than a production network) I want to emphasize the variety of actors, agents and processes, that gave shape to our version of carbon capitalism: that is obviously the IOCs [international oil corporations], the NOCs [national oil companies] and the service companies and the massive oil infrastructure, but also the petrostates, the massive engineering companies and financial groups, the shadow economies, theft, money laundering, drugs, organized crime, the rafts of NGO's (human rights organizations, monitoring agencies, corporate social responsibility groups, voluntary regulatory agencies), the research institutes and lobbying groups, the landscape of oil consumption (from SUV's of [sic] pharmaceuticals), and not least the oil communities, the military and paramilitary groups, and the social movements, which surround the operations of, and shape the functioning of, the oil industry narrowly construed. (Watts 2010: 8-9).

Imagine that: this is the oil complex, narrowly construed! Broadly construed, we would have to include national states and their respective governments, as well as the environment and its "constituents," including such proximate members as the flora and fauna of the Niger delta and such distal members as the waters of the oceans, and the air we breathe. Let us also insert "the wildcat drillers, smooth-talking promoters, and domineering entrepreneurs" as well as the oil sheiks, Niger River guerillas, and CIA operatives running rigging companies as "company" fronts, and we only begin to scratch the surface of the motley crew populating the assemblage of characters circumambulating the vast territory of the oil complex (Yergin 1991: 13). Here is another stab by Watts at circumscribing this assemblage:

Modern petro-capitalism operates through a particular “oil complex” (an institutional configuration of firms, state apparatuses, and oil communities) that
constitutes a radical—and multifaceted—challenge to customary forms of community authority, systems of ethnic identity, and the functioning of local state institutions. These challenges are generated principally by mechanisms of property and land disputes and by forms of popular mobilization to gain access to first, company rents and compensation revenues, and second, to the petro-revenues of the Nigerian state (largely by demanding and instituting new regional and/or local state institutions). The oil complex generates differing sorts of governable spaces in which identity, territory, and rule are in play. In some cases, generational forces (youth in particular) are predominant; in others the clan, the kingdom (chieftainship), or the ethnic minority (indigenous peoples). Local government councils or authorities, or radical (sometimes secessionist) insurgent movements, can also provide the setting in which new political communities are incubated. (Watts 2004: 4).

These expansive construals of the commodity chain encompassing oil, though sweeping in scope and gigantic in scale, still fail to adequately capture the range and extent of this wide and rambling chain.

Perhaps if we slow down the catalogue, retard the itinerary, and proceed one step at a time, we may be better able to corral the vast undulating circle of this particular commodity chain. We might want to reference Stephen J. Collier and Aihwa Ong's construal of an assemblage as defining "new material, collective, and discursive relationships … as global forms are articulated in specific situations - or territorialized in assemblages…. These are domains in which the forms and values of individual and collective existence are problematized or at stake, in the sense that they are subject to technological, political and ethical reflection and intervention" (2005: 4; italics, Collier and Ong). Perhaps Jane Bennett provides the most thoroughly latitudinarian definition of assemblage:

An assemblage is, first an ad hoc grouping, a collectivity whose origins are historical and circumstantial, though its contingent status says nothing about its efficacy, which can be quite strong. An assemblage is, second, a living, throbbing
grouping whose coherence coexists with energies and countercultures that exceed and confound it. An assemblage is, third, a web with an uneven topography: some of the points at which the trajectories of actants cross each other are more heavily trafficked than others, and thus power is not equally distributed across the assemblage. An assemblage is, fourth, not governed by a central power: no one member has sufficient competence to fully determine the consequences of the activities of the assemblage. An assemblage, finally, is made up of many types of actants: humans and nonhumans; animals, vegetables, and minerals; nature, culture, and technology. (2005: 445).

In the case of the oil assemblage, from a gas pump in Sligo, Ireland (for instance) to the speed boat of a squadron of bunkering MEND rebels swooping through the Niger River delta to the corporate boardrooms of Shell Oil to various NGO offices in Lagos - well, to paraphrase Bob Dylan, that's a lot of territory to cover, indeed. What's even more is that we need to include a diachronic formulation of the assemblage as well, for "assemblages are in constant variation, are themselves subject to transformation" (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 85). For nothing stands still, sitting patiently while philosophers and historians gaze upon it and compose their analyzes.

So, should we proceed synchronically or diachronically, do we lead with space or time, geography or history? Didn't we suggest, or rather demand, way back in Chapter Two ("The SpaceTimePlace `Thing'") that such a bifurcation is exactly the thing to be avoided whenever analyzing basically anything? Let alone when analyzing something so alive to the nuances of space and time as oil, the crude itself a product of the passage of time in certain vectors of space, pockets sunk deep into the earth, the bones of dinosaurs transformed into the liquefied mush which powers our age.
THIS MUCH FUN

SHOULD BE ILLEGAL
On consulting Jane Bennett's *Vibrant Matter: a political ecology of things*, we can perhaps extrapolate her exegesis of assemblage and intercalate it into our own analysis of the oil complex. Bennett, in this instance following Deleuze and Guattari’s construal of assemblage from *A Thousand Plateaus*, writes that:

Assemblages are ad hoc groupings of diverse elements, of vibrant materials of all sorts. Assemblages are living, throbbing, confederations that are able to function despite the persistent presence of energies that confound them from within. They have uneven topographies, because some of the points at which the various affects and bodies cross paths are more heavily trafficked than others, and so power is not distributed equally across its surface. Assemblages are not governed by any central head: no one materiality or type of material has sufficient competence to determine consistently the trajectory or impact of the group. (2010: 23-24).

This helps, especially in terms of the oil complex in its Nigerian manifestation, due to the fact that the assemblage as a whole has as many heads as an oily Medusa, what with MEND forces, multinational firms, and the Nigerian government all struggling for dominance over the assemblage. And the oil complex is a living, throbbing "thing," oil itself cast as both residue from pre-Neolithic epochs and the energy resource powering the living, throbbing matrix of globalization. Power being distributed unequally across the oil complex's surface comports as well, for oil itself is distributed across the surface of the earth "unequally;" likewise, the forces depending on that oil are unequally distributed as well, with some at the superpower status (the US government) and others at the status of "primitive" African villages. Bennett continues:

The effects generated by an assemblage are … emergent properties, emergent in that their ability to make something happen (a newly inflected materialism, a blackout, a hurricane, a war on terror) is distinct from the sum of the vital force of each materiality considered alone. Each member and proto-member of the
assemblage has a certain vital force, but there is also an effectivity proper to the grouping as such: an agency of the assemblage. (2010: 24; italics, Bennett).

The last enumerated property seems problematic in terms of the oil complex, as so many factors or nodes in the oil assemblage work at cross purposes that it becomes difficult to imagine an agency of the assemblage operating as a group; yet I suppose their very polarity, their very resistance to one another (even to the point of murder) can still be construed as an assemblage in Bennett's reading of the term: a dysfunctionally murderous family is still a family, after all.

And precisely because each member-actant maintains an energetic pulse slightly "off" from that of the assemblage, an assemblage is never a solid block but an open-ended collective, a "non-totalizable sum." An assemblage thus not only has a distinctive history but a finite life span. (Bennett 2010: 24).

Well, this last statement rings true re oil, as many experts believe we have hit the oil peak or even surpassed it. And the oil complex is never a stolid block, as it is continually in flux, in terms of price, supply and demand, and constantly under pressure from the various member-actants in the complex, whether those actants be OPEC, Shell Oil, or the numerous bunkerers and saboteurs hovering about the Nigerian oil complex. The state of being in flux comports nicely with Deleuze and Guattari's conception that "assemblages are in constant variation, are themselves constantly subject to transformations," as they put it in A Thousand Plateaus (1987: 82). Yet to call the violently motley grouping of the oil complex a collective goes much too far, unless we stipulate that there are

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dysfunctional collectives as well as dysfunctional families, a solid probability, given the tatterdemalional history of collectives from the USSR to California hippie communes.

Let us also pursue Bennett's allusion to Bruno Latour, as her mention of "actants" clearly references Latour's Actor-Network-Theory. In *We Have Never Been Modern*, Latour states that:

> We start from ... passages and relations, not accepting as a starting point any being that does not emerge from this relation that is at once collective, real and discursive. We do not start from human beings, those latecomers, nor from language, a more recent arrival still. The world of meaning and the world of being are one and the same world, that of translation, substitution, delegation, passing. (Latour: 129).

This passage leaves some rather thorny issues unanswered. How do we tell what is 'at once collective, real, and discursive' when it 'emerges from this relation'? And who is it that makes this decision? In other words, who are 'we'? And, in the case of the oil complex, does the "we" refer to oil executives as well as Ijaw villagers? How does this "we" manage to grab the power necessary to control what emerges from 'this relation'? And how does Latour propose that 'we’ decide what satisfies the criteria of being 'at once collective, real, and discursive'? However, what we do clearly gain from this passage is that Latour is defining "stuff" in terms of relations between every actant in whatever collective is under investigation, whether that actant be a thing, an animal, a human, or a contract.

However, if we return to Deleuze and Guattari we can make some sense, I think, of the idea of the collective vis-à-vis the oil complex. Outlining "some general conclusions on the nature of Assemblages," Deleuze and Guattari state that:
On a first, horizontal, axis, an assemblage comprises two segments, one of content, the other of expression. On the one hand it is a machinic assemblage of bodies, of actions and passions, an intermingling of bodies reacting to one another; on the other hand, it is a collective assemblage of enunciation, of acts and statements, of incorporeal transformations attributed to bodies. Then on a vertical axis, the assemblage has both territorial sides, or reterritorialized sides, which stabilize it, and cutting edges of deterritorialization, which carry it away. (1987: 88; italics, Deleuze and Guattari).

Without bothering to completely unpack this quite complex construal, we ourselves can carry away from it the following in terms of the Nigerian oil complex: collectively, it is an assemblage of enunciation, albeit one with many competing voices speaking in many disparate tongues, uttering the languages of bullets, contracts, environmental catastrophes, revolutionary polemics, tribal ties, resource extraction, drill bits, and governmental corruption, simply to name a few. And it is also simultaneously an assemblage that has both sides of the territorial coin referenced by Deleuze and Guattari, that which stabilizes and that which cuts away, though one would have to concede that the side of deterritorialization has been in the ascendancy throughout much of the period since oil was discovered in Nigeria and certainly of late.

Well, having kicked around the notion of assemblage to a certain uncertain degree, let us toss caution to the zephyrs, and proceed posthaste, without any fickle bending to the nettlesome questions of space and time, the diachronic and the synchronic, as our march through the oil complex will tackle space, time, and place as they come, putting them down one two three.

And instead of oil, let us begin with blood. That will be the starting point of this commodity chain. After all, there is a reason Watts titled his Hettner Lectures, delivered in 2000, "Geographies of Violence," albeit a form of violence invoking Edward Said's
notion that: "violence might be understood as `struggles over geography', where those struggles involve not only guns and bullets but also symbols, imaginings and meanings" (Watts 2000: 8). If we understand Said's expansive reading of struggle as inclusive of money, land, and power, in both their iconic and symbolic meanings (to allude to Peirce's semiology), then I believe we can use his interpretation as a viable point of departure.

However, prior to the bloody encounter between members of MEND, nominally representing the people of the Delta, and government forces, nominally representing the official Nigerian oil complex, we need to set the scene. So we commence with a Willsbros brochure dated 2000, delineating their work on the oil depot facilities at the Atlas Cove Jetty in Lagos. Before outlining the nuts and bolts of the operation, the brochure describes the purpose of the facility and its immediate history, which rationalizes their job: "The Atlas Cove Jetty in the Lagos Harbor area is used to off-load coastal tankers and pump petroleum products to the Atlas Cove Depot for storage. In March 1998, a vessel collided with the jetty, causing extensive damage and forcing operations to continue under hazardous conditions" (willbros.com/fw/filemanager/fm_file_manager_download.asp?: 1). The writers of the copy then insert what may justifiably be termed a metaphysical statement of functional import: "Maintaining an uninterrupted supply to the depot is of paramount importance" (willbros.com/fw/filemanager/fm_file_manager_download.asp?: 1), before launching into an account of what they are actually doing:

To ensure a secure and reliable supply, Willbros and Bilfinger+Berger Gas and Oil Services Nigeria Ltd. were awarded an EPC contract for the installation of a single point mooring facility and the construction of a pipeline to the terminal. This fast track project involved a 12-meter diameter Catenary Anchor Leg Mooring (CALM)

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buoy installed at a water depth of 17.2 meters, utilizing an anchoring system consisting of six special-purpose marine drag anchors. The pumping system of product tankers, up to 50,000 DWT, is connected to the CALM buoy with 160 meters of 16-inch floating hose. The buoy piping connects to a pipeline ending manifold (PLEM) via 37 meters of 12-inch hose. A 3.9-km, 20-inch subsea pipeline extends from the PLEM to a directionally drilled shore approach. The 20-inch line then continues an additional 2.6 km onshore to the terminal, where it connects to a splitting manifold. Gasoline, kerosene and diesel are transported to the terminal where the serial batch interface is sent to one of two new 175 m3 interface tanks and re-injection facilities. The integrated system is controlled by voice and data radio communications between the offshore facilities and the onshore control room. Services further included the installation of a SCADA system and telecommunications facilities, the development of O&M manuals, performance testing, operator training, commissioning and the provision of spare parts for three years operations. (willbros.com/fw/filemanager/fm_file_manager_download.asp?: 1-2).

With bullet-pointed items, Willbros then lets us know they have also performed four sets of studies to verify, determine, identify, and calculate various things about the operation:

- Hydraulic analysis to verify pipeline size and capacity for each product
- Surge pressure analysis to determine the effect of valve closures within the system
- Process hazards analysis to identify, and reduce or eliminate potential hazards
- Products interface handling analysis to calculate the length of contamination spread between batches

This is all well and good, with the engineering specs inscribed in an argot technical to the nth degree, and the verified, determined, identified, and calculated analyses seeming to ensure a facility simultaneously permanent, reliable, packed, and calibrated with quantifiable technical know-how.

However, "late in the night of July 12th 2009, 15 MEND gunboats," packed with irregulars, "launched an audacious, and devastating assault on" the Atlas Cove oil depot and blew it all to hell (Watts 2010: 4), most likely completely obliterating the work
Willsbros and its employees had performed in 2000, shattering the CALM buoy, liquidating the PELM manifold, exterminating the SCADA system and, quite possibly, destroying the six special-purpose marine drag anchors, the serial batch interface, the two 175 m³ interface tanks, and the entire re-injection facilities as well. The raid was the culmination of a bloody summer full of operations, by both government and insurgent forces. In May of 2009, "federal troops" had "launched a full-scale counter-insurgency against what the government sees as violent organized criminals who have crippled the oil and gas industry.

Thousands of dirt-poor villagers in the region around Gbaramatu, southwest of the oil city of Warri in Delta State [sic] - an area known to harbor a number of militant encampments including the notorious Camp 5 - have been displaced and hundreds of innocent villagers killed. The causalities are almost wholly Ijaw, an ethnic minority who inhabit the creeks and lowland riverine environments where the Niger river [sic] empties into the Atlantic. (Watts 2010: 4).

Here we need to insert into the oil complex assemblage the bullets, shell casings, and explosive parameters and ballistic trajectories of those bullets as they penetrated the cutaneous and subcutaneous integuments - the skins - of the Ijaw, their dripping blood and shattered bones, the graves of the villagers, their decomposing bodies, the tears of their survivors, as well as the flora and fauna native to the delta area, including "vast mangrove forests and a wide variety of animals that are specifically native to the particular ecosystem prevalent in that area," much of which has been extinguished due to the extreme pollution levels in the Delta (Roth 2011: 1). "Because the oil makes its way into the water system of the Delta, drinking water becomes polluted and fish die. This

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5 Roth acknowledges that her article is based on a paper written for Yale University Press by Alan Bacarese and Anja Roth in December 2009.
obviously has negative implications for the local population of the Delta, which mainly live off fishery and farming" (Nigerian Students for Environmental Action 2010: 1).6

Watts continues his account of the bloody summer of 2009:

The militants in return launched ferocious reprisal attacks, gutting Chevron's Okan manifold which controls 80% of the company's shipments of oil. Over a two-month [period] from mid-May to mid-July, twelve attacks were launched against Nigeria's $120 billion oil infrastructure. Agip was forced to declare force majeure on its Brass fields while Shell, following several devastating attacks on well-heads and pipelines near Escravos (in the west) and the Cawthorne channel (in the east), was losing $20 million per day in deferred production from its onshore operations. 124 of the Nigeria's [sic] 300 operating oil fields were shut by mid-July. (2010: 4).

Let us here insert - into this blistering summer of gutted manifolds, Ijaw corpses, and declarations of force majeure, with 124 of Nigeria's 300 oil wells forced out of operation and 'deferred production' mounting up to twenty million dollars a day for Shell - let us insert into this very un-everyday concatenation of incidents in the Niger River delta, the very everyday scene of say, a Hondo Accord driver pulling up to a pump along Massachusetts' famous 128 corridor, or say, a Jeep Cherokee getting its gas-tank filled to the brim along Highway 395 in the Owens River Valley between the Eastern Sierras and the White Mountain Range. These "hypothetical (but entirely possible!)" drivers and vehicles and gas stations and gas-tanks and pumps and highways are of course also part and parcel of this assemblage of the oil complex (kanarinka 2011: 46).

Now, let us return to the Delta and the events of 2009.

Overall the oil and gas industry, on and off-shore, has been crippled. By late 2009 Shell had closed its western operations completely, and the eastern region is

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6 The Nigerian Students for Environmental Action also acknowledge that this particular blog is based on a paper written for Yale University Press by Alan Bacarese and Anja Roth in December 2009.
barely producing 100,000 b/d [barrels per day]. Many of the engineering, construction and oil service companies have withdrawn core personnel and in some cases withdrawn completely…. Hostage taking - not only of oil workers, but also politicians, even children - has become a major growth industry. In the industry parlance, the international oil companies no longer have a license to operate. (Watts 2010: 4).

So here we must insert a few other items to our ever-burgeoning complex of Nigerian oil: what about kidnapping vis-à-vis personnel decisions and industry parlance vis-à-vis licenses by which it is permissible to operate? What about the language in those licenses? What about their Peircian semiotics, their Derridiean grammatology, and the embodied carrying of their creator's haptically-inflected hand? What about the personal lives of the personnel arrayed across the Nigerian oil complex, from Shell oil execs to Oregon Pinto drivers to Ijaw tribal chieftains? What is too much to insert and what too little? What too insignificant and ephemeral? Should we insert the tonal inflections of voices on anonymous telephones as ransoms are demanded for kidnapped children? Should we include the kineastheics of construction workers as they tighten lug nuts on the tires of company trucks? Should we include the handwriting of Michael Watts or the royalties payments for Yergin's best-seller? Questions of parameters and limits plague our discourse, scattering it to the Nigerian outbound winds as they make their course through the delta and skim over the surface of the Atlantic seas.

Well, to batten down our discourse we can go to the webpage for Shell's Nigerian operations where we can peruse a press release, dated 11 January 2011, which informs us that:

There have been 10 additional oil bunkering incidents in the Eastern Niger Delta since The Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Ltd (SPDC) shut
down production from Imo River on the 28th of August this year, following an upsurge of sabotage activities which have severely impacted the environment. Some of the latest incidents are on the Okordia – Rumuekpe trunk line, Imo River – Ogale trunk line and Buguma – Alakiri trunk line. Four separate incidents were reported on sections of the Obigbo North delivery line at Komkom and Ogale. (Shell 2011: 1; italics, mine).

The almost Chaplinesque vagaries of the definitional boundaries of that wobbly term, "the environment," of course gives this press release a certain ironic feeling and even an almost jolly touch: so far, we do not know whether "environment" references nature or business, mangrove forests or personnel, catfish or invoices. But we soon find out:

An overfly showed unknown persons had drilled holes and installed valves to transfer crude to waiting barges and trucks, in the process, polluting farm lands and water bodies. “We are very disappointed that oil thieves are still at work,” said Tony Attah, Vice President, HSE and Corporate Affairs, Shell Sub-Saharan Africa. “This is why we call for concerted efforts to help stop this criminal activity which not only puts the lives of the perpetrators and the public at risk but causes severe environmental impact and impacts the communities in the area. It also wastes badly needed revenue to finance development even in the same areas in which the activities are taking place.” (Shell 2011: 1).

So it's all of the above and more: concern for the environment for development possibilities, the health of the public at large, the environmental environment (catfish and corn and mangrove swamps), as well as untapped revenue streams and the impact these unfulfilled impacts may have had, both for Shell, which "accounts for close to 50% of all oil pumped" in Nigeria (Watts 2000: 22), and the residents of the Delta, as well as all Nigerians and Shell shareholders in general. An expansive list, what? Back to that release:
More than 75% of all oil spill incidents and more than 70% of all oil spilled from SPDC facilities in the delta between 2006 and 2010 were caused by sabotage, theft and illegal refining. Mr. Attah added: “…. [R]egardless of how well we run our operations until sabotage and crude theft spills are stopped or curbed, the vast majority of oil spills will continue to blight large swathes of land and pollute rivers and farm lands.” (Shell 2011: 1).

So let's add spillages of oil to our assemblage and return to Watts for a word or two about those. The Deepwater Horizon blowout on April 20, 2010, dumped something between 8.9 and 12 million gallons of oil and gas into the Gulf of Mexico during the two and a half weeks following the initial explosion; the Exxon Valdez spill of 1989 "released almost 11 million gallons (roughly 275,000 barrels) of heavy crude oil and laid waste to 1300 miles of Alaska coastline and covered 11,000 square miles of ocean" (Watts 2010: 1). In comparison:

During 2009, Shell confirmed that it had spilled roughly 14,000 tons of crude oil into the creeks of the Niger delta, the heart of Nigeria's oil economy. In other words, in the course of one year, a single oil company (Shell … accounts for roughly one third of Nigerian national output) was responsible for 4.2 million gallons of spilled oil; in 2008 the figure was close to 3 million gallons…. Since the late 1950's … over 7000 oil spills have occurred across the Niger delta oilfields. Cumulatively over a fifty year period, 1.5 million tons (4 billion gallons) of crude oil has been discharged in an area roughly one tenth the size of the Federal Waters of the Gulf of Mexico…. One way to think about this spill rate and its impact would be to say that since 1960, each acre of the Niger delta has been the recipient of forty gallons of spilled crude oil. (Watts 2010: 2; italics, Watts).

To extend this back into time a bit, let us add a statement from the 2004 Working Paper from UC Berkeley's Niger Delta: Economies of Violence project: "Between 1976 and

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7 Watts cites guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/may/05/shell-oil-spill-niger-delta for this.
2001 there were over 5000 spills [in Nigeria] amounting to 2.5 million barrels, equivalent to ten Exxon Valdez disasters within a confined deltaic zone” (Douglas, Okonta, Von Kemedi, and Watts 2004: 2). What Watts chooses to emphasize in his 2010 report, and with much sound reason, is the invisibility of these oil spills: despite the immense ecological and ongoing disaster that these spills represent, they are relatively unknown in the global north: "As disastrous at [sic] the Deepwater Horizon explosion and spill may be for the Gulf, it points to a much larger and relatively invisible ecological catastrophe is [sic] oil regions of the global south, and to the double standards by which the human and ecological costs of the oil and gas industry are assessed” (2010: 2).

Now that we have re-emphasized Watts' concerns by citing them and thereby inserting them into the oil assemblage of the Niger River oil complex, let us insert some other things as well. Let us insert the stink of that oil, the percolating stew of that crude as it sinks slowly into the delta soil, the tactility of oil as it clings to feathers, dirt, and hands; the way in which numbers fail to work as comprehensive tools by which to comprehend the extent of these compounded spills; the brain of Watts as he writes up these annual working papers; our brains as we read them; Shell execs as they do their utmost to defer responsibility for these spills to the effects of bunkering and sabotage; the thrill of guerilla tactics and the joy of plain old robbery (for why should that thrill and that joy be beyond the scope of our assembled assemblage?); the uselessness of this present attempt to circumscribe such a massive assemblage; oil itself, its unrecognizable matter-of-factness, its state of simply being there, innocent, dumb, resourceful in its very everyday unawareness of its great majesty as a resource; Shell headquarters with its
corporate boardrooms, parking spaces, security, computers, secretaries, janitors, and so on; the energy departments of various governments across the world, all factoring in the amounts of oil needed for their respective citizens, and so on.

**Secretion of the Oil Complex**

First, let us bring back spatial secretion into the frame: in *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre states that "the spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space; it propounds and presupposes it … it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it" (1991b; italics, mine). What is interesting in the Nigerian case (and, I suspect, in many other cases as well) is that only the first portion of Lefebvre's dicta holds true, as, while the secretion of spatial forms in the Nigerian oil complex does proceed from the presuppositions and demands of a society dependent on oil for either its revenue or its energy, it does not follow that these spatial forms, once secreted, are mastered by the very society which secreted them. For, these forms, whether they be the oil itself or the structures subtending its extraction, neither can be said to be mastered by that which is secreted to appropriate it, as oil is routinely bunkered and structures as well as equipment blown to bits.

Lefebvre also ties spatial secretion to the production of merchandise:

Space, which seems homogeneous, which seems to be completely objective in its pure form, such as we ascertain it, is a social product. The production of space can be likened to the production of any given particular type of merchandise…. there are interrelationships between the productions of goods and that of space. The latter accrues to private groups who appropriated the space in order to manage and exploit it. (Lefebvre 1976b: 31).
Let's consider Lefebvre's claim that space can be likened to the production of merchandise, and try to ascertain if it applies to the Nigerian oil complex. Well, a special type of merchandise, oil, being required by both developing and developed nations, and its extraction, in turn, requiring other special forms of merchandise such as tankers, oil depots, pipelines, rigs, and so on and so forth, produces spatial formations, does it not? Here, the type of merchandise catalyzes certain forms of spatial production, certain buildings, and certain reconfigurations of the earth, its spatial forms, its environment. It might be simpler to stipulate that space is transformed due to the construction requirements of the oil business as well as the general boon to the economy that an oil bonanza can sometimes produce. So, in the Nigerian case, for instance, during the 1970s, the state, "flush with money" from its share of the bounty from oil revenues, "through its fiscal linkages - road building, electrification, infrastructure development, industrial promotion, and so on - entered upon a massive industrialization program including autos, iron and steel and so on" (Watts 2000: 22). Here, we can extend the secretion and socio-spatial production of space out from the oil assemblage to include that which the revenue from the extraction of oil funds: roads, universities (e.g. Saudi Arabia's Female Branch of the Prince Naif Centre for Health Science Research), as well as mansions, armed guards, American-made missiles, etc.

Before a sort of paradisiacal positive multiplier effect is imagined, externalities derived from oil serving up everything from research universities to autobahns, we should take note of Watts' judgment that the Nigerian spending spree "unleashed a developmental ambition of the most grandiose, some would say, grotesque, sort.
El Dorado had been discovered and it was an oil well. A massive import boom followed close on the heels of the industrial program. In their wake followed an urban construction explosion, hyper-inflation, preposterous Stalinist-scale industrial schemes to produce iron and steel thousands of miles from any useful raw material inputs, and not unexpectedly a heavy dose of economic and social disruption…. Money abounded, and the lucky few made enormous wealth through contracting, tenders and privileged political access to the state. By the mid-1980’s, however, the oil boom had lost its luster. Petroleum prices had collapsed, Nigeria carried a vast debt burden, many projects lay in tatters, and the government faces brutal austerity measures. (2000: 22-23).

In other words, a crescendo of capital accumulation had dispersed in its wake an accumulation of misery while a "lucky few" had prospered, as is typical in such cases, from the Gold Rush days in the Sierra Nevada of California to the Russian de-nationalization of state industries and their subsequent expropriation by private buccaneers following the implosion of the USSR. However, the immediate point to be made here is that any schema of assemblage through spatial secretion should, or must, include by-products of the assemblage, whether they are research centers or auto factories lying in ruins.

But the other reason that the production of space can be likened to the production of merchandise is that we are living under a regime of capitalism. In such a regime, space is defined using the marker of exchange, not use, value; therefore, space becomes abstracted into a monetary value just as does any piece of merchandise under such a regime. So many woolen coats will buy you so many acres of land, in other words. And, under a strict private property regime, such as in the United States, the protection of space in its form of exchange value typically receives a higher priority than the use value which may be derived from that same space. But even private property regimes:
entail restrictions and obligations founded on the principles that there is an inherent public interest in private land, and that any public space is a shared space. This gives rise to regulations such as building codes, property standards, and zoning that are imposed by governments on private property. For instance, the private home of an owner is regulated in a number of direct and indirect ways, from what one can build to the property standards one must maintain. (Ruppert 2006: 278).

However, what may be within the bounds of coding regulations and permitting systems varies from neighborhood to neighborhood and jurisdiction to jurisdiction, even within a relatively restricted area such as the City of Los Angeles or the State of California. When attempting to align such regulations and systems between disparate nations, such as the United States and Nigeria, all hope is lost. What is allowable in Lagos may be banned in L.A. and visa-versa, making comparisons across borders and continents quite problematic.

In any account of the practices of spatial production, formal as well as informal outcomes must be included: assessing the Brazilian housing situation without dealing with the favelas would be ludicrous; investigations of Wall Street with only an eye on the de jure trades without the other eye tabulating up the de facto trades would also be an exercise in futility. This is just as true when dealing with the oil complex in Nigeria as the "monitoring agency Transparency International typically ranks Nigeria as one of the most corrupt countries in the world…. It is not without good reason that the National Electric Power Authority, or NEPA, was (and is) popularly assumed to stand for 'Never Expect Power Again' (Watts 2000: 24; italics, Watts). Here the Nigerian electricity generating plants must be subsumed within the oil assemblage, as the secretion of electricity and the buildings and spaces through which electricity is produced as well as the substations and lines through which that electricity is meant to be distributed - in fact, the entire Nigerian
power assemblage - has been severely inflected by the oil regime. Corruption spreads the secretion out into every aspect of society, to such a degree that "the depth of graft and bribery" caused "one disillusioned Nigerian commentator" to remark that, according to Watts, "Nigeria is not a country, it is a profession" (2000: 24).

The production of space included within the Nigeria oil assemblage must also include the secretion of the assemblage as its manifests itself in London, the capital of its former metropole. Massey brings this to our attention in World City, in which she states that "oil and gas account in one way or another for about a quarter of London's stock exchange; Shell and BP have major offices and headquarters in London; London [itself] is utterly dependent on oil" (2007: 201). Massey also informs her readers of a number of London-based activist campaigns, including "the radical London collective, PLATFORM" and "London Rising Tide, a group campaigning around the root-causes of climate change," with the latter group making it their business to make explicit the ties between the UK and the Nigerian oil complex (2007: 203, 202-203). Massey also references Carbon Web Newsletter #2, which presents a map demonstrating that "if all the sources and links in the [Nigerian] oil commodity chain and its multifarious supports were mapped, the centre of London would be crowded with references" (2007: 205). So we can trace the Nigerian oil complex to the nexus of London and code that nexus with links leading back to the crude being extracted in the delta.

In fact, if we are going to be exhaustive in our excavation of the Nigerian oil assemblage, we should include the entire historical relationship of the core/metropole, England, to its periphery/protectorate, Nigeria. This would of course transpose the complex into the component of time as well as that of space. But this seems to be the
most realistic and veridical way to go, as what time has etched and embedded into the contours of both nations cannot be divorced from the contemporary actuality on the ground. Oil oozing out of Nigeria right now, being extracted, processed, and transported for use in the global North cannot somehow be de-linked from a past which has led to its very extraction. So the whole colonial and post-colonial mode of the exploitation of resources needs to be inserted within the extended frame of our assemblage.

We should also insert insurgent commanders such as the Ijaw chieftain, Government Ekpemupolo (aka Tompolo), who reportedly has played both sides of the Nigerian oil equation, leading MEND forces while also serving as a "consultant" to Shell and other oil companies. "He was clearly a double agent, and his methods were very widely mimicked among the more privileged sections of those engaged one way or the other in the Niger Delta struggle…. Through him and many other Ijaw leaders, governments and oil companies made a lot of concessions in order to buy a peaceful atmosphere to move crude oil into the world market" (Nnanna 2009: 1). And perhaps we should also include Tompolo's "worship of Egbesu, an ancient Ijaw god of war, revived to symbolize the struggle against the federal government and oil companies. Followers of Egbesu believe he provides protection from death and capture during war. Tompolo is in the inner sanctum of Egbesu warriors and an exponent of their elaborate sacrifices and rituals" (africa-confidential.com/whos-who-profile/id/2613: 1); apparently, the violent rigor with which Tompolo devoted himself to this form of worship caused other delta residents to both fear and admire him. So here we are inserting a form of tribal power and "pagan" religious belief in either an atavistic return to a pre-colonial Africa or a retrieval of Ijaw worship which has never been rendered extinct, despite the "civilizing" influences
of British colonial rule, national independence, and whatever benefits oil revenue has delivered to the villagers of the Niger River delta.

We also should include experts and academics such as Michael Watts in our cataloguing of the oil assemblage. After all, Watts, serving as an example of this group, has spent the majority of his academic career tracking the Nigerian oil complex while writing and/or editing books such as *State, Oil, and Agriculture in Nigeria*, published in 1987, and *Curse of the Black Gold: 50 Years of Oil in the Niger Delta*, published in 2008. In a sense, Watts has tied his professional career to the oil complex and the unpacking of the Niger River assemblage; the *Niger Delta: Economies of Violence* project, with its twenty-five working papers, most authored or co-authored by Watts, is co-sponsored by the United States Institute of Peace, based in Washington, D.C.; Our Niger Delta, based in Port Harcourt, Nigeria; and the Institute of International Studies, based at UC Berkeley, where Watts is a professor in the geography department as well as the department's Class of 1963 chair, thus implicating all of these various organizations and institutions at least into the outer links of the great web of the Nigerian oil assemblage.

Here what I want to underline is that every one of the branches of this assemblage must secret/produce its own spatial node within that assemblage, whether that space be a gas station built on the edge of an Arizona subdivision, an oil subsidiary only existing on paper for the purposes of tax evasion, the letterhead itself the space in which the subsidiary exists; an insurgent encampment in the far reaches of the delta of the Niger River, or a professor's office on the campus of the University of California at Berkeley.

And, now that we have extended the Nigerian oil assemblage nearly to the snapping point, let us return to our primary subject, the everyday.
People are driving cars, an everyday action. They are filling up gas tanks, again an everyday action. Some people are working on oil crews, actions which are more or less everyday as far as they are concerned. Others are bunkering oil or toting firearms as they cruise through the Niger Delta, again more or less everyday actions for them. Others are making decisions and/or pushing paper around in Shell and BP headquarters in Europe, more everyday acts for those involved in such acts. My point here is that far-reaching assemblages, such as the oil complex in Nigeria, no matter how expansively they are construed or how "exotic" the actions constituting them may seem, always track back to the everyday and the more or less contained actions of that quotidian domain.

One final point and then we shall move on to Foucault and the milieu. The Nigerian oil complex is of course only one assemblage amongst an almost numberless variety that we may have chosen as our prime exemplar of an assemblage and its connection to the everyday. For instance, the international market in organs, as elucidated by Nancy Schepere-Hughes in "The Last Commodity: Post-Human Ethics and the Global Traffic in 'Fresh' Organs," with its ties from the University of Maryland Medical Center, whose "website advertises its kidney transplant program in Arabic, Chinese, Hebrew, and Japanese" (2005: 150), to the "rustic little village of Mingir, Moldova" and the "slums and shantytowns half a world a way [sic] in the Filipino capital of Manila" (2005: 152) where young men and women sell their kidneys to organ brokers to the bioethicists attempting to impose some sort of deontological order on this regime to the "highly fetishized kidney" itself, invested with all the magical energy and potency that the transplant patient is looking for in the name of "new' life" (2005: 156), is another exemplar that could easily fit the bill for our present purposes. As is the telegraph system.
of the 1800s, as elucidated by Andrew Barry in "Line of communication and spaces of
rule," with the telegraph's ties to the development of the standardization of electrical
measurement and its role as a early warning system for the British empire, as well is its
"function as a mediating machine, articulating a relation between the most abstract and
fundamental areas of physical science and the most practical and urgent problems facing
the empire" (1996: 134; italics, Barry) and its place as a pivot point in scientific
methodology, as the "disastrous failure" of the first attempt at laying down a trans-
Atlantic telegraph cable served as a proverbial wake-up call for scientists, engineers, and
politicians that the arcs of ambition and technology could not be aligned unless
"adequate" and "appropriate" standards as well as the instruments by which to calibrate
such standards were in place to ensure such alignment (1996: 133). The telegraph
assemblage also serves nicely as a prototype for many of the questions many of us are
still grappling with in terms of the technological capacities of communication and
information systems: how to balance the positive and negative forces of, respectively, the
distributive and emancipatory reach of these systems with their potential as repressive
surveillance tools.

Linking these two examples to spatial production is not difficult, of course: the
trans-Atlantic cable is a wonderful example of a feat of spatial secretion as are the secret
locations in the Philippines, Turkey, Brazil, and Moldova where illicit organs are
removed to be transported to the hospital operating rooms of Israel and the United States
where those organs are implanted into patients at a cost of up to $200,000. The latter
gives us an example of what Lefebvre might have called the invisibility of their creation:
"The fact remains … that productive [spatial] operations tend in the main to cover their
tracks; some even have this as their prime goal: polishing, staining, facing, plastering, and so on. When construction is completed, the scaffolding is taken down” (1991b: 113).

This tendency to cover the tracks of that which is created obfuscates the labor power which has been necessary for creation and production, and it also makes it much more difficult to trace the inner workings of the everyday, as a veneer is placed between consumption and production is fabricated precisely to cover the scaffolding necessary for consumption to proceed: hence, advertising, Shell, Exxon, and BP presenting oil and gas as commodities divested of extractionary operations and all that those operations may entail, including environmental destruction, violence, and the possible impending collapse of the global eco-system, which, if it occurs, and all signs point to this possibility becoming a reality, will be primarily caused by the oil assemblage, most especially, our seeming incapacity and unwillingness to unhinge ourselves from its grip.
“Considered overall, social practice presupposes the use of the body: the use of the hands, members and sensory organs, and the gestures of work as of activity unrelated to work.”

Lefebvre, *The Production of Space.*
**Golf**

**Johnson Draws Another Penalty**

Dustin Johnson wound up with another bizarre penalty Thursday when his caddie thought his tee time was 40 minutes later than it was, and he raced to the first tee at the Northern Trust Open in Los Angeles to avoid disqualification.

Johnson was given a two-shot penalty for not being on the tee box at his starting time. Players then have five minutes to get to the tee before they are disqualified, and Johnson made it with six seconds to spare. He made a par 5 on No. 1 but had to record a 7. He finished at two-over-par 73, six shots behind the early leaders.

Last summer, Johnson was penalized two shots on the 72nd hole of the P.G.A. Championship when he did not realize he was in a bunker with the gallery standing around him. The penalty kept him out of a playoff.


(AP)
Cinema Three: Chinatown

Chinatown is nothing but a slow stripping away of the given. The glamorous sheen of Los Angeles is divested of its veneer and what lies beneath that tacky lacquer once it is exposed to raw light is incest, murder, and a generalized corruption through which the beast of the city, as symbolized by John Huston’s reptilian Noah Cross, with his crocodile eyes and alligator mouth, slithers and crawls, feeding on innocent flesh and fortune’s frothy joy. The characters in the film express a reluctance to the unraveling of the assumed: Nicholson’s Jake Gittes tells the faux Mrs. Mulwray, when she asks him to track her straying husband, that she’s “better off not knowing” after asking her if she knows the expression, “Let sleeping dogs lie” (Towne: 1974). What he doesn’t know at this point in the story is that he is the dog better off left sleeping.

Knowing and not knowing, the state of knowledge and its dull but much more comfortable counterpart, the state of ignorance, play a game of hide-and-seek throughout Chinatown. To Gittes’s “You’re better off not knowing,” the down-and-out actress impersonating Mrs. Mulwray replies: “I have to know.” There’s a constant reiteration of this refrain throughout the film:

“You may think you know what’s you’re dealing with, but believe me you don’t.”

“If you want to hire me, I still need to know what the argument was about.”

“Do you know him?”

“Exactly what do you know about me?”

“You don’t know what you’re talking about, you dumb Okie.”

“Charley, you ought to know better than that.”
“And Hollis knew about this?”

“You know any good criminal lawyers?”

“How come you happen to know her?”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“How do you know?”

“Do you know where that is?”

“Did you know that you’re a very wealthy woman?”

“Like she knows more than you want her to tell.”

“I want to know more about you.”

“Oh my god. Let me know.”

“Curly, do you know how long I’ve been in this business?”

“You know what he used to say?”

“I just want to know how much you’re worth.”

“He put up with more from me than you’ll ever know.”

“I want to know where you’re going.”

“I know.”

“You know?”

“She’s never going to know that.”

“I don’t know how it got in the newspaper.”

“Lou, you don’t know what’s going on here.”
This shadow-boxing between ignorance and knowing makes Chinatown an exercise in a certain brutal form of epistemology. How much do we know? How much do we need to know? Are we better off not knowing?

The same cat-and-mouse game is conducted upon the body politic of the City of Los Angeles. Its inner workings, the dynamics at play in the interstices between water, power, and money, throw a murky reflection on the surface of the city. Mayor Bagby (who is holding the bag?) proclaims at the city council meeting: “L.A. is a desert community. Without water, the dust will rise up and cover us as though we never existed.” It’s near-Biblical, this bit of prophecy declared in support of a water bond. “Beneath this building, beneath our streets, is a desert.” It’s a cover-up, you see: the given of these buildings and the given of our streets cover the given of the desert sands and their remorseless salinity and merciless aridity.

Jake Gittes is better off not knowing. Whenever he knows, the girl dies. Get thee back to ignorance, Chinatown seems to be saying. Don’t rip asunder the thin veil of the assumed, for underneath lurks the monster reptilian, an incestuous cyclopean, with the Biblical name that transverses the Old and New Testaments, Noah Cross. Jake, or Jacob, and Noah, is it too much to wonder if their battle over the daughter-sister-lover-mother, the one with the flaw in her eye, Evelyn Cross Mulwray, is some kind of Old Testament struggle, its field the lip of the desert as the water on the horizon glimmers and shines?

Jake’s better off not knowing. He doesn’t know the real Mrs. Mulwray is right behind him when he tells his “associates” the joke about “how the Chinese like to fuck.” He doesn’t know the extent of the abyss he’s stumbling into when his “kitty-cat” nose is sliced in two by that “dwarf,” played by Roman Polanski with an elfish devilry, the
gnome delighting in his bloody tasks. Jake doesn’t know when he lies in Evelyn Mulwray’s bed, the post-coital spiral of cigarette smoke conjuring the mystery of sex. He doesn’t know when he tells the faux Mrs. Mulwray that she’s better off not knowing. No, it’s you, Jake, it’s you that’s better off not knowing. But you won’t know that until the bullet through the eye of Mrs. Mulwray sends her dead against the horn of her car and the wail of the sister-daughter tears the Chinatown night in two.

*Stick with the given, that’s what Chinatown tells us. It’s easier. More comfortable.* It shines and shimmers like the lights of L.A. Ride on it like a magic midnight carpet ride and leave the rest alone, because beneath it, burbling up like the Tar Pits of La Cienaga (“The Swamp”) are the bones of the dinosaurs, those ancient reptiles with their secrets that hide the secrets of the Knowledge of the Secret that lies secreted beneath the last layer of the desert sands.

Peeling back the given. That’s the sequence of the film, one layer after another taken off from the eyes, the skin of the brain. Peeling back the givens of Jake’s corrupt little world of divorce dicks and love nests; peeling back the eye of Mrs. Mulwray (that flawed eye, the one the bullet rips asunder on the streets of Chinatown (the obscure, the “inscrutable” dimness of the anti-ocular Chinatown)); ripping back the given of the City of Angels, its satanic provenance in the waters of thievery, the waters of lust.

*It’s a siren song to the risk of knowing, that’s what Chinatown is. The dangers inherent in giving up the given. “You see, Mr. Gitts,” Noah Cross growls, mauling the name, “most people never have to face the fact that at the right time and the right place, they’re capable of anything.” That’s what Noah says, in that voice of satanic prophecy straight out of the infernal deserts of the Old Testament, that man who will bring the*
water as he takes the land. It’s a cover-up and it covers up the covers of ignorance that covers the people; it swaddles them in their ignorance, an ignorance fabricated out of tinseled doom.

“Forget it, Jake. It’s Chinatown.” Famous last words that will never heal the wound of knowing, that fractured epistemology, the sundered assumed without which we cannot live.
Chapter Eight:
Foucault and the Milieu

Prior to commencing with an investigation of Foucault's conception of the milieu and its function within our "system," let us review what we (hopefully) accomplished in Part Two of the present study. To situation, which we examined in the opening chapter on Goffman; the time-space-place contraption we fashioned in Chapter Two, and Chapter Three's analysis of history as a vertical driver, we added typification, reproduction, and the role of spatial secretion as a vertical driver. The main purpose of Part Three is to get our rather monstrous structure-less structure up and moving, to breathe life into its body, an injection of afflatus that will vitalize it, allowing it to roam unhindered on its own. Along the way, we will offer up a new discipline, neuro-geography, as that which needs to be instituted to investigate the environmental predicates of the mind. So, a bit like Mary Shelley's Dr. Frankenstein, we proceed.

The Milieu

Foucault's milieu is the ground upon which he positions the relationship between security and risk. Each milieu possesses its own dynamic between these two factors, a dynamic that can teeter from risk into mayhem, violence, incarceration, or death, and from security into the rigidity typically associated with the coercive power of totalitarian regimes, but also more or less operative within "free" societies as well. In Security, Territory, Population, the compilation of his lectures at the Collège de France in 1977-78, Foucault states that "The space in which a series of uncertain elements unfold is, I
think, roughly what one calls the milieu" (2007: 20). First, before we attempt to further unpack Foucault's conception of the milieu, note the pair of qualifiers, "I think" and "roughly," notes of hesitation which undermine the sense of certainty with which Foucault proceeds as he outlines the essentials of the milieu; perhaps they are simply the quiver in the arm before the arrow is let loose from the bow, or, perhaps, they betray a real sense of doubt about what he is proposing.

Foucault attaches a hierarchy corresponding to a chronology to his conception of the milieu. As the territory is aligned with sovereignty and the body with discipline, the milieu is tethered to the population as it is shaped by the polar forces of risk and security:

Sovereignty capitalizes a territory, raising the major problem of the seat of government, whereas discipline structures a space and addresses the essential problem of a hierarchical and functional distribution of elements, and security will try to plan a milieu in terms of events or series of events or possible elements, of series that will have to be regulated within a multivalent and transformable framework. (Foucault 2007: 20).

So, analogically, sovereignty is to territory as discipline is to space as milieu is to a framework. Or, sovereignty is to the capitalization of the territory as discipline is to the structuration of space as well as the distribution of elements within the territory as the milieu is to the planning of events and their regulation within the framework of the spaces constituted by discipline. Here, the chronology goes from the age of monarchy (Louis the XIV as the paradigm) to the age of the First Republic (the paradigm being the French Revolution, as, for Foucault, "the more egalitarian juridical framework of the French Revolution masked the more insidious controlling mechanisms that operated in the factory, the military, the school, and the prison" - along with the liberties, came to
disciplines (Afary and Anderson 2005: 15))\(^1\) to the age of democracy (with the people themselves, or, rather, the population itself, filling the paradigmatic role).

But such a facile reading and a simplified analogical interpretation of Foucault needs to be challenged by a more complex reading. It seems quite possible that Foucault intended to have these distinct types reads not as necessarily sequential, but as types that could, and often do, operate simultaneously at various levels of society. As Nikolas Rose warns us:

He [Foucault] certainly cautioned against conceiving of a chronology that went from 'sovereignty' - a discontinuous exercise of power through display and spectacle, law as command, sanctions as negative and deductive - to 'discipline' - the continuous exercise of power through surveillance, individualization and normalization - to 'governmentality' focusing on maximizing the forces of the population collectively and individually. At one point, he suggested that one could identify a 'triangle' of sovereignty, discipline and governmentality. (Rose 1999: 23).

One can easily imagine such a trialectics (to borrow Soja's phraseology, which he uses to describe Lefebvre's triad of lived, conceived, and perceived space) at play in the United States, for instance, over the course of the last thirty years. Spectacle has been offered up for display, especially during the "smart bomb" campaign of the first Iraq War and George W. Bush's "shock and awe" bombing campaign which kick-started Operation Enduring Freedom, both presented live on television for massive audiences to "enjoy."

Yet the disciplinary powers of the state could be said to be at their zenith at the present time, at least in the United States, what with the passage of the all-encompassing Patriot Act and its sweeping powers of data-mining. And there certainly has been no remission

\(^1\) Although one must wonder how egalitarian the juridical system was for those who suffered the brunt of The Terror.
of the powers of governmentality, as data about individuals as well as populations continues to be collected, collated, and utilized in innumerable ways. Yet it is hard to argue that Foucault did not introduce these ideas with a chronology attached to them, as they are presented as if they appear in order over the course of the last four hundred years or so. However, the point is, one regime does not simply supersede the previous one, but subsumes the previous within its regimen, making an additive rather than a subtractive whole: sovereignty, discipline, and governmentality piled and mushed together yet working holistically to operationalize the command and control forces of the state.

However, this construct, along with its historiographical presuppositions, no matter what one thinks of the construction of its chronology, is challenged by a less Eurocentric reading of history. But, prior to elucidating that challenge, let us point out the odd congruence here between Goffman and Foucault: both are quite provincial, finally, in the scope of their concerns, or at least in the geographical nexus in which they locate their concerns. As related in chapter one, Goffman circumscribes his unit of analysis variously as "our Anglo-American society, the English-speaking world, the Anglo-American community, West European nations, Protestant countries, Christian society, and the West," while Foucault rarely engages with anything outside the borders of France, restricting his analysis to a very strict national domain. And, according to Hacking, when Foucault does stray outside the borders of his native country, he frequently makes mistakes: "His predilection for French examples projected onto European history leads to mistakes…. Now … we find that the facts are sometimes not quite right, that they are over generalized, and that they are squeezed into a model of brusque transformations" (1986: 29, 30). However, Hacking doesn't offer much evidence
to back up his claim, other than the existence of one obscure essay in a rather obscure book, H.C. Erik Midelfort's "Madness and Civilization in Early Modern Europe: A Reappraisal of Michel Foucault" in After the Reformation, Essays in Honor of J.H. Hexter.² Arafy and Anderson in their Foucault and the Iranian Revolution also charge that "historians and philosophers have also criticized Foucault for factual inaccuracies on gender in modern Europe," but they present no evidence for this claim besides their unadorned indictment (2005: 27).

Foucault's "Place"

Perhaps the case I am making regarding Foucault's overly narrow focus is argued too vehemently and enunciated in too categorical a fashion, as, after all, he does engage with the Roman, Greek, and Carolingian Empires and even treads beyond the bounds of Europe when he discusses "pastoral power" and "the theme of the king, god, or chief as a shepherd (berger) of men" which "is found in Egypt, Assyria, Mesopotamia, and above all, of course in the Hebrews" (Foucault 2007: 123); all of this is brought up vis-à-vis a discussion of the notion of raison d'Etat in Security. Territory, Population. And Foucault displays a thorough and incisive understanding of the Greeks and their conception of truth-telling (Parrhesia) in two series of lectures, one from his 1982-1983 session at the Collège de France, gathered in the collection titled The Government of Self and Others, and the other series, delivered at UC Berkeley in the fall of 1983, the notes of which have been collated under the title, Fearless Speech. The ease and intimacy with which Foucault delves into his Greek sources reveals the thoroughly steeped Western

intellectual that he was: "As you know, there are four kinds of Greek harmony," Foucault states with that almost annoying and nonchalant erudition of those so saturated in such knowledge that they take it as granted that of course "we" all know such things, "The Lydian mode which Plato dislikes because it too solemn; the Phrygian mode which Plato associates with the passions; the Ionian mode which is too soft and effeminate; and Dorian mode which is courageous" (2001: 100).

Perhaps Foucault can be seen as a hinge figure, a pivot-point, between classical European knowledge, with Europe itself as the endpoint and product of both knowledge and knowledge production, and a post-European world, in which such a stance would signify not an endpoint but only a resting point. And what is odd is that it is Foucault's work itself (and Foucault himself, for that matter) which both indicates the zenith and the culmination of such a European focus, as his erudition can stand in as a symbol for the entire tradition of a classical European university pedagogy, his scholarship its apogee, while his theory itself can, perhaps, stand in as a symbol for the conclusion of that tradition, his ideas its death knell. Still, however Foucault is figured in intellectual history, his is a thoroughly European-based reading of the world, one descending from a tradition founded upon the bedrock of the conquering of "the rest" by the West.

Foucault's relative geographical myopia is also a bit surprising if we consider the actual utilization of the panopticon during the nineteenth century, as the Benthamite technology was first put to use in colonial territories. In Colonising Egypt, Timothy Mitchell reports that:

Foucault's analyses are focused on France and northern Europe. Perhaps this focus has tended to obscure the colonising nature of disciplinary power. Yet the
panopticon, the model institution whose geometric order and generalized surveillance serves as a motif for this kind of power, was a colonial invention. The panoptic principle was devised on Europe's colonial frontier with the Ottoman Empire, and examples of the panopticon were built for the most part not in northern Europe, but in places like colonial India. (Mitchell 1988: 35).

Mitchell elaborates on this in a footnote: "Jeremy Bentham's panoptic principle was devised in factories run by his brother Samuel on the Potemkin estates, land colonized by Russia after the defeat of the Ottomans in 1768-74" (1988: 185, f.n. 6). And Jeremy Bentham was in correspondence with "local rulers" in "Russia, India, North and South America, and Egypt…. Including the governor in Cairo, Muhammad Ali Pasha, advocating the introduction of the panoptic principle and other new techniques" (Mitchell 1988: x). The colonies offered a tabula rasa for Europeans to initiate and "audition" new technologies: they were a kind of living experimental field on which to try out technologies without the encumbrance of "civilized" subjects to either interfere or be harmed by these new powers before they had been tested on disposable subjects. And, "For many Europeans - military officers, Saint-Simonist engineers, educationalists, physicians, and others - a place like nineteenth-century Cairo provided the opportunity to establish a modern state based on the new methods of disciplinary power" (Mitchell 1988: x). Given that Foucault was such a relentless scholar as well as an advocate for probing into the archives, it is almost shocking that he does not include this material in his work, material which would have also dislocated his fixation on a French and northern European focus.

However, Foucault was not a completely sequestered European. He taught at the University of Tunisia for two years, from 1966 to 1968. He did travel to Japan, and

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3 For more on this, see Mathew S. Anderson's "Samuel Bentham in Russia," *The American Slavic and East European Review* 15 (1956), 157-172.
"voluntarily exiled himself … far from the Parisian avant-garde" as a young man, spending extended periods of time in Sweden, Germany, and Poland (Miller 1993: 91); and was a frequent visitor to California, especially in the last decade of his life. Foucault visited Iran twice in 1978 (and also met with the Ayatollah Khomeini in Paris in October of that year) (Afary and Anderson 2005: 2). He even served as a foreign correspondent, writing articles for the Italian newspaper Corriere della sera as well as for Le Monde and "the widely circulated leftist weekly Le Nouvel Observateur, in support of the 1978-79 Iranian revolution, which he apparently viewed as a case of the birth of a "new form of ‘political spirituality,’ not just for the Middle East, but also for Europe," a stance for which his reputation has not unduly suffered, at least in the United States (Afary and Anderson 2005: 3).

Foucault's essential and essentializing parochialism, his steadfast Euro-centrism, despite his flirtation with Islamism and his international travels, has been noted by Gayatri Spivak and Timothy Mitchell, among others. In Colonizing Egypt, Mitchell writes that "Foucault's analyses are focused on France and northern Europe, yet forms of power based on the re-ordering of space and surveillance and control of its occupants were by nature colonizing in method" (1988: x); and one could add that they are especially so when used by peoples who are colonizing pretty much every square foot of the globe! Foucault's myopic focus on the West is especially marked in his genealogy of that emblem of modernity, the bourgeois individual…. The History of Sexuality entirely overlooks the colonial projects and apprehensions that paralleled and often prefigured the development of middle-class sexuality and selfhood in Europe. The silence in Foucault now seems remarkable… (Miller 2000: 5).
And Spivak notes that there is a kind of "sanctioned ignorance" amongst scholars concerning Foucault's neglect of much of anything beyond the borders of Europe, as if the ignorance of the non-West is acceptable since, it is Foucault, after all, who is the one so benighted. ⁴ In her famous essay, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Spivak adds that:

Foucault is a brilliant thinker of power-in-spacing, but the awareness of the topographical reinscription of imperialism does not inform his presuppositions. He is taken in by the restricted version of the West produced by that reinscription and thus helps to consolidate its effects.…. [T]o buy a self-contained version of the West is to ignore its production by the imperialist project." (Spivak 1994: 85, 86). ⁵

Here, Spivak goes beyond an indictment of simple ignorance on the part of Foucault to a charge of collaboration in the consolidation of the myopia necessary for the continued reinscription of the narrative of the West as self-contained and constituted as an entity untethered to the rest of the world through its imperialist project, and, thus, from its own history.

If we accept the notion that Foucault's concerted gaze never much drifted from the confines of Europe, it is especially odd that scores of geographers as well as numerous scholars from other disciplines such as anthropology have posthumously recruited Foucault as one of their own. Said, that most intractable of post-colonists who never wearied of scolding Western scholars for their historical ignorance and geographical benightedness, claims that Foucault's "view of things was … spatial" and that he had an essentially "geographic bent;" yet if Foucault did have a bent for geography, his

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⁴ The "sanctioned ignorance" comment is cited by Timothy Mitchell (2000: 5), as he references Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

⁵ This is cited in Timothy Mitchell's "The Stage of Modernity," f.n. 27, 29.
geography was certainly an oddly constricted one, with its cartography petering out just beyond the boundaries of Europa. Soja, too, eagerly presses Foucault into the ranks of those, if not adhering to, at least serving as a bellwether for the spatial turn: "For Foucault, every space is a heterotopia, a realized and imagined space of resolvable oppositions, and heterotopology becomes a way of looking at and interpreting all spaces and their consequent effects" (2010: 104). This is surely an overwrought claim, as Foucault cordons off heterotopic spaces - gardens and cemeteries, for instance - precisely because they are heterodox to and different from other spaces. To argue that Foucault urges us to bestow every space with the label of a heterotopia is equivalent to stating that heterotopic spaces designate everything and therefore designate nothing at all. Foucault contrasts heterotopias to utopias, as the latter "are sites with no real place … sites that have a general relation of direct or inverted analogy with the real space of Society," whereas the former are:

Real places - places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society - which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias. (Foucault 1984: 3).

Perhaps the only way to secure Soja's claim is to translate the following citation from Foucault as proof positive of the all-inclusive nature of heterotopias: "The space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and gnaws at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous
space" (1984: 2). Still, even with such an expansive sense of heterogeneous space and with at least a partial understanding of himself as a geographer alive during an "epoch of space," why are Foucault's own geographical citations so circumscribed?

And then one must also ask: why have so many scholars in so many disciplines used Foucault for their various projects, many of which have a distinctively non-European and even post-colonial focus? Is it simply a willful and "sanctioned" neglect of Foucault's parochialism? Or is it that his work is so elastic that it can be applied almost anywhere without losing any of its powers of adherence? Is it that it is so pertinent that, despite its limitations, it is essential as a tool to unveil the multiplicity of disciplinary regimens used to create and control subjects and subjectivity?

Much of this wide-spread use is due to Foucault's cogent schema of power vis-à-vis knowledge and its constitutive effect on the creation of modern selfhood. "A whole generation of feminists and postcolonial theorists has stressed that forms of knowledge are not independent of power. Foucault articulated this notion in a crisp theoretical formulation," write Janet Afary and Kevin B. Anderson in *Foucault and the Iranian Revolution* before citing the following succinct statement from *Discipline and Punish*: "There is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (2005: 14). Or to reference another statement from Foucault, summing up the gist of his project:

The point of all these investigations concerning madness, disease, delinquency, sexuality, and what I am talking about now [in *The Birth of Biopolitics*], is to show how the coupling of a set of practices and a regime of truth form an apparent *(dispositif)* of knowledge-power that effectively marks out in reality that which
does not exist and legitimately submits it to the division between true and false. (2004: 19).

This theorization of the conjunction of power and knowledge, expressed so eloquently and so coherently, was available for extrapolation to a wide variety of situations in which regimes of power had utilized their control of fields of knowledge to subjugate those without power and without recourse to the command and control centers (whether located in governmental or educational institutions) which construed and conveyed "knowledge" as if it was truth; and so Foucault's schematic of power/knowledge came to be appropriated and diffused to domains far beyond their original context in a circumscribed Europe. "Knowledge, power, truth: these are the three words that so struck Foucault's readers" (Veyne 2008: 32). Elizabeth Grosz helps us to comprehend a feminist recruitment of Foucault when she stresses that, despite their shortcomings (their "many apparently misogynist or phallocentric texts"), a number of thinkers, including Foucault:

have occupied a particularly privileged place in the production of feminist theory, because their work enables feminists to understand both how apparently gender-neutral theoretical or representational systems work, what their unspoken assumptions and unacknowledged costs might be, and how they function to efface their masculinity. This knowledge is prerequisite to, or perhaps the necessary accompaniment to, the development of alternative accounts, accounts able to articulate other points of view, other (sexual) perspectives and interests. (1999: 161).

So that Foucault, among others, has cleared the ground and in some sense pointed the way for counter-hegemonic voices to be heard.

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6 Grosz also lists Merleau-Ponty, Marx, Freud, Lacan, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida, Deleuze, "and others" as part of this group.
Foucault himself outlines this in *Society Must be Defended*: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76. Foucault starts the first lecture of this series (the lecture of 7 January, that is) with an extended explication of his own research; in this "vindication" he states that:

> I think it is the coupling together of the buried scholarly knowledge and knowledges that were disqualified by the hierarchy of erudition and sciences that actually gave the discursive critique of the last fifteen years its essential strength. What was at stake in both cases, in both this scholarly knowledge and these disqualified knowledges, in these two forms of knowledge - the buried and the disqualified? A historical knowledge of struggles. Both the specialized domain of scholarship and the disqualified knowledge people have contained the memory of combats, the very memory that had until then been confined to the margins. (2003: 8).

So here it is the coupling together, the doubled functionality, of two forms of marginalized knowledge, two sets of archives which had been forgotten and ignored, the one set buried in the libraries, the other buried in the memories of those who had been marginalized until "the last fifteen years," i.e. circa 1960-1975: women, the colonized, racial and ethnic minorities, homosexuals, and so on. Foucault threw open the doors of the scholarly archive, letting loose knowledge of the previously buried methods by virtue of which those with power had subjugated those without power; the cogency of Foucault's scholarly feat, its clear articulation, its success at unveiling the specifications of domination, instigated replication by numerous scholars on numerous fronts.

But perhaps the key to the universal use, as well as the universal applicability of his instruments of analysis, is that Foucault's method consists of a deep excavation of the particular. He is a nominalist who "always rejected attempts to develop a general theory," which at least partially explains why his work is very difficult to encompass within one
fell analytic stroke (Jessop 2007: 40). But his method, nominal though it may be, has a
tendency to reveal universals. As, once the particular has been reduced to its essentials,
once it had been thoroughly unraveled of its particularities to be revealed in its
singularity, it has a tendency to turn itself inside out and manifest itself as a universal.
And perhaps Foucault's unwavering focus on the core, the particulars of Europe,
especially of France, in the final analysis winds up shedding light on the periphery as
much as the core, as the core was constituted by, as well as disciplined by, practices
honored in the periphery, and so, whatever is true for the core is also true for the periphery,
albeit in a condition at least once removed and distorted through the tangled weave of
dominance and destruction. One could also make the argument, as Nikolas Rose does in
*Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*, that what was not possible in the
metropole in terms of the "disciplinary technologies" was quite possible in the colonies:

Whilst in the metropolitan polities liberal concerns halted the tendency for
disciplinary technologies to be utilized directly in the name of 'reason of state',
many of these technologies were deployed in colonial government. There was
nothing essentially liberal in disciplinary techniques, and in their colonies their
use was seldom troubled by liberal concerns. … in India, Egypt and 'the Orient'
colonial subjects were seldom thought even potentially competent to take up the

And so disciplines thought to be too "savage" to be used in the "liberal" metropole were
exported to the colonies, where subjects thought to be too "crude" to comprehend the
degree of their un-freedom were used as experimental subjects for these technologies.
Such a construal places the periphery within the core as a laboratory for disciplinary
technologies which could be reviewed, reconstituted, and used against the colonial
subjects of the metropole before being reimported to the metropole for use against domestic subjects.

Timothy Mitchell is even more explicit in tethering Foucault's analysis to a misreading of the geographic causality of disciplinary techniques:

The methods of managing persons, self-identities, space, and movement that Foucault presents as essential to the formation of European modernity in many cases came to Europe from its encounter with what lay beyond…. Whether one looks at Dutch settlers in Indonesia, the English in India, or the mixture of French and other European colonizers in Algeria, colonial society was experienced as an often-threatening intermixture of social ranks, genders, and skin colors. To govern these new forms of disorder, colonial discourse became preoccupied with establishing distinctions of race, sexuality, culture, and class. These thematics were then available to be transferred back to the metropole, where in the later nineteenth century they helped form the racial, cultural, class, and sexual identities that defined the modern bourgeois self. (2000: 3, 5-6).

And so these practices, these methods and distinctions, though they may have been instigated by the European encounter with "what lay beyond," and perfected to a certain degree in the colonies, were often imported back into the metropole for what can be termed as a regime of domestic colonization and pedagogical indoctrination through disciplinary techniques and cultural inculcation. For instance, the "cultural field we know as English literature was constructed as a curriculum and tool of character formation in colonial India before its appearance in England" (Mitchell 2000: 3).

This is also borne out by Lefebvre's work on the colonization of the everyday:

In the 1960s, Lefebvre framed his critique of everyday life as a critique of colonization to draw attention to the unevenness of everyday experiences. Notably, he wanted to alert us to the process by which colonial techniques of

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7 Mitchell also notes that "the beginnings of English literature have also been traced in another imperial context - the English subjugation of Scotland in the eighteenth century" (2000: 28, f.n. 13).
subjection were reimposed from the former colonies to the metropolitan heartlands. (Kipfer et al 2008: 294).

Foucault was well aware of this as well:

It should never be forgotten that while colonization, with its techniques and its political and juridical weapons, obviously transported European models to other continents, it also had a considerable boomerang effect on the mechanisms of power in the West, and on the apparatuses, institutions, and techniques of power. A whole series of colonial models were brought back to the West, and the result was that the West could practice something resembling colonization, or an internal colonialism, on itself. (2003: 103).

Yet and still, despite such apparent knowledge on the part of Foucault, he rarely seems to pay attention to the possible ramifications of such boomerang effects, and just as rarely strays outside Europe in general and France in particular when citing and referencing source material.

All of this is intended to point out that Foucault's analyses are plainly and patently overly tethered to European sources: there was much too much of an interpenetration at work between the metropole and its colonies to credit the metropole with sole dominion over the production of Europe and its culture; it was the cross-pollinization between the "mother country" and her colonies which more than anything constituted both the general regime and the particular techniques of the disciplines and the milieus in which they were inscribed. For Foucault, it appears that a "homogeneous time-space" with "no interruptions from the non-West" was necessary for his project of constructing a modern bourgeois self, divested of the messiness of the encounter with difference and the other, that "otherness that creates the boundary of the space of modernity" (Mitchell 2000: 15, 16). Even the "flowering" of biological classification, one of the forerunners of the
"flowering" of classification in general in eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe, can be traced back to "boomerang effects" between the metropole and the colony: "The systematic surveying and cataloguing of the biological resources of tropical regions conquered by European countries led to a flowering of systematic biology under the leadership of Linnaeus" (Levins and Lewontin 1985: 198). This same relationship can be traced in the shipment of species of fauna and flora from Alexander the Great to Aristotle during the lengthy Greek expedition to "the East."

More on the Milieu

Here we should also insert a brief exegesis of three other influential uses of the term, "milieu" by French thinkers. one descending from the geographer Vidal de la Blanche, one from the critic and historian Hippolyte Taine, and the last from Deleuze and Guattari. In de la Blanche, "society and milieu" serve as stand-ins for "sociality and territoriality" (Buttimer 1971: 3). These two elements are construed as the "two scaffolds of human experience" which "interact to produce the earth's variegated cultural landscapes: society a complex web of organizational arrangements, milieu a variegated mosaic of physically differentiated regions" (Buttimer 1971: 3). So this conception is essentially physical and rooted in the region, the primary object of research of "the 'first generation' of French human geographers in their regional monographs" (Buttimer 1971: 3, f.n. 4). Taine's trio of race, milieu, and moment, had an enormous impact on both the writing of fiction and literary criticism, as Zola and de Maupassant were deeply indebted to this conceptual schema as they researched various environments in which to set their works (historicism can also be traced back to Taine's construal of the triad of race, milieu,
and moment). In their rather arcane metaphysical toxology, Deleuze and Guattari utilize "milieu" to designate "the material field in which strata and assemblages are formed," and so the milieu as conceptualized by Deleuze and Guattari seems to retain the physical element bestowed upon it by French geographers of the region (Bonta and Protevi 2004: 113). However, that would be to underestimate Deleuze and Guattari's canny ability to multiply simplicity into complexity: "A milieu is a 'soup' or the coded medium of particle-flows and the strata that gives birth to or at least supports a rhizomatic assemblage: a living being, a symbiont, or an ecosystem, for example" (Bonta and Protevi 2004: 113). This codicil appears to push Deleuze and Guattari's construal a step or two closer to Foucault's, though Foucault seems to want to keep the term more closely aligned with an event or a series of events within an assemblage; in other words, Foucault's milieu is not a medium, it is that which occurs within the medium, and a distinctly human, not a natural, medium: the word "ecosystem" would ring false if it were contained within a Foucauldian analysis of the milieu.

In Brian Massumi's "Notes on the Translation and Acknowledgments" to Deleuze and Guattari's A Thousand Plateaus, he states that "In French, milieu means 'surroundings,' medium,' (as in chemistry) and 'middle'' (Massumi 1988: xvii; italics, Massumi). He then goes on to add that, "In the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, 'milieu' should be read as a technical term combining all three meanings" (Massumi 1988: xvii). However, Deleuze and Guattari, in their typically omnivorous way, exceed even Massumi's broad definitional boundaries and his expansive appropriative uses of the term: differentiating the territory from the milieu, they state that the territory:
is not a milieu, not even an additional milieu, nor a rhythm or passage between milieus…. The territory is the product of a territorialization of milieus and rhythms…. A territory borrows from all the milieus; it bites into them, seizes them bodily (although it remains vulnerable to intrusions). It is built from aspects or portions of milieus. It itself has an exterior milieu, an interior milieu, an intermediary milieu, and an annexed milieu. It has the interior zone of a residence or shelter, the exterior zone of its domain, more or less retractable limits or membranes, intermediary or even neutralized zones, and energy reserves or annexes. (1988: 314).

Again, without unpacking every nuance of this passage (a passage which, I am afraid, does much more to define the "territory" than the "milieu"), I believe it is clear that this seems much too unabashedly physical to be legitimately tied to Foucault's conception of the milieu.

*A Return to Foucault's Milieu*

These brief but necessary explications at an end, let us return to Foucault's conception of the milieu:

*What is the milieu? It is what is needed for action at a distance of one body on another.* It is therefore the medium of an action and the element in which it circulates. It is therefore the problem of circulation and causality that is at stake [at risk] in this notion of milieu. (Foucault 2007: 20-21; italics, mine).

What is of interest in this passage is its articulation of what can be taken as a striking difference between Goffman's situation and Foucault's milieu. The situation a la Goffman is at hand, close, intimate, personal: it is always occurring within the physical propinquity of bodies with one another and in one place, whether that place be an office, a party, an elevator, or a bus; Foucault's milieu is what animates as well as what controls the situation, but as it is animated and controlled on a distal basis: it is impersonal, distant,
alien, yet present through the power of its reach, a reach catalyzed by both technology and discipline. The milieu is that ground on which a homeostatic tension exists between the abyss of risk and the cove of security.

Foucault's construal of the milieu, as I understand it, can be of multiple types: political conventions, academic conferences, film locations, sporting events, church services, assisted living facilities, homeless encampments, business meetings, and so on. Notice that these disparate types share the quality of what could be called, albeit somewhat clumsily, eventful occurrence:

Security will try to plan a milieu in terms of events or series of events or possible elements, of series that will have to be regulated within a multivalent and transformable framework. The specific space of security refers then to a series of possible events; it refers to the temporal and the uncertain, which have to be inserted within a given space. (Foucault 2007: 20).

Here we might imagine the planning of an upcoming meeting of the leaders of the G-20. Uncertain contingencies (i.e. risks) have to be imagined and then inserted as possible givens into the space of the meeting. It is only then that the responses of security forces to these risks can be developed and prefigured into the (possible) future of the milieu. Knowledge of the typology of the milieu as well as the specifications of this particular milieu (e.g. a G-20 meeting), both on the part of those attempting to secure the milieu and on those willing to risk themselves in order to disrupt or even destroy the milieu, allows each side to perform at an optimum level as they secure the milieu or put it at risk. In other words, each specific milieu provides a more or less known platform from which to calibrate the possibilities of risk and security. This is why we have "officials of the French electrical utility … [who] have at their disposal catastrophe simulators" to plan
for possible nuclear accidents; such simulators are "comparable to the army's 'strategic calculators,' and akin to airplane and automobile simulators," in that they attempt to delimit the risk of that which Paul Virilo insists is inherent to the very process/machine so delimited:

Since the production of any substance is simultaneously the production of a typical accident, breakdown or failure is less the deregulation of production than the production of a specific failure, or even a partial or total destruction. Oceangoing vessels invented the shipwreck, trains the rail catastrophe, fires the forest fire…. Indeed, the primacy accorded the renowned mode of production seems to have helped obscure the old dialectic: the mode of production/mode of destruction (not just mode of consumption) of preindustrial societies. (Virilo 1993: 216, 212; italics, Virilo).

However, Schumpeter's idea of creative destruction may be viewed, if seen through a lens inspired by Virilo's notions, as an attempt to transfer the preindustrial mode of production/mode of destruction into the industrial age.

These considerations are also of utmost importance during any civil disturbance or protest action. For instance, the civil rights demonstrators in the American South during the 1960s understood to a certain degree the parameters of risk and security of the milieu in which they were operating. In other words, they knew that beatings, jail, and possibly even death were the outer bounds to which risk could push security and yet, despite the risks, they were willing to challenge those parameters. That is, their effort consisted of and constituted a challenge to the very construction of the milieu in which they existed. On the other side, the police forces of the South were attempting to keep intact the pre-existing milieu, which of course entailed securing it against the challenge of a reconfiguration of that very milieu by the protestors.
However, perhaps this is not quite right, as the milieu, according to Foucault's use of the term, would accord more with the series of events which constitutes a protest or demonstration rather than the pre-existing state of affairs upon which or against which the protest attempts to act. We will return to this subject below.

This mention of population and its "circulation," in the sense that circulation between the white and black population in the South was policed along racial lines, brings us back to Foucault's referencing of the "problem of circulation and causality." Here Foucault is alluding to the problem of population and its control which arose in the latter half of the eighteenth century during the first wave of the industrial revolution with its concomitant increase in population. This increase meant that cities could no longer be regulated in a casual way as the walls of the cities became ineffectual against the tide of humanity passing in to and out of the city:

An important problem for towns in the eighteenth century was allowing for surveillance, since the suppression of city walls made necessary by economic development meant that one could no longer close towns in the evening or closely supervise daily comings and goings, so that the insecurity of the towns was increased by the influx of the floating population of beggars, vagrants, delinquents, criminals, thieves, murderers, and so on, who might come, as everyone knows, from the country… (Foucault 2007: 18; italics, mine).

In other words, the city walls no longer could suppress the arrival of strangers, whether those strangers were merchants or murderers. This, then, constitutes the gist of the problem of population, as its circulation must somehow be controlled within the milieu of the modern city, a city now too expansive and too overflowing to curb the arrival and departure of an exploding population.
But circulation in relation to a burgeoning population also has a more physical
dimension; here, the connotation is to the circulation of air, water, and transportation
systems. Circulation and centralization are tied together as the State attempted to extend
its range of powers into the collective body:

Throughout the whole second half of the eighteenth century we see a huge effort
being made to homogenize, normalize, classify, and centralize medical
knowledge. How could medical knowledge be given a form and a content, how
could homogeneous laws be imposed upon the practice of health care, how could
rules be imposed upon the population - not so much to make it share this
knowledge, as to make it find it acceptable? All this led to the creation of
hospitals, dispensaries, and of the Societie royale de medecine, the codification of
the medical profession, a huge public hygiene campaign, a huge campaign to
improve the hygiene of nurslings and children, and so on. (Foucault 2003: 181).

This "huge" effort to minimize the risk of contagion and disease while
maximizing the centrality of information and the institutionalization and codification of
all things medical also becomes the pivot-point around which circulation, population,
causality, and urban planning connect with the milieu and its double aspects of security
and risk:

Security will rely on a number of material givens. It will, of course, work on site
with the flows of water, islands, air, and so forth…. It is … a matter of
maximizing the positive elements, for which one provides the best possible
circulation, and minimizing what is risky and inconvenient, like theft and disease,
while knowing that they will never be completely suppressed. One will therefore
work not only on natural givens, but also on quantities that can be relatively, but

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8 Foucault addresses the "urban problem" in "Society Must Be Defended" when he is outlining the rise of
biopolitics in the 1800s: "Biopolitics' last domain is … control over relations between the human race, or
human beings insofar as they are a species, insofar as they are living beings, and their environment, the
milieu in which they live. This includes the direct effects of the geographical, climatic, or hydrographic
environment: the problem, for instance, of swamps, and of epidemics linked to the existence of swamps
throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. And also the problem of the environment to the extent
that it is not a natural environment, that it has been created by the population and therefore has effects on
the population. This is, essentially, the urban problem. (2003: 245; italics, mine).
never wholly reduced, and since they can never be nullified, one works on probabilities. (Foucault 2007: 19).

This passage includes an acknowledgement that security (and thus the milieu) has an outer boundary ("theft and disease … will never be completely suppressed") at which security and its techniques reach a limit; beyond that limit, to which the algorithms of possibilities and probabilities cannot reach, lies the remainder, the residue of that which cannot be controlled, and which, then, is fertile ground for transformation and revolution, but also a miasma in which corruption of every kind and disease in every form can fester and breed. This remainder, this residue, that which lies beyond the limits of risk, is also prime territory for the operation of the police. Once security has been breached, risk ensues, and the police are called in to restore the order of the milieu. The police frequently operate beyond the limits (and order) of the milieu in order to force it back within its limit. Extra-legal means are utilized to create (or recreate) legal order within the milieu. "The fact is that the police is the site where the contiguity if not constitutive exchange between violence and law that characterizes the figure of the sovereign is visible in all its nakedness," writes Giorgio Agamben, "contrary to common opinion, which sees the police as a purely administrative function for the operation of the law" (1993: 61). The police, then, are the site in which violence and law "team up" to make visible the naked power of the regime: heads are cracked all right, but the blood flowing from those wounds welds back together the limits of the milieu, as that milieu had now been set back within the limits of the state. "The investiture of the sovereign as cop has another result: it entails a criminalization of the adversary" (Agamben 1993: 63). So that the breaking of the law on the part of the police legitimates the very law which the police
have just broken: this forms the constitutive exchange between violence and law on the part of the police.

The techniques of discipline frequently require "enclosure, the specification of a place heterogeneous to all others and closed in upon itself" (Foucault 1995: 141; italics, Foucault). Such sites as prisons, army barracks, monasteries, workshops and factories, boarding schools and colleges, hospitals and insane asylums, though organized for the control of certain segments of the population, work on those selected segments on an individual basis: "It does this first of all on the principle of elementary location or partitioning. Each individual has his own place; and each place its individual" (Foucault 1995: 143; italics, Foucault). The techniques of the milieu, however, are not based on enclosure and the individual per se; instead, they are based on more or less open spaces and a population which comes and goes. Therefore, the milieu and its population, a population which came into its own during the 1700 and 1800s, opens up an entirely new forum in which the forces of security and risk must learn to operate. Within this new forum, the techniques of the milieu must allow for the contingencies of the arrival of two unknowns, the stranger and the future. Being unknowns, and therefore essentially unknowable, ipso facto, the techniques can only account for so much: here again, they reach a limit, and beyond that, a remainder exists in which security no longer is reliable and risk comes into play, a risk leveraged on two unknowns, the future and strangers.

The techniques of the milieu must also operate at a distance. As its subjects are not confined and do not necessarily exist in the present (and so are not confined to either the here or to the here and now), these techniques must work across space and across time. In order for such a diffusive process to occur and at such a scope and scale, a great
deal of centralization must occur. This necessitates the hub-and-network system
congruent with the modern nation-state, with the centralizing power of the capital
relaying signals of command and control to distant provinces and, in turn, receiving
signals of compliance in the form of revenue and conscripts from the provinces.

The translation of thought and action from a "centre of calculation" into a
diversity of locales dispersed across a territory - translation in the sense of
movement from one place to another. Through a multitude of … mobile relays,
relations are established between those who are spatially and temporally
separated, and between events and decisions in spheres that none the less retain
their formal autonomy. The composition of such networks is the condition of
possibility for "action at a distance": it is only to the extent that such alignments
of diverse forms can be established that calculated action upon conduct across
time and space can occur at all. (Rose 1996: 43).

For such actions at a distance to occur, transportation and communication networks have
to be planned and constructed which must extend out to the most remote areas of the
state. And these must be extended while still maintaining the absolute centrality of the
state's power; the more remote those areas, the more power the center must retain in order
to keep what is at a distance in its grip: "dispersal occurs under conditions of
concentration of control" (Sassen 2002: 15).

In Seeing Like A State, Scott outlines such a process using France as his template
while classifying the imposition of the centrality of the State and Paris on the provinces
and their population as a form of "domestic colonization" (1998: 72). With the
standardization of language, the population becomes "linguistically subdued and
culturally incorporated" into the nation at large; with the centralization of the road and
railroad networks, the nation's transportation systems "increasingly favored movement to
and from Paris over interregional or local traffic;" with techniques of "state simplification such as maps, censuses, cadastral lists, and standard units of measurement," it became feasible to construct "a powerful form of state knowledge, making it possible for officials to intervene early in epidemics, to understand economic trends that greatly affect public welfare, to gauge whether their policies are having their desired effect, and to make policy with many of the crucial facts at hand" (Scott 1998: 72, 73, 77). Using such techniques, an opaque population could be rendered transparent, at least to a certain degree. However, such knowledge could of course be used for other purposes, purposes that extended well beyond beneficent ones such as the rousting out of an epidemic or the prodding along of positive economic trends: Scott cites the instance of a map that Dutch authorities had compiled of the distribution of Jews in Amsterdam, a map the Nazis, upon conquering the Netherlands, utilized to pinpoint and round up people of Jewish heritage and send them to concentration camps.

The Nazi authorities, of course, supplied the murderous purpose behind the exercise, but the legibility provided by the Dutch authorities supplied the means to its efficient implementation. That legibility, I should emphasize, merely amplifies the capacity of the state for discriminating interventions - a capacity that in principle could as easily have been deployed to feed the Jews as to deport them. (Scott 1998: 78).

Here, we must concur with Scott that the transparency (or legibility) of the population does not necessarily lead to either positive or negative outcomes. However, it does lead to a state of affairs in which the population is more accessible, and therefore, at least potentially, more pliable to the commands of the state. Foucault's focus on the population, its creation as the focus for the activities of the state, highlights the main shift
of the state during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries from individual supervision to mass manipulation, whether that supervision consists of the dissemination of universal polio vaccines or of universal conscription notices, the prevention of the spread of SARS or the surveillance of emails and telephone calls. "Foucault has been more perceptive than other social philosophers of recent times," writes Partha Chatterjee, "in noticing the crucial importance of the new concept of population for the emergence of modern governmental technologies" (2000: 43).

Many of the modern governmental techniques have to do with a "security" agenda which replaced the defense agenda of the pre-9/11 state, though the security state per se dates at least from President Truman's creation of the CIA in 1947 and the formulation of what came to be termed "the National Security State." Arguably, of course, the inception of the security state could be dated much earlier and is contingent upon which state is at issue and what definition of "security" one is using to analyze such a condition; however, the emphasis on a total and absolute security, the passage of the Patriot Act, the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, and new developments in surveillance and crowd control all testify to if not an absolutely new development, at least to a significant increase in the importance of security to the state and its population.

Here, let us return to the milieu and stipulate that each milieu has a limit beyond which its security is at risk. This limit may be prefigured, at least to a certain extent, or it may alter as the event which it circumscribes develops. If we take the political protest as our prototypical milieu, perhaps we can better understand the workings of the milieu itself in all its forms, with its limits arranged around parameters defined by various understandings of security and risk. We will proceed this way, despite what Foucault
claims about the milieu, viz, that the regulation of the milieu entails "not so much establishing limits and frontiers, or fixing locations, as, above all and essentially, making possible, guaranteeing, and ensuring circulations: the circulation of people, merchandise, and air, etcetera" (2007: 29). The reason we will proceed with an emphasis on the limit is that, even if one privileges circulation over limits, one still must master the limit of circulation in order to circulate whatever one intends to circulate, be that people, merchandise, or air. In other words, the guaranteeing of circulation, its assurance, relies, and relies necessarily, on the establishment of limits; ergo, we will focus on limits, at least for now. People cannot circulate unless there is a limitation on the amount of horses (and therefore of horse dung) on the road; merchandise cannot circulate unless there is a limit put on acts of fraud and instances of thievery; air cannot circulate unless there is a limit on the noxious potential of coal smoke and industrial fumes, and so on.

Of course all of this does not mean that Foucault, when using the term himself, limits himself to his own construal of the milieu; for instance in The Birth of Biopolitics, Foucault, discussing criminality, states that "penal action must act on the interplay of gains and losses or, in other words, on the environment; we must act on the market milieu in which the individual makes his supply of crime and encounters a positive or negative demand" (2004: 259; italics, mine). Similarly, Foucault refers to the "criminal milieu" and the "delinquent milieu" when discussing the genealogy of the prison system (Foucault 1980: 195-196). Here, milieu does not seem to be used to refer to a series of events, though it does seem to have a limit circumscribing the limits of security and risk. In the same series of lectures, Foucault refers to "an economic and political choice formed and formulated … within the governmental milieu" (2004: 218; italics, mine).
Here, the milieu seems even more static, as it is instantiated within a government and embedded within a state. Finally, in the same lecture (14 March 1979, that is), Foucault, now with migration as his topic, mentions the "psychological cost for the individual establishing himself in a new milieu" (2004: 230; italics, mine). Here, "milieu" appears to be used as a synonym for home, niche, dwelling, or environment. There is no sense of a series implied here, and, although every home has its limit beyond which security is at risk, the use of the term in this specific case is so general as to be ideal, abstract, and formless to the point that its generality is lost in the obscurity of the opaque. Granted, these examples are a far cry from constituting the total sample of Foucault's use of the term; however, they do offer a limited amount of evidence that milieu was a wobbly term for Foucault, at least when utilized in his own discourse. But there is nothing odd about a thinker not being internally consistent with his definitional construals or not completely adhering to his own lexical decrees: certainly, this should not be held against Foucault's own formulation of the term. Let it stand.

A Pause for the Limit

Next, let us indicate the import of the limit and the limit-experience to Foucault, both as objects of analysis and as elements by which he gauged and tested the boundaries of his own life. On the personal front, Foucault, according to his friend and colleague, Paul Veyne, started off early as a "pusher" of the limits:

He [Foucault] … told me, his great passions at secondary school had nothing to do with his nascent homosexuality; it involved drowning as many drugs as he could filch from his father, who was a doctor, in order to find out how much they altered one's thinking and also to discover that different kinds of thinking are
possible. "Mama, what do fishes think?" he asked his mother one day, faced with a fishbowl in which goldfish were swimming. The thinking of a fish, medical drugs, hard drugs, madness … they all showed that our normal way of thinking was not the only one possible. There are many ways of sparking off a philosophical vocation. (2008: 141).

In *The Passion of Michel Foucault*, James Miller constantly invokes the extent to which *limits, the limit-experience, and the limits* to which the self could be extended prior to hitting its *limitations* or shattering through them were Foucault's central concerns. His homosexuality, his suicide attempts as a youth, his drug use, his predilection for anonymous bathhouse sex even after the danger of unprotected sex *vis-à-vis* AIDS had became widely acknowledged, and even AIDS itself are all presented as limit experiences by which Foucault challenged the borders of his own subjectivity, as Miller presents Foucault as using his own self as a test case by which to calibrate the liminality of the subjectifying disciplines which Foucault had posited as forming the modern self.

In *The Birth of Biopolitics*, the *self-limitation* of governmental reason is presented by Foucault himself as the prime factor in the transformation of governmentality from one formed essentially around the valorization of *raison d'Etat* and one formed essentially around the valorization of interests: "Governmental reason in its modern form, in the form established at the beginning of the eighteenth century with the fundamental characteristic of a search for *the principle of its self-limitation*, is a reason that functions in terms of interest" (2004: 44; italics, mine). This is the formation of governmental reason which limits its power in relationship to the poles of the market and utility:

"Exchange for wealth and utility for the public for the public authorities: this is how governmental reason articulates the fundamental principle of its self-limitation" (Foucault 2004: 44). Such a form of self-limited governmental reason is opposed in Foucault's
schematic to "the unlimited tendency of raison d'Etat," a form of governmental reason which is intended "to ensure the growth of the state's forces, wealth, and strength, to ensure its unlimited growth" (Foucault 2004: 41, 27; italics, mine). Here, I will not pause to argue these points, or even to unpack them; my only intention is to indicate Foucault's preoccupation in his analytic work with the notion of limits.

Foucault's work on discourses, their power in shaping or misshaping our views of both history or of the present, highlights another aspect of the importance of limits; this is nicely explicated by Veyne in his *Foucault: His Thought, His Character*:

> Given that we cannot think absolutely anything at absolutely any time, our thinking does not stray beyond the frontiers constituted by the 'discourse' of the moment. *Everything that we think we know is, unbeknown to us, limited; we cannot see the limits and are even unaware that they exist.* (2008: 27; italics, mine).

This notion of the limit, in all its variations (i.e. the limited, the limitless, the delimited, the limitations, etc.) occurs with a great deal of frequency in Foucault's work; one could fairly claim, I think, that one of Foucault's central preoccupations is the limit beyond which one cannot go without constituting a new conception of the foundation upon which one proceeds; the limit of the milieu beyond which its parameters of security and risk are punctured; the limits of discipline; the limits of sovereignty; the limits of the limit, and the limits of the variations of the limit, its limitation, its limitlessness, and its delimitations. In fact, it is quite astounding how often the term and its variations appear in Foucault's *oeuvre*. For instance, in *The Archeology of Knowledge*, Foucault states, in regard to the "great problem" to be reckoned with:
historical analyses is not how continuities are established, [it is not] how a single pattern is formed and preserved … the problem is no longer one of tradition of tracing a line, but one of division, of limits; it is no longer one of lasting foundations, but one of transformations that serve as new foundations, the rebuilding of foundations" (1972: 5; italics, mine).

In the same work, and a mere five pages later, Foucault asserts that:

it is supposed that history itself may be articulated into great units of - stages or phases - [already we have the sense that the "limits" to such a supposition may be descending] which contain within themselves their own principle of cohesion. These are the postulates that are challenged by the new history when it speaks of series, divisions, limits, differences of levels, shifts, chronological specificities, particular forms of rehandling, possible types of relation. (1972: 10; italics, mine).

Foucault reiterates this theme of the limitation of the constitutional cohesiveness of history on page twelve of The Archeology of Knowledge: "It is as if it was particularly difficult, in the history in which men retrace their own ideas and their own knowledge, to formulate a general theory of discontinuity, of series, of limits, unities, specific orders, and differentiated autonomies and dependencies" (1972: 12; italics, mine).

And The Birth of Biopolitics is virtually littered with the notion of the limit; for instance, when articulating the origins of neo-liberalism and its idea of a limited governmentality in his lecture of 10 January of 1979, Foucault says that:

The problem is one of defining this general and de facto limit that government will have to impose on itself…. Internal limitation means that in looking for the principle of this limitation, because we need to know what this generality depends on, we will not seek it in the natural rights prescribed by God to all men, for example, or in revealed Scripture, or even in the wills of subjects who at a given moment agree to enter into society. No, the principle of this limitation is not to be sought in what is external to government, but in what is internal to governmental practice, that is to say, in the objectives of government. And this limitation will then appear as one of the means, and maybe the fundamental means, of attaining
precisely these objectives. To attain these objectives it may be necessary to limit governmental action. Governmental reason does not have to respect these limits because they are limits laid down once and for all outside, or before, or around the state. Not at all. Governmental reason will have to respect these limits inasmuch as it can calculate them on its own account in terms of its objectives and [the] best means of achieving them. (2004: 11; italics, mine).

The milieu maintains itself by maintaining its limits, the limits, that is, set between the delimitations of security and risk.

Interest in the limit or limit-experiences is of course not limited to Foucault, and though the French seem to have a special fascination with this subject (think of a short list consisting of Sade, Bataille, Rimbaud, Celine, and Artaud), the limit had a special fascination with the romantics and the Transcendentalists as well. In his *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America*, Garry Wills lays this out nicely:

The strong link between childhood and death in the nineteenth century is normally treated as a matter of the high rate of infant mortality. But other periods have had as high or higher death rates and not dwelt on the rituals of mourning. Frequency can indurate as well as sensitize. There is something deeper in the connection between children, death, and the healing countryside that J. Hillis Miller traces to Dickens's novels. They key to the fascination seems to be that childhood was seen as one of those liminal experiences that fascinated the romantics in general and the Transcendentalists in particular. The interest in dreams, reverie, mesmerism, spiritualism, birth, and death shared this liminality. (1992: 72; italics, Wills).

Imagining Foucault as a romantic Transcendentalist conjures up visions of intriguing studies exploring such a link.

*Back to the Milieu*

Each Foucauldian milieu possesses "a sort of homeostasis" which hovers at equipoise "by achieving an overall equilibrium that protects the security of the whole
from internal dangers" as well as external risks (Foucault 2003: 249). The milieu's homeostasis controls the limits of the milieu, or monitors that which exists within the milieu. Poised between security and risk, the milieu achieves its own homeostasis; Deleuze and Guattari formulate a conception of the milieu with its equipoise balanced by the two poles of the milieu's own rhythm and the chaos descending upon the milieu from outside its borders: "Rhythm is the milieu's answer to chaos. What chaos and rhythm have in common is the in-between" (1988: 313).

Perhaps the homeostatic equipoise of the milieu and its relationship between security and risk can best be illustrated by recourse to Foucault's own biography, as his participation in the milieu of the protest can illuminate the demarcations (the limits) of such an equilibrium. Though Foucault was teaching at the University of Tunis during the upheaval of May 1968, a very similar uprising occurred in Tunisia during the same year. Foucault described these events in a colloquium some years later in Italy:

'I witnessed student riots, very strong, very intense. This was in March 1968, and the agitation lasted the whole year: strikes, suspension of courses with students arrested in March, a general strike of students. The police entered the university and beat students, badly wounding many and taking them to jail. There was a trial, during which some students received sentences of eight, ten, fourteen years in jail.' (Miller 1993: 171).9

Here we can see multiple perforations of multiple milieus. Students judge that the homeostasis of the university milieu, its norm of security, its equipoise, its status quo, is unacceptable, and so take the risk of puncturing its limits to disrupt and possibly destroy its normative equilibrium; the forces of the State, with the police as their vanguard, judge

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9 Miller cites Volume V, 18 of a text titled _Colloqui con Foucault_ (Salerno, 1981), though the reference is a bit uncertain for _Remarks on Marx_ (translated by R. James Goldstein and James Cascaito, New York, 1991) is also listed
that the limits of security have been breached and therefore take actions to restore the
limits of their conception of the normative milieu of the Tunisian university, circa 1968.
The milieu of individual bodies is also punctured through being on the "giving" and
"receiving" ends of physical beatings, directly disrupting physiological norms of
homeostasis on the two types of bodily form involved in these confrontations, that is, the
bodies of both the students and the police officers are rent asunder from their normal
sense of homeostasis. Foucault's own sense of the milieu of the university had been
interrupted as well, as he now came face to face with the existential possibility of political
action for the first time in his life: "In the aftermath of the Tunisian student uprising,
Foucault had a decision to make. He could speak out in public on behalf of the students,
and face expulsion from the country. Or he could help the students surreptitiously, trying
to exploit his own prominent position for their benefit" (Miller 1993: 171). Of course,
there is another possibility as well: he could have done nothing, which is probably the
most typical response on the part of most people to the possibility of political action, and
which could be construed as a sort of passive wish that the milieu that has been punctured
(or that needs to be punctured) will anneal itself of its own accord. Foucault chose instead
to aid the students on a surreptitious basis:

At some risk to himself, he helped students who had escaped arrest, hiding them
in his apartment. He also hid a mimeography machine, which the students used to
print manifestos. On more than one occasion, he tried, without success, to
intervene on behalf of those in prison…. It was, in fact, his first inkling that
politics, like art and eroticism, could occasion a kind of "limit-experience."
(Miller 1993: 171; italics, mine).
So here, in the aftermath of the bursting of the limits of the Tunisian university milieu, circa 1968, Foucault undergoes a limit-experience, meaning that he is experiencing that which lies outside the limit of this particular milieu. Security has been breached, those who stray outside the breach put themselves at risk, but they also create a new milieu with its own homeostasis, its own limits, its own sense of security and risk.

Let me also add that, in my estimation, Foucault put himself at great risk, given what we know about the Tunisian government of that period, e.g. the prison sentences doled out to student protestors. This belies the usual impression of Foucault as apolitical, above the fray, distanced from the particulars of strife as it also belies the estimation of Foucault by "colleagues like Georges Dumézil and left-wing intellectuals like Sartre [who] took Foucault to be a rather conventional, even conservative academic mandarin" (Mitchell 1993: 172). It also belies Foucault's own estimate of his work, an estimation which could be perceived as merely self-serving (as may many a self-appraisal), but which, despite that qualification, serves to buttress the claim the Foucault was far from apolitical and aloof:

To me it doesn't seem a good method to take a particular science to work on just because it's interesting or important or because its history might appear to have some exemplary value. If one wanted to do a correct, clean, conceptually aseptic kind of history, then that would be a good method. But if one is interested in doing historical work that has political meaning, utility, and effectiveness, then this is possible only if one has some kind of involvement with the struggles taking place in the area in question. (1980: 64; italics, mine).

And, indeed, there is a genealogy and a reason for Foucault's selection of research subjects: having been "evaluated in the Hôpital Sainte-Anne by one of the leading lights of modern French psychiatry" after several suicide attempts when he was a youth, and
having also served as an "unofficial intern" at the same hospital in the early 1950s, it comes as no surprise that Foucault chose the asylum as his first object of study (Miller 1993: 54, 62). As Foucault discretely explains it:

I tried first to do a genealogy of psychiatry because I had a certain amount of practical experience in psychiatric hospitals and was aware of the combats, the lines of force, tensions and points of collision which existed there. My historical work was undertaken only as a function of those conflicts. The problem and the stake there was the possibility of a discourse which would be both true and strategically effective, the possibility of an historical truth which could have a political effect. (1980: 64; italics, mine).

So that it seems at least somewhat one-sided, if not downright unfair, to accuse Foucault of scholarly indifference to the political problems of his day.

Breaking the limits of security, putting oneself at risk, challenging the boundaries of the milieu, are constitutive of transgression, also one of Foucault's primary concepts. "Nothing is negative in transgression," writes Foucault in an essay on Bataille (1963). As James Miller lays this out in The Passion of Michel Foucault, transgression, for Foucault, was an ingress in to as well as the most direct route to transcendence, affirming both the limitations of the self as the self is transcended as well as the limitlessness of the realm into which the self was vaulted while transgressing. Indeed, Foucault states in the essay on Baitille that acts of transgression offer up the "sole manner of discovering the sacred in its unmediated content" (1963). And, for Foucault, such acts of transgression could come in many forms: through the ingestion of drugs such as LSD and opium, through the acting out of erotic fantasies, through violence, as well as through the violation of the security limits of the milieu. However, acts of transgression can also demolish the limits which they violate, transforming the very milieu which it transgresses. This, then, turns a
simple limit-experience into a more complicated multivalent act: "Transgression, then, is not related to the limit as black to white, the prohibited to the lawful, the outside to the inside, or as the open area of a building to its enclosed spaces. Rather, their relationship takes the form of a spiral which no simple infraction can exhaust" (Foucault 1963, 754). But even if this is the case on a metaphysical or ontological level, actual transgressions do have their limits: if Foucault had been caught by the Tunisian authorities, he would have found himself outside the limit of the law and either inside the limits of a prison or deported outside the limits of the country.

The Tunisian experience was not singular, in terms of Foucault being willing to overstep the bounds of the milieu of the political protest. In 1969, back in France and teaching at Vincennes, Foucault joined "a handful of other professors," including André Glucksmann, "and some five hundred students and militants" as they occupied the university in "ostensibly a show of solidarity with students who had occupied the rector's office at the Sorbonne … in response to the appearance of police on the Paris campus" (Miller 1993: 178). When the police made their appearance at Vincennes, some protestors surrendered, while others, including Foucault and Glucksmann, retreated to the roof and "set about hurling bricks at the police gathered below" (Miller 1993: 178). Here, once again, Foucault is willing to risk puncturing the limit of the milieu, as he places his security (as well as the security of the police) at risk. And he seemed to have performed the task with a sense of the transcendental release of exceeding the limit: Miller reports that "Witnesses recall that Foucault exulted in the moment, gleefully lobbing stones" at the authorities (1993: 178-179). Here we can fairly ask the question (though the answer exceeds our grasp, and may have exceeded Foucault's at the time as well): how much of
Foucault's exultation at that moment was due to the making of a political point - 'you, the police, are not the only force that can engage in the use of force, you no longer have a monopoly on the force of force' - and how much was due to the sheer transgressive thrill of it all? Regardless of the answer to that question (and the most probable answer may be that both sides of the equation contributed to Foucault's sense of exultation), this is definitely another case in which Foucault is engaging in the limit-experience of transcending the limits of the milieu of the political protest. The university seized, the retreat to the roof, the stones hurled at the police: the boundaries of the milieu of French academia circa 1969 in combination with the milieu of university protest have been broken. Once again, risks have been taken, security breached, and limits exceeded in this serial event.

But perhaps this is all wrong. Perhaps, by this time and in this place, that is, France in January of 1969, the milieu of a protest and the milieu of the French academy had already been reconfigured, so that the seizure of the university and the hurling of stones at the police were at that time constitutive of these very milieus. Their limits had already been stretched to the point that such acts were ordinary, normative, and even expected to a certain degree. The definition of the milieu, the figure of its inscription, its lexical and existential borders, where risk begins and where security abides, are up for grabs as their limits are tested and contested. This would then be the milieu of the reshaping of the protest and academic milieu (or the protest of the academic milieu) as the forces protecting security battle those pushing the limits of risk.

This contestation still continues, most noticeably, perhaps, in the various protests staged against the meetings of the G-20 as well as the recent spate of Occupy Wall Street
protests. Such items as "protest zones," police infiltrators, occupations of public and private parks, the use of mace and pepper spray - these are all attempts to reconfigure the milieu of the protest.

_Foucault and Goffman: Milieu and Situation, Top-down and Bottom-up_

It is rather difficult, if not impossible, to decipher Goffman's situation vis-à-vis Foucault's milieu through a strategy of contrasting and comparing them, as Foucault's construal of the milieu is over-theorized and under-utilized (nearly to the point of being not utilized at all) while Goffman's construal of the situation is over-utilized while being under-theorized (nearly to the point of not being theorized at all). So they are mirror reflections of one another, both of them hypertrophic but not homologous with one another.

We know that the social situation, for Goffman, is one of his main preoccupations, as he is continually dissecting its particulars, e.g., women on buses protecting themselves against intrusion by the invocation of involvement shields (reading a book, for instance); or the staking out of territory by the claiming of space, e.g., spreading out personal items across the surface of a table at a coffee shop in order to signal that others should not consider invasion or interference. In the case of Foucault and the milieu, however, it is not so clear if the theorization of the milieu is of primary significance for him. It seems that it is not, as he does not - except for the few passages of _Security, Territory, Population_ that I have cited - directly deal with the concept (at least from what I have been able to verify); however, surely the milieu can be intercalated as a vital part of many of the subjects that Foucault investigates. We can fairly say that
there is the milieu of the prison, the milieu of the clinic, the milieu of the academy, and so on, and that with all of these Foucault is concerned with their equilibrium, their homeostasis, and their demarcations of security and risk, or what we could call the limits of their limits.

Goffman too is concerned with limits and homeostasis, though of course he doesn't use such terminology. He wants to demonstrate what normative behavior for "Anglo-American" society circa 1960 consists of, and so must mark out its limits. However, where Foucault will use an abstract term, such as the limit, to mark such a boundary, Goffman will use a concrete thing, such as a window, to mark such a boundary, as in the following excerpt from *Behavior in Public Places*:

Windows themselves may provide an opportunity for partial participation in a situation and are typically associated with an understanding that such a possibility will not be exploited. Deviations from this rule can, of course, be found. In Shetland Isles, visiting Norwegian seamen, described by some islanders as "of the lowest type," would sometimes walk around cottages and peer directly into windows. (1963: 152).

The window itself is the limit. Peering directly through it constitutes the shattering of this limit. The norms of behavior particular to this situation, the Shetland Isles of the 1950s, as well as the norms of "Anglo-American" society in general, have had their homeostasis put at risk by the fracturing of these limits, that is, by the peering through the window.

Perhaps if we think of Foucault's milieu as denoting types or universals and Goffman's situation as denoting tokens or particulars, we can hang Foucault's milieu and Goffman's situation together. A milieu, then, may be a prison or a clinic as a general category, whereas a situation takes places in this prison or that clinic as a specific place.
Notice also that at least in the way in which I have framed this, the milieu is static whereas the situation occurs. So that maybe the milieu is a stand-in for the situation as a noun-like thing and the situation is a stand-in for the milieu as a verb-like thing.

But then it isn't quite right to delimit Foucault in this manner, as Hacking does when he avers that Foucault "wrote of discourse in the abstract" as if that could stand as a categorical statement, with no possibility of garnering evidence to demonstrate that Foucault frequently trained his sights on the particular and the concrete (2004: 278). In fact, Foucault often cites particular prisons, clinics, and schools wherein specific things occurred. For instance, in Discipline and Punish, when Foucault wants to explicate the milieu of the public execution, he doesn't simply rattle on in generalities, dealing merely in abstract universals, but instead engages in concrete particularities:

To clarify the political problem posed by the intervention of the people in the spectacle of the executions, one need only cite two events. The first took place at Avignon at the end of the seventeenth century. It contained all the principle elements of the theatre of horror: the physical confrontation between the executioner and the condemned man, the reversal of the duel, the executioner pursued by the people, the condemned man saved by the ensuing riot and the violent inversion of the penal machinery. (1995: 63-64; italics, mine).

Here of course what Foucault is depicting is a breakdown of the milieu of the public execution, as the execution is inverted: in fact, the scene ends with the gallows smashed into pieces and hurled into the Rhone, the condemned man pardoned by an archbishop, and the executioner nearly torn to pieces by the "mob." Foucault contrasts this breakdown of the homeostasis of the milieu of the execution with a "successful" execution which occurred in Paris in 1775:
Between the scaffold and the public, kept at a safe distance, two ranks of soldiers stood on guard, one facing the execution that was about to take place, the other facing the people in case of riot. Contact was broken: it was a public execution, but one in which the element of spectacle was neutralized, or rather reduced to abstract intimidation. Protected by force of arms, on an empty square, justice quietly did its work. (1995: 65).

The milieu of the public execution can only proceed if contact is broken between the scaffold and the people, if the forces enforcing the proceedings tamp down the incipient violence of the crowd, reducing that sense of impending violence by abstract intimidation, as Foucault puts it. Yet it will not be too long - a mere fourteen years - until the scene is not only inversed, but reversed: the public will enforce the spectacle of the guillotine and those hitherto in power will have their heads on the block. Of course this is merely a continuation of the milieu, merely reconfigured under a different cloak of authority, just as Stalin's rule is merely a continuation in reverse of the rule of the Tsars and the Soviet secret police, the NKVD, a continuation in reverse of the Tsar's secret police, the Okhranka. "Do you think it would be much better to have the prisoners operating the Panopticon apparatus and sitting in the central tower, instead of the guards?" (Foucault 1980: 164-165).

And it isn't quite right to delimit Goffman either, as he doesn't always confine his remarks about situations to those in situ: Goffman's situation isn't always a situation per se but can connote the situation in general as well. For instance, in *Behavior in Public Places*, Goffman states that:

> In many social situations, a particular main involvement will be seen as an intrinsic part of the social occasion in which the situation occurs, and will be
defined as preferential if not obligatory. At a card party, for example, participants may be expected to focus their attention on cards, justifying their allocation of involvement by reference to the nature of the social occasion. (1963: 50; italics, mine).

In this passage, we can note different levels of generality: there is the all-inclusive and vaguely formulated "social situation;" there is the category of the "social occasion," nested within the social situation; and then, finally, there is the "situation" itself, nested within the social occasion, i.e. the very situation we happen to be examining or observing. And Goffman parses situation into types: "foreign students in a classroom," "persons not British at a cricket match," "when an individual in a vehicle sits or stands while awaiting his destination," "a woman not closely related to the deceased who appears at the funeral in a very modish, very complete, black ensemble" (Goffman 1964: 50, 51).

Perhaps it is this very way in which Foucault generally confines himself to the abstract while Goffman generally confines himself to the concrete which led Hacking to slot the former into the top-down category and the latter into the bottom-up category. And, at first glance, especially in regards to slotting Foucault as one who confines himself to operating at the super-structural level, it is a somewhat understandable mistake. But a mistake it plainly is. The error becomes clear when one peruses Foucault's lectures and the various interviews conducted with him, which offer up numerous instances of Foucault slotting his own work into the bottom-up side of the ledger.

For instance, in Society Must Be Defended, Foucault states that instead of deducing "whatever we like from the general phenomenon of the domination of the
bourgeois class … we should be doing quite the opposite, or in other words," we should be:

looking in historical terms, and from below, at how control mechanisms could come into play in terms of the exclusion of madness, or the repression and suppression of sexuality; at how these phenomena of repression or exclusion found their instruments and their logic, and met a certain number of needs at the actual level of the family and its immediate entourage, or in the cells or the lowest levels of society. (2003: 32; italics, mine).

Here of course he is quite explicit in his direction: do not make deductions from generalities but look from below, at a familial and even at a cellular level. Start with particulars at 'the lowest levels of society' and make inductions from there. In the very same lecture (14 January 1976), Foucault instructs his students thusly:

Our object is not to analyze rule-governed and legitimate forms of power which have a single center, or to look at what their general mechanisms or its overall effects might be. Our object is, on the contrary, to understand power by looking at its extremities, at its outer limits at the point where it becomes capillary.... I tried, in other words, to understand power by looking at its extremities, at where its exercise became less and less juridical. (2003: 27, 28; italics, mine).

This to me reads as a definitive statement: here, at the extremities of the extensive reach of centralized power, at the level of the region and the town, at the level of the single individual, at the level of the capillaries and not the heart: this is where is where the object of analysis lies. Michael Walzer, for one, concurs with Foucault's assessment of his own method: "He [Foucault] argues from the bottom up," Walzer writes before immediately qualifying this remark with: "but this is a mode of analysis that suggests, at
least by its direction, that the world is not all bottom" (1986: 58). This is a point we will return to in short order.

Foucault reiterates and expands upon his "bottom-up" approach in the same lecture of 14 January 1976:

Do not regard power as a phenomenon of mass and homogeneous domination - the domination of one individual over others, of one group over others, or of one class over others; keep it clearly in mind that unless we are looking at it from a great height and from a very great distance, power is not something that is divided between those who have it and hold it exclusively, and those who do not have it and are subject to it. Power must, I think, be analyzed as something that circulates, or rather as something that functions only when it is part of a chain. It is never localized here or there, it is never in the hands of some, and it is never appropriated in the way that wealth or a commodity can be appropriated. Power functions. Power is exercised through networks, and individuals do not simply circulate in those networks; they are in a position to both submit to and exercise this power. They are never the inert or consenting targets of power; they are always its relays. (2003: 29).

And in the interview titled "Confession of the Flesh" and included in Power/Knowledge, Foucault states that "Generally speaking I think one needs to look … at how the great strategies of power encrust themselves and depend for their conditions of exercise on the micro-relations of power" (1980: 199; italics, mine). However, this statement of method can be read as being a bit ambiguous, as it locks in combination or intertwines 'the micro-relations of power' with 'the great strategies of power.' But perhaps this is Foucault's very point: power circulates, from top to bottom and from bottom to top; the circulation of the great strategies of power not only depend on the micro-relations of power, they are constituted by their deployment. In effect, one cannot have the one without the other. Or, as Foucault definitively puts it in the same interview: "In order for there to be a movement from above to below there has to be a capillarity from below to
above at the same time…. I don't believe that relations of power are only engendered … from the top downwards" (1980: 201, 200; italics, Foucault). In Colonizing Egypt, Timothy Mitchell concurs with Foucault's assessment: "The effectiveness of disciplinary methods, as Michel Foucault has termed these modern forms of power, lay not in their weight or extent, but in the localized ability to infiltrate, rearrange, and colonize" (1988: ix).

Of course it could be counter-argued that in his major works (e.g., Discipline and Punish, The Order of Things, The Archeology of Knowledge) Foucault is precisely 'looking' at the structural relays of power 'from a great height and from a very great distance.' Therefore, has he not violated his own methodological precautions, precautions which are of course only stipulated after the fact, that is, after his own methodological "mistakes"? And we could add to this that perhaps Foucault is attempting in these lectures "to set the record straight" when the record is instead quite clear: that is, that Foucault did not work from below, but was always in the heights, making deductive abstractions without reference to the cellular level whatsoever. This, perhaps, can be linked to the frequently articulated criticism that Foucault gives regimes of power and discipline such a dominant and dominating position that the mere thought of emancipation or liberation is not even possible. For instance, Charles Taylor claims that "The problem is that Foucault tidies it [the reality of history] up too much, makes it into a series of hermetically sealed, monolithic truth-regimes, a picture which is as far from reality as the blandest Whig perspective of smoothly broadening freedom" (1986: 98). In such a hermetically sealed perspective, how can there be any circulation of anything?
Only that which the monolithic truth-regime propagates gains the advantage of dissemination.

Said puts this complaint quite plainly:

Many of the people who have learned from Foucault, including myself, have commented on the undifferentiated power he seemed to ascribe to modern society. With this profoundly pessimistic view went also a singular lack of interest in the force of effective resistance to it, in choosing particular sites of intensity, choices which, we see from the evidence from all sides, always exist and are often successful in impeding, if not actually stopping, the progress of tyrannical power. (1986: 151).

However, I think here that Foucault would agree with Said, albeit with one profound qualification. Of course, resistance and revolution are always possible; "progresses" of power of one type or another are often impeded or even dramatically reversed; but these obstructions and reversals do not mean that power itself is nullified. "Power functions," as Foucault puts it, indubitably and continually, in one way or another (2003: 29). Furthermore, Said thinks that Foucault is suffering from a basic confusion that he identifies as an inability on Foucault's part to distinguish "between the power of institutions to subjugate individuals, and the fact that individual behavior in society is frequently a matter of following rules and conventions" (1986: 151). In other words, has my liberty been essentially curtailed if I drive on the right side of the road, even though the state has instituted that very curtailment? Or am I dominated by an irreducible power if I sit at a counter and order a cup of coffee instead of moving behind the counter to serve myself? Here, we may perhaps agree with Said: Foucault has not done enough to parse rules decreed by those who hold power and submitted to by bodies gone docile
from conventions that circulate in society and are followed without regimes of coercion necessarily being in effect, at least in regards to the following of such conventions.

When some of Foucault's work is examined, it certainly is not surprising that many believe the world he envisions to be hermetically sealed, with those in power holding the keys to any possibility of escape. Some of this may come from what Foucault says; some may come from the enunciative power of articulation with which he says what he says: for instance, in *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault, writing of the Panopticon, claims that:

> The Panopticon is a privileged place for experiments on men, and for analyzing with complete certainty the transformations that may be obtained from them. The Panopticon may even provide an apparatus for supervising its own mechanisms…. The Panopticon functions as a kind of laboratory of power. Thanks to the mechanisms of observation, it gains in efficiency and in the ability to penetrate into men's behavior; knowledge follows the advances of power, discovering new objects of knowledge over all the surfaces on which power is exercised. (1977: 204; italics, mine).

One can easily gain the notion from reading Foucault that these `surfaces on which power is exercised' are ever-expanding and even omnipresent to the nth degree. Belief in this notion is also bolstered by the unqualified manner in which Foucault makes some of his claims (`with complete certainty') that leads one to the conclusion that a corrosive and tyrannical power has exhaustively encircled the globe, covering every square inch of its surface with its absorptive tentacles. Foucault makes the same type of categorically absolute statement when he says that "you well know how easily the Party leadership [of the PCF] - which knew everything of course - could circulate instructions preventing people from speaking about this or that, or precluding this or that line of research" (1980:
111; italics, mine). We can also conflate the powers of the Panopticon with the power of centralized government itself: Foucault does little to discourage such a conflation. For, if the Panopticon can do what Foucault claims it can, then power itself must be well nigh all-powerful:

It [the Panopticon] is polyvalent in its applications; it serves to reform prisoners, but also to treat patients, to instruct schoolchildren, to confine the insane, to supervise workers, to put beggars and idlers to work. It is a type of location of bodies in space, of distribution of individuals in relation to one another, of hierarchical organization, of disposition of centres and channels of power, of definition of the instruments and modes of intervention of power, which can be implemented in hospitals, workshops, schools, prisons. (1977: 205).

And, given such omnipotence, it is fairly reasonable for readers to draw the conclusion that the State, itself striving for omnipotence (and often viewed as always already possessing such omnipotence) can be the only recipient or bearer of that power.

So far we can envision a certain limitation to the range of control of the Panopticon, as Foucault has restricted its field of operation to such institutional settings as prisons, hospitals, army barracks, and so on. But he concludes this passage with a much more open-ended commitment: "Whenever one is dealing with a multiplicity of individuals on whom a task or a particular form of behavior must be imposed, the panoptic schema may be used" (1977: 205). Here, we can easily imagine that the panoptic schema may be used to instill forms of loyalty and patriotism, and that it may be operated in a much more general way, e.g. data-mining the Internet for buzz words (e.g. "bomb") and so on. The entire nation then becomes institutionalized and power creeps into every fissure, repressing even the possibility of thinking of rebellion and revolution. This is the kind of Foucauldian nightmare scenario, with the Panopticon computerized
and the subjects of power docile and compliant to the degree that they have aligned their thoughts to conform with what is perceived to be wishes of those in power. And Foucault encourages this reading as well, for in a society circumscribed by techniques of surveillance and regimes of discipline, "There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints. Just a gaze. An inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorizing to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against, himself" (1980: 15).

There does seem to be scant attention paid by Foucault to any possible forms of resistance to the gaze of the Panopticon. There is an exchange between Foucault and the historian Michelle Perrot in the interview titled "They Eye of Power" which reveals the embarrassingly naïve extent to which Foucault has neglected this matter:

PERROT: These thinkers [Bentham at al] generally misunderstood the difficulty they would have in making their system take effect. They didn't realize that there would always be ways of slipping through their net, or that resistances would have a role to play. In the domain of prisons, the convicts weren't passive beings. It's Bentham who gives us to suppose that they were. The discourse of the penitentiary unfolds as though there were no people confronting it, nothing except a tabula rasa of subjects to be reformed and returned to the circuit of production. In reality it had to work with a material - the prisoners - which put up a formidable resistance. The same could be said about Taylorism. The system of Taylorism was an extraordinary invention…. But one can still ask: did Taylorism ever work? (1980: 162).

Foucault first replies by stating that "This indeed is another of the factors which shift Bentham into the domain of the unreal: the effective resistance of people" (1980: 162). This a rather extraordinary admission, as in Discipline and Punish Foucault never seems to question the idealistic efficacy of the Panopticon: it works, and it works absolutely: there is no question of resistance. But then, after making this initial admission, Foucault
betrays his own lack of scholarly rigor by asking his interlocutor the following series of questions:

FOUCAULT: This is something you have studied, Michelle Perrot. How did people in the workshops and the *cites ouvrières* resist the system of surveillance and constant record-taking? Were they aware of the constraining, subjecting, unbearable character of that surveillance? In a word, were there revolts against the gaze? (1980: 162).

This is quite astonishing, as it reveals that Foucault has not even considered the question of resistance to the gaze. And it is especially so when one recalls that Foucault was active in the struggle for the rights of prisoners: it seems to constitute a blind spot in his analysis, as if he had been so busy studying one side of the equation that he had not even paused to think about the other side. Consider, however, how Foucault describes the Panopticon in *Discipline and Punish*:

The Pantopticon must not be understood as a dream building: it is the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form; *its functioning, abstracted from any obstacle, resistance, or friction, must be represented as a pure architectural and optical system: is it in fact a figure of political technology that may and must be detached from any specific use.* (1995: 205; italics, mine).

This is precisely the problem: detached from any specific use, of course it would not ever gain the possibility of encountering obstacles, resistance, or friction. In use, which must occur specifically *somewhere*, and, more importantly, against *someone*, it may very well encounter obstacles of all kinds, resistance from every quarter, and friction of a very abrasive nature. Notice how Walter Benjamin frames the possibility of resistance:

"Redemption depends on the tiny fissure in the continuous catastrophe" (2006: 161); and
what is this catastrophe, according to Benjamin? "That things are `status quo' is the catastrophe" (2006: 161; italics, Benjamin). This bit of catechism leaves open the possibility of the location of such fissures which may widen to redemption. At least sometimes, such resistance comes from the very people put in charge of resisting resistance, i.e. the military. For instance, in Colonizing Egypt, Timothy Mitchell informs us that despite:

the power of colonialism … to penetrate locally, spreading and establishing settlements not only in the shape of cities and barracks, but in the form of classrooms, journals and works of scholarship[,] … [t]his colonizing process never fully succeeded, for there always remained regions of resistance and voices of rejection. The schools, universities and the press, moreover, like the military barracks, were always liable to become centres of some kind of revolt, turning the colonisers' methods of instruction and discipline into the means of organized opposition. (1988: 171; italics, mine).

Indeed, history teems with examples of the `methods of instruction and discipline' turned back upon those in power. Yet Foucault never fully addresses these possibilities as he elides between the actual and the ideal, not properly separating the ideal Panopticon from its actual use.

But it isn't simply resistance that can destabilize regimes of power (at least potentially): corruption also plays a major part in sending fissures through the monolith of power. For instance, in the Los Angeles Times of 12 January 2012, we can read that a Los Angeles County sheriff's deputy by the name of Henry Marin "strayed" by attempting to smuggle heroin to a prisoner through inserting the drug inside a "bean-and-cheese burrito" (Faturechi and Leonard 2012: AA1). Though this attempt at corruption could be dismissed on two counts - one, Marin was apprehended; and two, simply on the
grounds of its flat-out comical aspect - the larger issue of the corruption of those in charge of prisoners cannot be tossed aside so lightly:

The charges against him [Marin] are the latest in a string of prosecutions and internal affairs investigations that have targeted corrupt sheriff's deputies and other department staff for delivering contraband behind bars, and helping fuel a lucrative drug trade behind bars. Three sheriff's guards have been convicted and a fourth fired in recent years for smuggling or attempting to smuggle narcotics into jail for inmates. (Faturechi and Leonard 2012: AA1, AA4).

The efficacy and omnipotence of CCTV, often conceived of as the modern version of the Panopticon, in prisons can also be cast in doubt: in the Orange County jail, for instance, sheriff's deputies have routinely used their computers to play video games instead of using them as instruments to surveil and control the "docile" bodies of prisoners. There are a range of other possible malfunctions as well: "One should not overstate the coherence of these technologies, as Foucault sometimes does," writes Timothy Mitchell (1988: xi). "Disciplines can break down, counteract one another, or overreach" (1988: xi). Not only that, but they can also "offer spaces for maneuver and resistance, and can be turned to counter-hegemonic purposes" (Mitchell 1988: xi). Here, we might want to imagine Banksy's sly graffiti as exemplary of precisely such acts of subversive expropriation. Mitchell provides a nice example of a counter-hegemonic "hijacking" of disciplinary technologies as well:

Anti-colonial movements have often derived their organisational forms from the military and their methods of discipline and indoctrination from schooling. They have frequently been formed within the barracks, the campus, or other institutions of the colonial state…. Colonial subjects and their modes of resistance are formed
within the organizational terrain of the colonial state, rather than some wholly exterior social space. (1988: xi; italics, Mitchell).

There are also more direct and brutal ways of resisting regimes of power. We can recall here Schweyk's reporting of self-mutilation as a method to avoid military service. Mitchell reports that this kind of active resistance also occurred in Egypt during the 1830s when the Egyptians were trying to "professionalize" their army:

[Peasants] sent for military service would mutilate themselves to avoid conscription. "some draw their teeth, some blind themselves, and others maim themselves, on their way to us," complained the Governor of Egypt in a circular to his district officials issued in March 1833, "and for this reason we send back the greater part … I will take from the family of every such offender men in his place, and he who has maimed himself shall be sent to the galleys all his life; I have already ordered this to the Sheiks in writing." The weaknesses of the military order are evident from the increasing severity of the methods of conscription, which began to rival those of Europe in their brutality. (Mitchell 1988: 42-43). ¹⁰

Reports of African-American slaves cutting off their heels to escape their chains should also be tallied in such a tabulation.

Foucault also seems to believe that once rules are established, they are followed and followed in an absolute sense. But this is not necessarily so. Frequently enormous gaps exist between the de jure and the de facto state of affairs in terms of obedience to laws and codes, and rules and regulations. For instance, it is now illegal in the State of California to talk on a cell phone while driving. For a very brief period of time after the law was passed, this law seemed to be in effect on a de jure basis: that is, the law was followed. After a few months, it was generally determined that the police were not about to enforce this regimen in anything approaching an absolute degree, and so drivers went

¹⁰ Mitchell is citing British Foreign Office records: FO 78/502, 16 March, 1833.
back to yakking on their cell-phones. Implicit and explicit policies also influence the level of enforcement of laws. For instance, though the undocumented are "illegal" in both Maricopa County of Arizona (which includes the City of Phoenix within its jurisdiction) and Los Angeles County, the Maricopa County Sheriff's Department, under the "leadership" of Joe Arpaio, routinely stop "foreign-looking" types to check their papers while the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department does not.

Foucault does, however, hedges his bets as he acknowledges some limitations to the State and its all-seeing powers. Foucault's determination of the range and extent of power is never centralized around one source: there is no universal gaze nor a cyclopean eye of a monolithic Panopticon. Rather, power is diffused here, there, and everywhere.

The State, for all the omnipotence of its apparatuses, is far from being able to occupy the whole field of actual power relations, and … the State can only operate on the basis of other, already existing power relations. The State is superstructural in relation to a whole series of power networks that invest the body, sexuality, the family, kinship, knowledge, technology, and so forth. (1980: 122).

Foucault qualifies this by stating that:

I don't claim at all that the State apparatus is unimportant, but it seems to me that among all the conditions for avoiding a repetition of the Soviet experience and preventing the revolutionary process from running into the ground, one of the first things that has to be understood is that power isn't localized in the State apparatus and that nothing in society will be changed if the mechanisms of power that function outside, below and alongside the State apparatuses, on a much more minute and everyday level, are also not changed. (1980: 60; italics, mine).
Here also is evidence that Foucault was not only cognizant of the importance of what he refers to as the 'minute and the everyday level,' but that he granted them a certain systematic priority: if they are not changed, nothing will change.

And of course Foucault grants space for rebellion and revolution, at least when he's dealing with the larger entities that control the "smaller" disciplines of the prisons, the schools, the hospitals, and so on. Foucault's not daft, and, despite what was stated earlier about his ignorance regarding prison resistance to the panopticon, he has read his history after all. However, as I previously stated, there is no absolute revolution that obliterates power and its relations along with the Sovereign and his minions:

I would say that the State consists in the codification of a whole number of power relations which render its functioning possible, and that Revolution is a different codification of the same relations. This implies that there are many different kinds of revolution, roughly speaking as many kinds as there are possible subversive recodifications of power relations, and further that one can perfectly well conceive of revolutions which leave essentially untouched the power relations which form the basis for the functioning of the State. (1980: 122-123).

There's even a simple, mechanistic way in which Foucault poses the possibility of change, albeit at a much smaller scale, as he states unequivocally that every effect of power has an automatic counter-effect: "Power, after investing itself in the body, finds itself exposed to a counter-attack in the same body…. For each move by one adversary, there is an answering one by the other…. Each offensive from one side serves as leverage for an counter-offensive from the other side" (1980: 56, 57, 163). In fact, there is almost a quaint Newtonism about these statements, as they are almost a paraphrase of Newton's third law of motion which states that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.
Foucault's seeming preoccupation with power certainly does not automatically transfer into a valorization of power, or a justification for the arbitrary actions of a tyrannical power, or a thorough-going vindication of an all-repressive power which leaves no room for subversion. It seems to me that what Foucault is attempting to do is to widen what he believes has become a too narrowly construed conception of power, the better to comprehend it and, possibly, to contest it.

In defining the effects of power as repression, one adopts a purely juridical conception of such power, one identifies power with a law which says no, power is taken above all as carrying the force of a prohibition. Now I believe that this is a wholly negative, narrow, skeletal conception of power, one which has been curiously widespread. If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces knowledge, produces discourse. (1980: 119).

Here, we may want to imagine the Nazis, surely one of the greatest regimes of repression in history, and their production of power effects that traversed and produced "positive" results - at least for a short period of time - for the German citizenry. The great Reichstag events were spectacles of power that posited an absolute yes to the German people, producing an electrifying effect that must have consumed those in the audience with an astounding feeling of participation in an overwhelming sense of national optimism. The fact that they were completely deluded at the time and utterly defeated in less than a decade doesn't negate those power effects; it merely counteracts them with a greater power effect.

President Ronald Reagan did not sell his neoliberal economic "revolution" to the American people through pure negativity, but instead used an invocation of a sunny
"morning in America" in which a foundational sense of peace and posterity would be restored. The fact that this revolution led to the long decay of the middle class, the engrossment of the ranks of the poor, and the continuing engorgement of the wealthy doesn't nullify the fact that it was sold as a positive remedy for all, not a repressive negation of many. Power "needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than a negative instance whose function is repression" (Foucault 1980: 119).

Some of what we perceive as Foucault's over-concentration on the effects of power perhaps should also be attributed to the historical context in which he lived; born in 1926, dying in 1984, Foucault was thirteen years old when World War Two broke out and died prior to the implosion of the Soviet Union. This means that he lived during the era when the great powers of Germany, the USSR, and the USA were at their peak, and this must have had an effect on his estimation of the circumference of power. And some of what we perceive as Foucault's over-concentration on the effects of power may be simply attributable to the wide dissemination and subsequent appropriation of some of his concepts: in effect, it is a result of publishing and academic success. But it is also the result of a certain disparity in the way that Foucault has been received, as the main things that have been recruited from Foucault's corpus have been one or two concepts, the Clinical Gaze and the Panopticon, and their ostensible omnipotent power. Yet this seems to be a mistaken reading of Foucault, for, as we have seen, he qualifies these concepts many times and in multiple ways.
Conclusion

What we need to retrieve from our investigation of Foucault are two things. One, that Foucault's conception of the milieu and Goffman's *use* of the situation (as we have seen, Goffman never offers up a conception of the situation) may be combined or superimposed to craft an instrument to comprehend actions, occurrences, events, and yes, situations. Goffman provides tools by which to batten down the logistics of interpersonal behavior while Foucault provides tools by which to demarcate the relative homeostasis of that which is occurring: i.e., the limits of security vis-à-vis risk and the limits of risk vis-à-vis security. Put them together and one may have a fairly comprehensive method by which to analyze the immediate actions of the everyday, especially in terms of their socio-political ramifications.

The second take-away point is that, pursuant to the evidence I have managed to muster in this chapter, Hacking is mistaken in inserting Foucault into an exclusively top-down slot. Foucault, much like the everyday, is too elusive to be so easily confined into any one position. And his work is so far-ranging, his corpus so vast and his mind so overflowing, that any attempt to corral Foucault into a pithy analysis is doomed. Perhaps in his writing Foucault wanted to replicate what he observed about the workings of the relations of power: that it resembles Newton's third law of motion, with every action catalyzing an equal and opposite reaction, so that for every instance of a statement of Foucault's that seems to reflect a top-down hierarchical and rigidified view of power we can find a match reflecting a bottom-up cellular and capillary view of power.

Next: the body, something about which Foucault also, of course, has a good deal to say.
Place Four: Public Plaza

This plaza is open to the public, its expansiveness ostensibly accessible to anyone and everyone. Its everyday status is that it is a given place for the public to congregate and ruminate, to ponder and wonder, to drink coffee and sip wine, to converse while flipping through exhibit catalogues, or to do nothing at all (if possible). It is not mandatory here that one must gaze at pieces of art prior to taking a seat in the given set of chairs which dot the plaza. One can just meander in off the streets and sit, if one feels so inclined. Security guards in black blazers and ties serve as unobtrusive sentinels here; they recede into the background as if part of the given ambiance of the place. It seems as if they are trying to watch without seeming to be watching; if their eyesight (or our awareness of their eyesight) could simply smudge itself into the scene without them losing the capacity to see, that would be ideal. Unseen watchers, smudged into the given, anonymous sentinels of the everyday.

Does this plaza qualify as an everyday place? Of course that depends on the set of criteria used to judge such things (are such things judged? if so, by whom?). It seems to be trying hard to qualify as an everyday place; that is, if it can be said that a place can try to do anything.

But this raises a deeper question: before arriving at a decision as to the correct criteria for qualification as an everyday place, perhaps we should attempt to answer the seemingly simpler question: what qualifies a place as being a place? In other words, what makes a place a place? Is it merely that which happens to lie within a given set of boundaries? Such a construal would make place a gigantic category, as the United States
of America lies within its given boundaries and so does the glove compartment of my car. But my car moves from place to place, and as it does so, it takes its place(s) with it. Besides the car as a totality being a moveable place, its trunk is a place, as are its front and back seats, as are its glove compartment and engine. But perhaps it’s not the engine itself that is a place, but rather what’s under the hood. For not only is the engine under the hood, but a certain amount of ambient air or what we might call emptiness or space is there as well. In a sense, this emptiness houses the engine. Or the engine and ambient air (space) are the two components of a composite place. Is this more of a place when the hood is open or down? Or is it essentially the same place, whether the hood is open or closed? Is it a contained place, with hood down, and an uncontained place, hood up? But if it’s uncontained, then it is not contained, and being uncontained, is it possible that what is under the hood then loses its place? Uncontained, could it flee? Does its place lose its immediate identity when the hood is flung open and it becomes uncontained? But how could that be so, when that is the only time when the place is actually revealed? But does such a conception mean that the place is somehow not there when the hood is down? Is it only a potential place, with hood down, and a realized place, hood up? Or are we referring to two different places, one hood up, other hood down? Perhaps opening up the hood creates a new place: an extended place composed of engine, its ambient air, and the space occupied by, let us say, a mechanic working on the engine. The bodily extension of the mechanic has extended the place up into the ambient air around his form; this configuration – air (space), mechanic, engine, hood (angled up), is now its own place within its own boundaries. And what is the upward limit of this place? Six inches above the mechanic’s head? Ten feet? The sky? Does it extend up into the stratosphere or stop
at the edge of his scalp? It seems like we should be able to gauge the extent of this upward limit, but how do we calibrate it? How is it measured? What is it commensurate with? Does the mechanic create his own place, attendant to his body, his physical form carrying this place (its place) along with it wherever the mechanic goes? An appendage of a place, invisibly tied to his body?

But perhaps we are pulling the focus in too tight: perhaps the appropriate perspective from which to view this is to think of the place as that in which the entire car rests: that is, in this case, the mechanic’s shop. With this reconfiguration, we have entered the question of scale. That is, at what scale are we to articulate place? Considering the world as a place (which it certainly seems to be), does the mechanic’s shop even qualify as a place? That is, is its scale too insignificant to even be worthy of the term “place”? Well, it has definable boundaries; there is a distinct ongoing activity occurring within those boundaries, an activity by virtue of which the shop assumes its identity as a place; it has its own title – say, Joe’s Garage, along with a sign that announces this to the general populace; it surely has various pieces of bureaucratic paraphernalia that testify to its official status as a place: say, a business license from the city; a deed or a lease agreement giving the proprietor territorial privilege to the property; a certificate from a mechanic’s school, and so on.

But wait: for the moment (at least) let us stick to the question at hand: that is the everyday place and not place itself! Aren’t our hands full enough without taking on extra metaphysical and definitional baggage? We shall return to parse place itself in a later section of this essay, but, for now, we shall proceed as if there is no puzzle as to the underlying status of place as place – and so this is hereby stipulated.
And now we can at last resume our work.

Only now does it occur to me: the reason why this question of the car-and-its-various-components-as-place sidetracked me: sitting right in front of me at LACMA is Gilbert “Maju” Lujan’s “Our Family Car,” a 1950 Chevy as art piece, displayed behind a rectangle of black cord tethered to stanchions, cordoned off from the public yet placed there (ostensibly) for its appreciation. Occupying its own place, it creates its own place, its solitary status drawing attention to it as thing, flaming red chili peppers and neo-Aztec gods and goddesses blazoned on its flanks, chrome shiny, polished to a sparkle, the beauty of the classic American car announcing itself: the family car, at one time an everyday vehicle, is now a thing of wonder and mystery, a work of art, a sculpture to be contemplated and consumed by the eye. A placard lets us know that Lujan’s “work on the car continues today. The dynamic exterior images are drawn from sources in contemporary barrio life as well as from pre-Columbian Aztec and Maya cultures. Inside, the front and rear seats are humorous imitations of a taco and a burrito.”1 We are also informed that the Chevy is a working vehicle (it runs!). And so we can assume that it was driven here and presume that one day it will be driven away.

So this everyday vehicle (our family car) has been made extraordinary. Time has accomplished this, to a certain degree, its mere passage enough to conjure the aura of the wondrous and the nostalgic around this vehicle. But, to a much greater degree, what makes “Our Family Car” extraordinary is the work of the artist, Lujan.

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1 Anonymous. We should note that the ‘today’ in the first sentence appears to be indexical: at least I did not witness Mr. Lujan working on the Chevy the ‘today’ that I was at LACMA. It should also be clarified that the front and backs seats are imitations of a taco and burrito, respectively, not that imitations of a taco and a burrito are lying on the seats.
Patrons of LACMA approach the car, pausing behind the cords and stanchions that create a space around the Chevy as well as a distance between this work of art (that works) and its audience. So I suppose the question is: how could this public space possibly be of the everyday variety? Is it everyday that a car is painted and decorated like this, with its tacos and burritos? Is it everyday that an automobile is cordoned off by ropes and stanchions? Is it everyday that people calmly gaze at a 1950 Chevy, its steel and chrome gleaming across a no-man’s gloaming of sectioned-off space?

As I pose these questions a security guard approaches the rope that circles the car. She’s an extremely slight Asian, skinny as she is tiny, tiny as she is skinny, dressed in a black blazer, gray slacks, white shirt, black shoes and a black tie – her uniform. She appears to have a nervous disorder, as disarticulated gesticulations tic from her hands in haphazard fashion. She crosses over the rope, deftly lifting one leg after another over this border that separates the Chevy from its public, and walks into the sector of space around the car. Gestures popping from her arms like silent firecrackers igniting on the Fourth of July, she cuts a diagonal across the rectangle that contains “Our Family Car” and then vaults over the rope on the adjacent side. This act seems every bit as extraordinary as the Chevy sitting there in its inarticulate beauty, if not more so: why did she do that? Of course she has every right to transgress the place that has been cordoned off; after all, she’s guarding that space (is that what she’s guarding? that space? Of course not: she’s guarding the space in general, LACMA itself, that larger space that surrounds us, not the particular space adjacent to “Our Family Car,” the space she bisected as she casually cut across it - but of course that particular section of space is contained within LACMA’s more voluminous space.).
What is everyday here? Anything? It is a common space, shared by members of the art-going public, buildings, paintings and sculptures, guards, ticket booths, and refreshment stands (that is, if we can attribute sharing to such things as buildings, ticket booths, refreshment stands, ropes, stanchions, and works of art). The people in the immediate environs seem like everyday, regular folk, except for the fact that they have come to an art museum. With water bottles and cameras ubiquitous, the patrons are dressed in what might be called L.A.-casual, t-shirts and flip-flops, shorts and sunglasses. But though they might be or at least look like everyday people, they are not doing an everyday thing. They are engaged in a cultural activity. They are looking at art. They are taking things in. They are gazing at artwork. They are judging that work. They are appreciating that work. They may even be moved by that work. That work might even change their lives. Or it may mean next to nothing. Do they seem different after viewing the artwork? Has a look come upon them? Have they been transformed? Do they no longer fit within the confines of the everyday (but what are those confines anyway?)? Perhaps after seeing a certain painting, nothing is given anymore. Color has been redefined, shape made elastic, form reformed, angles have become straight lines and straight lines angles. But there’s no evidence to support such a claim: no one seems disoriented, or at least not to the extent that they are bumping into buildings, falling on the grass, or tearing out their eyeballs. In fact, everyone seems abnormally normal, as if they have not been looking at art at all, but merely strolling along the beach or window-shopping in a mall. But how can I make such judgments, judgments that demand precise insights into the inner workings of the mental states of total strangers? I’m not inside anyone’s head. I am a mere observer, trying to maintain the indifferent disinterest of a
scholar, pencil and notebook in hand. Perhaps inside their heads, they are *mentally* bumping into buildings and *metaphorically* ripping out their eyes. Perhaps they are *psychologically* falling on the grass! Perhaps the given is no longer so given for them any more; now its retention must be battled for, as the strange composition of an abstract painting or the angular features of an Olmec mask has dislocated their optical gyroscopes and discombobulated their visual cortices. Now they find their grasp on the word has gone wobbly: everydayness cannot be maintained; everything’s gone topsy-turvy herky-jerky and it’s all upside-down and ass-backwards as well.

Yet they seem so serene. As if gazing at woks of art has had a tranquilizing effect, giving the gazers renewed faith in the integrity of the everyday. Yes, it is there after all! The everyday, it exists! There is no doubt about the given now, for I have seen its essence reflected in works of art! The everyday has been resurrected via a water color and rejuvenated via a woodcut.

And perhaps such rejuvenation is the very function of art, to send us back into the world with a restored sense of faith in the everydayness of the everyday world. The artwork has buttressed the world, bracing it against doubt. Now we can go forth again, without confusion about that tangled web we call “reality.” Now we can assume that what has been pre-given *is* the given and that it was given to be taken without regret. For what is given is meant to be taken without thought, for the given is what is granted and what is granted is there to be taken for granted.

But wait! Was this the intention of such artists as Picasso and Braque, Duchamp and Pollack, those great revolutionaries of modern art: that the effect of their art would allow witnesses of their work to simply slide back into the texture of the given without a
second thought or at least a minor readjustment to their sensorium; nay, even worse than that: that their work should serve as a sedative to the senses, soothing any doubts that one may have about the everydayness of the everyday, no matter what its form or manifestation? Wouldn’t that be, or at least couldn’t that be, construed as art of nearly a fascistic bent, an art tending to support the normative standards of the given rather than ripping them apart or at least abrading them a little?

However, perhaps the calmness and tranquility of these faces as they stroll through the plaza are deceptive and do not betray what is occurring within the souls of those people upon whom these faces are being imposed. Yes, perhaps the faces themselves are imposters, masks disguising the utter turmoil taking place within that which they hide. Perhaps inside the minds of these seemingly sunny art-goers is delirium, madness, insanity, colors gone wild in kaleidoscopic frenzy, forms reformulating themselves in a continual cartwheel of motion, shapes shifting into unforeseen combinations, angles reconfiguring themselves, lines dissolving and then retracing themselves only to dissolve once again, paintings sundered from their frames and dancing in the heads of these art aficionados, sculptures levitating from their screws and mountings and rambling though the consciousnesses of their apparently complacent public; watercolors dislocated from their locations, their tones and hues transubstantiated into the brains of those who view them to be set loose to drip through their minds as they sip Diet Cokes and chat on their Motorolas. Following this line of thought, one could assume that major revisions of the given and the everyday are underway and that a new order is soon to emerge.
Perhaps, but perhaps not. Perhaps nothing is happening here. Neither a buttressing nor a sundering of the given order. Art is inefficacious. It does nothing but amuse. It merely passes over the eyeball without making an impression. Aesthetics is nonsense, a form of thought solely devised to loosen the bowels of constipated academics. Forget Kant and his “disinterest;” nullify Burke and the Sublime: all that happens here is that nothing happens here.

To adjudicate this conundrum, perhaps we should haul in the heavy lifters of the social sciences: surveys and interviews and protocols, regression analyses, flow charts and mathematical modeling, Boolean minimization procedures and Boolean truth tables, graphs delineating correlations of artistic preferences to economic status, and demographic breakdowns as they relate to the physiological as well as psychological impact of the viewing of art. Such methodology would have to calibrate such impacts over an extended period of time, as fleeting disturbances of the sensorium can hardly be defined as “impact.” We will also have to stipulate what we mean to denote when using this inherently ambiguous term “impact.” Does it entail a substantial change of behavior or simply a wholly interiorized revolution in the subject’s visual perception of the world? Is it something that catalyzes profound change or is it something that merely causes a slight but significant shift?

Obviously, the question of the definition of terms is one that can be a conundrum of its own. But, however we define our terms, it should be agreed that “impact” must denote something lasting longer than at least a day and may even elongate into durations lasting a lifetime. In order to measure this, what if the protocol calls for bi-monthly updates, interviews and psychological testing lasting over the course of a decade? That
should give us a satisfactory set of data on which to gauge the overall and long-lasting impact of the viewing of art. We’ll need to standardize the allotments of temporal viewing periods of course (say three minutes per art piece), as well as the objects of art which are viewed; we’ll also have to corral a control group: say, a random sampling of those who have never been to a museum (or those that had and wish they hadn’t), or perhaps we could have our control population gaze at blank walls instead of walls adorned with works of art, or perhaps we could pick a random alternate population: say, Dodger fans or lawn-bowlers or cops.

Or we could guess. That is, substitute our own set of (educated?) suppositions for those which may (or may not) be calibrated via the heavy lifters of the social sciences. In other words, transubstantiate our own thoughts into the brainpans of others and then transubstantiate them back into our own prior to transcribing such thoughts onto pads of paper; these trans-transubstantiated thoughts will then serve as the raw material for our research studies. But whatever method is employed, subjectivity and self-reflexivity will intrude, more blatantly via the latter course of educated supposition, but more insidiously if we choose the former as this choice imposed by the investigator will (fatally?) impede the semblance (pretence?) of objectivity to which such forms of methodology aspire. Either way, there are flaws. So, with that, let us leave this tedious digression on methodology in order to return to the main body of our text, a text perhaps (fatally?) punctured by the ramblings of one who fancies himself above the methodological fray, though such a fancy may be merely one more form of pretension. Nevertheless, the social scientist soldiers on, the burden of his job weighing heavy on the shoulders of this particular soldier.
Where were we?


There are two types of guards patrolling the plaza, one armed, one unarmed. The unarmed wear blazers and ties; the armed carry billy clubs, guns, and mace. They wear jackets and hats. They also are employed by Inter-Con, the firm which employs their less threatening brethren and sistern (if I may be allowed to coin such a word) as well.

One must make an inquiry here: why all the heavy weaponry? Is a bomb threat imminent? Is someone about to steal the Mona Lisa (or whatever its LACMA equivalent may be)? Is a riot expected? Have the art patrons organized massive protests to petition against the selections the LACMA curator has made? Do they not like the DeKooning sketches recently purchased for a cool twenty-five million? Or is it the mid-fifteenth century Persian miniatures that are agitating them? Those erotic images painted with delicate precision too much for SoCal sensibilities?

But seriously: why all the weapons? Not that the guards look all that threatening, as they are mostly overweight, slow-moving and seem more intent on chatting with one another than patrolling the plaza, but one must assume that the bullets which potentially may flow from their guns are not so slow-moving and overweight and that they do not chatter, but are quick and weighted precisely for maximum damage to the fragile flesh of whomsoever they may penetrate.

This brings us to a tricky aspect of the everyday that seems to have the potential to destabilize its very existence (that is, if there is such a thing as the ‘very existence of the everyday’). If the everyday is in peril of being sundered at any moment, as would
seem to be the case given that guards (at least in our present case) patrol the parameters and perimeters of the everyday in order to ensure its ongoing existence, then the stability of the everyday must be not all that stable to begin with. But this raises a question as to the ontology of the everyday. For how can the everyday maintain its everydayness if it is being patrolled? Doesn’t the mere recognition of an imminent threat to the everyday put the everyday in jeopardy? How can the everyday recede into itself, as it must if it is to retain its status as the unrecognized core of the given, if the presence of weapons indicates that at least this instance of the everyday should not be taken as pre-given?

Or has surveillance and security become so pervasive, so prevalent, that guns, billy clubs, and canisters of mace are merely assumed to be necessary components of the given? Not even assumed as such: not even noticed, in that the presence of such weaponry is so ingrained and so embedded in the warp and woof of the given that it is as invisible as any other part of the given. Perhaps if the Inter-Con security guards were carrying AK-47s and flame-throwers, their presence would obtrude in brazen saliency, but, given that they’re just packing the usual unholy trinity of guns, billy clubs, and mace, they and their weapons are only an everyday aspect of the everyday and doesn’t signify anything.

However, doesn’t this very insignificance signify something? That it is assumed that more and more of the everyday must be secured and surveilled is a fact of some significance, but indicating what? That we are in danger. Perhaps, but in danger of what? A terrorist attack? A spectacular rip-off of art? A massive incursion of nudists? Just exactly what is it that these Inter-Con guards are protecting us from? That some haphazard movement of ours may result in a ding or a dent in the shell of the given? That
we might take out a Sharpie and scribble graffiti on a piece of art? That we might hop
behind the wheel of “Our Family Car,” hot-wire it and drive away to East L.A., the ersatz
burritos and tacos and the neo-Aztec gods and goddesses coming along for the ride? That
we might dance? That we might grab a Hockney painting and head for the Hollywood
Hills, trying to locate the swimming pool which matches the cool blue one in the
painting? Just what is it that they are protecting us from?

   OK, calm down. Nothing to get excited about. No reason for paranoia. No reason
at all. The Inter-Con folks have been installed here simply to ensure that the given
remains as it is – that is, given. They make sure that the fabric of the everyday does not
become roiled or uncoiled or that we foil it with any untoward antics or madcap
hullabaloo. Their job is to blend into the background and make their weapons seem to be
part of the scenery as well, as if gun, billy club, and canister of mace are exchangeable
with leaf, glimpse of sky, and can of Coke. Their job is to be invisible sentinels of the
given.

   And of course there are actual art thieves. And people who do crazy things. And
terrorists too. But how much does surveillance serve as a fillip to self-censoriousness? In
other words, now that we know that we are being watched and recorded on almost a
continual 24/7 basis (this knowledge not dawning on us like the proverbial bolt of
lightning but seeping into our consciousnesses slowly but surely over an extended period
of time), do we adjust our behavior to meet the expansive capabilities of the monitoring
systems that are observing us? This may not be a process that is done with any trace of
self-consciousness or hint of self-reflexivity at all, but may occur without any awareness
of its occurrence at all, altering our actions and behavior in a sort of slow-motion
unconscious sea change. Is this how changes in the given occur? At a speed so sluggish that such changes cannot even be detected? Or do they happen overnight? Think of 9/11. In its aftermath, so many claimed that “things” would never be the same. ‘Things,’ I believe, can be safely translated as “the given.” So the intention of such statements following 9/11 was that an abrupt shift in the given had occurred. Among many other changes, one of the things that abrupt shift allowed for was a dramatic increase in the public’s toleration for surveillance, not only of possible terrorists but of themselves as well. Thus the pervasive proliferation of monitoring devices as well as security guards in public and private places.

Perhaps we’re making a mistake by positing an either/or choice. In other words, perhaps alterations in the given occur at both quicksilver and super-slow motion speeds, some transformations happening in such a protracted manner that their very occurrence isn’t even noticed, others so quickly it’s as if they were was following decrees demanding immediate instantiation. Maybe there’s a wide variety of speeds at which changes happen in what we metaphorically refer to as the fabric of the everyday; maybe there’s an infinite variety to the speeds at which such alterations occur. It could be that every instance of a change to the given has its own particular speed at which it manifests itself. In fact, this seems to be the most sensible option, as every physical process (is that what a change in the everyday is, a physical process?) has its own schedule by which it occurs: a bolt of lightning happens at one speed, a shift in geological epochs another.

Back to our Inter-Con guards. They smile and move slowly. The smiles are difficult to align with their battery of weapons. Should a person with a gun, a billy club, and a canister of mace be smiling? Shouldn’t they be snarling, or at least grim-faced? No,
this is a public place, a site dedicated to the enjoyment and appreciation of art: grim-faced guards are not conducive to such activities.

So here at LACMA it is a given that the government (in this case, the County of Los Angeles, in conjunction with a wide variety of philanthropists and corporate sponsors) should, as one of its necessary functions, provide the public with the means to enjoy and appreciate art. And so it is a given that part of the everyday fabric of any great city (L.A. being given and taken as such) are museums wherein the assorted masses of humanity may view “great works of art.” This inclusion of public access to art as a component of the given necessities of a world-class city presupposes that works of art must have some sort of positive effect upon – what? – the minds of the public? Their eyes? Their beings? Their souls? Do people become better citizens through the enjoyment and appreciation of art? Does viewing art lead to greater degrees of participation in public life? Does it induce some sort of generalized state of well-being which translates into a predilection to pass bonds for K-12 education and improvements in infrastructure? Does gazing at a Rubens conduce one to fulfill one’s civic duties, whatever they may be? Does pondering the meaning of a Picasso lead to a rise in voluntarism?

Such causal chains seem ludicrous, but, if they are, then what is it, precisely, that happens to patrons at an art museum that in and of itself is of civic benefit to the municipality in which that museum is located? Is it a way in which the city and its inhabitants are woven into the great chain of culture and civilization? Fine, let us stipulate that as a given. But such a stipulation leads to this question: how does such an inclusion of the public into the warp of culture and the woof of civilization result in a generalized improvement of the commonweal? What is it about looking at art that so
improves the general quality of the everyday that it is among the given givens of urban governance that an art museum is a necessary condition of being categorized as a great city? Or is the art and the viewing of the same merely a veneer upon which to stamp some much more commercial quality we might emblazon as “urban conditions necessary for civic boosters to trumpet virtues of our fair city”? For how can a city dare to label itself “great” unless it has a “world-class” art museum? And without this kind of cultural premium, a city may sink into backwater status and be stuck with a has-been would-be reputation. This is bad for business, and business being the great lubricator of the reproduction of the everyday, museums are a necessary component of urban life. Following this analysis, it matters not what actually transpires when LACMA patrons view art; they could just as well be looking at pools of darkness, as long as “art” exists as an ongoing commodity in the city. Not that business interests have a necessary stake in providing nihilistic construals of art or of ensuring that patrons of art receive reservoirs of nothingness when they enter a museum; it’s simply that from a purely economic determination of the situation the actual art (its quality, the experience of viewing it, and so on) is completely immaterial: all that matters is the existence of a world-class museum, not the artwork itself.

But what of our patrons, the people debouching from the darkness of the exhibit halls: as they come blinking into the light have their eyes been transformed by what they have seen? And could that transformation rearrange their take on the given? Give it a different perspective? Place our patron in a new positionality from which to view the everyday? Did the tone of colors change? Is there a new inflection to form? Has the invisible become visible and the visible taken on new shapes? Is there some sort of
intricate process by which the everyday is altered by a series of elliptical circumambulations, first the artist taking his everyday experience and rearranging it onto a canvas; then the piece of art inflecting the everyday experience of the patron who returns to the “normal” world only to shift it ever so slightly with his transfigured sense of the everyday? Is this some sort of therapeutic process? The entire series nature’s way of rejuvenating the everyday? What kind of metaphysical superstructure would have to be invoked to lend credence to such a form of agency? Or is no agency required, as nature is the superstructure which arranges such things, and nature, being “natural,” not requiring any force outside it to justify such conceptions?

Such unanswerable queries are akin to the questions we have been asking about the ongoing subsistence of the everyday, it being inherently undecidable whether what is given is something that shapes us or whether it is us that shapes the given, or whether a third possibility is the more viable option, that is whether the assumption of the given is a combination of the two: the given shapes us as we shape it.

And everyday places? Are they simply the most standardized versions of the given? The given’s most noticeable aspects, these everyday places that serve as way stations on our transepts through our daily routines?

But of course what is exotic about this particular instance of an everyday place, the LACMA plaza, is that as part of a museum it is a place visited on a quite irregular basis, yet even though it is outside the parameters of the daily routine, it presents itself as if it is an everyday place. But it is deceptive in this? Is this presentation of itself as an everyday place done under false pretenses? Is it a conceit? Are the folks who stroll
through the plaza being duped? Are they fools manipulated into believing they are in an everyday place when, in fact, they are not? Rubes who know not where they are?

But, in order to be duped in such a way, wouldn’t the people here have to first realize that they are in an everyday place and then, having come to that initial realization, they would subsequently have to realize that the plaza is masquerading as an everyday place and is no such place at all. Then, indignant, what – would they march to the ticket booth en masse and demand a refund? Would they confront the LACMA curator and seek restitution for this fraud?

And what if this awful realization occurred to everyone simultaneously? At one instant, it comes to us: hey, you know what, this everyday plaza is no everyday plaza at all! How could it be everyday when it is only frequented on special occasions? And then we turn and stare at one another, horrified at this utterly under-handed attempt to undermine our senses with such deceit and fakery!

Of course such a scene is silly, as everyday places very specifically do not indicate their everydayness. That, in fact, is one of their defining attributes, the characteristic of being so ingrained in the fabric of the given that no attention is even paid to its existence. This characteristic of what – invisibility? – should not be misconstrued as an indication that such places are indistinct, smudgy, or vague. Everyday places are most definitely there; however, they are so there that they almost constantly evade recognition. Here we might want to recall Poe’s famous story, “The Purloined Letter,” in which, it will be remembered, the missing letter, ostensibly concealed, is actually hiding in plain sight on a table in the middle of a room. This quality is shared by everyday places: hidden in plain sight, they disappear, that is until awareness of their existence is retrieved by the
inscriptions of social scientists or by the disruption of their status by upheavals, 
catastrophes, criminal acts, or instances of performance art specifically deigned to shatter 
the fabric of the given. Such disruptions, such interferences in the normative functioning 
of the everyday routine of the everyday, serve to remind us of the fragility of the 
everyday. It is not strong enough to withstand such commotion. It fractures under the 
stress of street-fights, public displays of psychotic behavior, or even collective outbreaks 
of behavior that might in most circumstances be described as only mildly neurotic. For 
instance, one individual biting her nails in public would never constitute behavior likely 
to come under scrutiny, but if every person at a bus-stop, coffee shop or plaza were to be 
engaged collectively, simultaneously, and without any form of pre-meditation in such 
behavior, it would interrupt the everyday status of such a place.

But, as noted earlier, dents and dings in the everyday are quickly fixed, as if self-
annealing substances were located in the underbelly of the everyday, merely waiting for 
emergencies to eject their gelatinous contents and reconstitute the fabric of the everyday. 
This tendency of everyday places to maintain their status can be interpreted as the 
homeostatic quality of the given: resisting change, it seems to prefer reproduction to 
revolution; however, as also previously noted, alterations to the given do occur, usually 
with a slow and deliberate speed, but sometimes with a speed that seem to defy physics.

Here, at the LACMA plaza, an attempt is made to provide art patrons with a place 
in which to – what? – meditate between visits to exhibits, sip Perrier while gazing at “Our 
Family Car,” wander aimlessly about as if too dazzled by the impact of the art to keep to 
a straight line, chat with friends and relatives about this or that painting, jot down ideas 
about the latest draft of the latest screenplay, ponder such mysteries as form, shape, and
content; or simply relax, blank spaces accumulating in the mind, interstitial territories in which new works of great art might take place.
Chapter Nine:
Bringing in the Body

There is no position from which to view the everyday except via the body. In this chapter, I want to bring in the physical being, the perceptual network, the sensorial hub. We will accomplish this in three steps: first, through an examination of Merleau-Ponty and his re-working of Husserl's phenomenology, then through an excursus of the indexical body, and, finally, through a vindication of the sensorial as a systemic whole, or, in an inversion of this conception, the repudiation of the singularity and autonomy of discrete and distinct senses.

Merleau-Ponty

"Carnal awareness is the Archimedean point of Merleau-Ponty's philosophy," states Richard Calverton McCleary in his preface to Merleau-Ponty's Signs; "for the body's presence to itself as both perceiving and perceived provides us with our fundamental knowledge of the consciousness in terms of which the self, the world, and other men are constituted" (1964: xvii). This installation of the core of Merleau-Ponty's philosophy into an Archimedean point situated in 'carnal awareness' is a break from Husserl's form of phenomenology, which, though based in bodily experience, still gravitates to an ideal transcendental form of "egological" thought as its epicenter. Husserl's "reduction" is bracketed off from the world, removed from the body and its surroundings, as he posits a “phenomenological Ego” which “establishes himself as 'disinterested onlooker', above the naively interested Ego" (1999: 35; italics, Husserl).
From this grand perch, somehow rendered “pure of all accompanying and expectant meanings on the observer’s part,” said observer will “create for itself a universe of absolute freedom from prejudice” from which to gaze upon the pre-selected aspect of the given, render judgments as to what is observed and then make the phenomena “accessible by means of a new reflection, which, as transcendental, likewise demands the very same attitude of looking on ’disinterestedly’ – the Ego’s sole remaining interest being to see and to describe adequately what he sees, purely as seen, as what is seen and seen in such and such a manner” (Husserl 1999: 35; italics, Husserl). On the other hand, Merleau-Ponty’s "perception" is of the world, instilled and incorporated into the body and its surroundings: "Surely it is true that the new morphology of the visible we acquire from Merleau-Ponty's work does implicate a new conception of the ideal, which cannot be defined by opposition to the sensible" (Lingis 1968: li). And it cannot be defined by opposition to the sensible because it exists within the sensible, within the corporeal being, that is, within the body. Or, in Merleau-Ponty's own words, this from The Visible and The Invisible:

For the visible present is not in time and space, nor, of course, outside of them: there is nothing before it, after it, about it, that could compete with its visibility…. The visible can thus fill me and occupy me only because I who see it do not see it from the depths of nothingness, but from the midst of itself; I the seer am also visible. What makes the weight, the thickness, the flesh of each color, of each sound, of each tactile texture, of the present, and of the world is the fact that he who grasps them feels himself emerge from them by a sort of coiling up or redoubling, fundamentally homogeneous with them; he feels that he is the sensible itself coming to itself and that in return the sensible is in his eyes as it were his double or an extension of his own flesh. (1968: 113-114; italics, Merleau-Ponty).
But if it is true, as McCleary says about Merleau-Ponty's thought - that 'for the body's presence to itself as both perceiving and perceived provides us with our fundamental knowledge of the consciousness in terms of which the self, the world, and other men are constituted' - this still presents us with an aporia, that is, if the purpose of one's investigation is to collapse the body and the world into one indivisible whole, which I take it is one of the main purposes of Merleau-Ponty's work. Merleau-Ponty hints at this aporia as well when he states in the preceding passage from *The Visible and The Invisible* that 'he is the sensible itself coming to itself,' suggesting a binary between the subject ("he") and the sensible that can only be overcome (transcended) when they become one, flesh. Here, Elizabeth Grosz may help us as she outlines what she perceives as Merleau-Ponty's project:

Merleau-Ponty's stated project involves, among other things, destabilizing the pervasive structure of binary oppositions that characterize the history of Western philosophy. Rather than valorize one or the other side of a dichotomous pair of terms, rather than either affirm their fundamental unity or oneness in some kind of holism (which necessarily implies a reduction of one term to the other) or accept the bifurcation and mutually exclusive and exhaustive status of binarized terms, Merleau-Ponty … refuses the very terrain and founding presuppositions of dualisms. (Grosz 1999: 146)

For, as long as the perceiving and the perceived are sundered, the subject (the self) and the object (things, or the world) are sundered, no matter how tightly knit the suture between the perceived and the perceiving; such a sundering of course leaves the dualistic conceptions essentially intact.

Merleau-Ponty himself came to recognize that his conception of the perceived and the perceiving is problematic, and in his last work, the unfinished *The Visible and the*
Invisible, he attempted to rectify this by positing a "common flesh" which unifies subject and object, self and world; as described in the following passage by Gary Brent Madison in *The Phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty*, the flesh itself is that which conjoins subject and object:

In the new perspective opened up by *The Visible and the Invisible* Being is not to be looked for on the side of the object (Sartre) nor on the side of the subject (Husserl), but where object and subject encounter each other, in this "in-between." Neither the world (as object, correlate of existence) nor the subject has the ontological priority, but rather Being, which is neither the one nor the other (nor some other thing) but rather their common flesh, the single fabric of which they themselves are differentiations. The key notion in Merleau-Ponty's ontology, the one which underlines its originality, is the flesh. (Madison 1981: 207-208; italics, Madison).

Such a perspective is an attempt to obliterate in one fell swoop the entire "problem" of the mind-body, subject-object dualism which has plagued Western thought since Plato via Socrates (or Socrates via Plato) invented rationalism (Foucault calls "Socrates and his death … the major event which founded Western rationality" (2011: 120)).¹ For if the flesh can be read as "the same fabric" from which both the mind and the body are constituted and have their being, then the "problem" is enfolded within the same thing, flesh itself. In the working notes appended to *The Visible and The Invisible*, Merleau-Ponty states that: "My body is made of the same flesh as the world … and moreover … this flesh of my body is shared by the world, the world reflects it, encroaches upon it and it encroaches upon the world … they are in a relation of transgression or of overlapping" (1968: 248; italics, Merleau-Ponty). While there is still a possibility of difference here

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¹ See also Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* for this.
(after all, for two things to overlap, they must be different), it is a difference that does not necessarily lead to polar opposition. As Madison puts this:

There is no antimony between the subject and the world, as if one had to explain the one in terms of the other (there is no antimony between a philosophy of transcendental constitution and a philosophy of material causality); subject and object are indissociable partners precisely because they are what they are only insofar as they stem from and are part of the same fabric and are the derived and simultaneous expressions of the same Being, the same Whole. (1981: 208).

What Madison is describing, and what Merleau-Ponty describes as well, could be rather summarily dismissed as ridiculous metaphysical blathering until rather recently. The idea that a fabric, flesh-like, interconnects the human and the world into a Whole, or a Being, is a notion so seemingly unscientific, so divorced from traditional Western conceptions of rationalism, and is stated in such terms - the capital "B" and the capital "W" advertisements of their own grandiosity, of their own overweening metaphysical and ontological scope - that they are easily shot down as the blithe nonsense that only a French philosopher could offer up. However, as we will demonstrate in this chapter and the next, "science" is now catching up with this conception, as it has come to be thought by more and more thinkers that the brain, the mind and the world are not disassociated entities but conjoined, indissolubly.

But, anxious to reach the finish line, I am rushing ahead of my story; let us retrieve our thread and continue.

When he was writing *Phenomenologie de la Perception*, Merleau-Ponty thought phenomenology had already laid to rest the question of the bifurcation of the mind from the body:
Probably the chief gain from phenomenology is to have united extreme subjectivism and extreme objectivism in its notion of the world or of rationality. Rationality is precisely measured by the experiences in which it is disclosed. To say that there exists rationality is to say that perspectives blend, perceptions confirm each other, a meaning emerges. But it should not be set in a realm apart, transposed into absolute Spirit [e.g. Hegel] or into a world in a realist sense [e.g. Marx]. The phenomenological world is not pure being, but the sense which is revealed where the paths of my various experiences intersect, and also where my own and other people's intersect and engage each other like gears. (1962: xx).

This passage is fraught with problems, not the least of which is that the "place" in which (or where) intersections occur between my own experiences as well as between my own experiences and the experiences of others, seems to be ever bit as much a 'realm apart' as those in which an absolute spirit or a "real" world might abide. In other words, the disjunctive nature of the metaphysical-ontological bifurcation of duality has not been collapsed, as its resolution has only been foisted off onto the "rationality" of experience. It does not help that Merleau-Ponty supposes that the truth phenomenology is axiomatic: "Phenomenology, as a disclosure of the world, rests on itself, or rather provides its own foundation" (1962: xx-xxi). Anything that provides its own foundation is without foundation, as there is nothing that can rest on itself, unless one is transposing phenomenology and the world, which can only be the position of a true believer, that is, one who trades in axioms. Thus, the circle is complete, circularity having laid its foundation for its foundation.

Yet, even in the Phenomenology of Perception, Merleau-Ponty cannot be dismissed so cavalierly. For what he accomplishes in this book is to bring the question of the body and its inherent worldliness (its being-in-the-world) into philosophy: "We are involved in the world and we do not succeed in extricating ourselves from it in order to
achieve consciousness of the world" (1962: 5). By establishing a "relation of continuity between what might be considered the 'interior' aspects of the subjects and the 'exteriority' of the world," Merleau-Ponty also establishes an ontology no longer "restricted by nature-consciousness (or body and mind) dichotomies" (Olkowski 1999: 1, 5). This 'relation of continuity' is synonymous in Merleau-Ponty's system with the scope of the body, or, better, the enfolding of the flesh. As Edward S. Casey explains this:

Continuity is guaranteed … by the lived body - which subtends all experience, even the most disjointed - and eventually by flesh, a term that brings body and world together in a literally convoluted but ultimately consistent manner: the "flesh of the world" is a whole … in relation to which discontinuities can only be momentary fissures within its encompassing embrace. (2007: 68; italics, Casey).

So Merleau-Ponty brings the body back in after its long exile from Western thought; as Iris Marion Young puts this:

The unique contribution of … Merleau-Ponty … to the Western philosophical tradition has consisted in locating consciousness and subjectivity in the body itself. This move to situate subjectivity in the lived body jeopardizes dualistic metaphysics altogether. There remains no basis for preserving the mutual exclusivity of the categories subject and object, inner and outer, I and world.2

By demonstrating "that experience is always, necessarily embodied," Merleau-Ponty also demonstrates that "experience can only be understood between mind and body (or across them), in their lived conjunction, rather than, as Cartesianism implies, in their logical disjunction" (Grosz 1999: 149). And since there is nothing outside of experience, it

follows that the mind-and-body conjunction (the flesh) must be the basis of any given ontology.

But what kind of body is this that Merleau-Ponty is describing? Male? Female? European? Asian? African? Healthy? Diseased? Heterosexual? Homosexual? In short, does it allow for difference? Or is it unified around a normative model of the body? Feminists, though appreciating Merleau-Ponty's invocation of the body as the field of ontology - "Merleau-Ponty, as one of the few more or less contemporary theorists committed to the primacy of experience, is thus in a unique position to help provide a depth and sophistication to feminist understandings, and uses, of experience in the task of political evaluation" (Grosz 1999: 148) - question the "neutral" postulation of such a body, for, by the default guaranteed by most theory prior to the new terms of discourse invoked by feminists, such a body was white, male, and European/American. Therefore, many feminists, "while utilizing his work, nonetheless remain suspicious of the apparent sexual neutrality of his claims," remain cautious about Merleau-Ponty, even to the point of dismissing the validity of his work as being solely restricted to a subject enwrapped in masculine experience; yet, this limitation does not deter Grosz from stating that Merleau-Ponty's work can still be useful to feminists as "a new account of masculine modes of human being - a major revision of its scope and relevance" (Grosz 1999: 150, 151).

Judith Butler even seems more wary of Merleau-Ponty: she asserts that even though in the *Phenomenology of Perception* Merleau-Ponty ostensibly "offers certain significant arguments against naturalistic accounts of sexuality that are useful to any explicit political effort to refute restrictively normative views of sexuality," in the final analysis, "the potential openness of Merleau-Ponty's theory of sexuality is deceptive"
The problem arises, according to Butler, because "despite efforts to the contrary, Merleau-Ponty offers descriptions of sexuality which turn out to contain tacit normative assumptions about the heterosexual character of sexuality" to the extent that he "conceptualizes the sexual relation between men and women on the model of master and slave" (1989: 86). So instead of offering up a universal or neutral conception of embodiment in which to enfold the duality of subject and object, Merleau-Ponty offers up a conception of embodiment based on a normative heterosexual voyeuristic "gaze" in which the male (Merleau-Ponty himself) places the female in a passive, oppressed position, thus replicating Hegel's master-slave paradigm. Butler admits that in *The Visible and the Invisible* Merleau-Ponty "suggests an ontology of the tactile [as opposed to his previous "social ontology of the look"], a description of sensual life which would emphasize the interworld, that shared domain of the flesh which resists categorization in terms of subjects and objects" (1989: 97). Yet the problem remains that Merleau-Ponty: fails to acknowledge the historicity of sexuality and of bodies. For a concrete description of lived experience, it seems crucial to ask *whose* sexuality and *whose* bodies are being described, for 'sexuality' and 'bodies' remain abstractions without first being situated in concrete social and cultural contexts…. In the end, his version of 'lived experience' commits the fallacy of misplaced concreteness, giving life to abstractions, and draining life from existing individuals in concrete contexts. What is the historical genesis of the 'subject' that Merleau-Ponty accepts as an a priori feature of any description of sexuality? Does this 'subject' not denote a given history of sexual relations which have produced this disembodied voyeur and his machinations of enslavement? What social context and specific history have given birth to this idea and its embodiment? (Butler 1989: 98; italics, Butler).
In effect, Butler is accusing Merleau-Ponty of a failure to practice self-reflectivity: he has not reflected upon his postionality as a white, European male vis-à-vis embodiment in general.

Perhaps we could say that Butler herself is ignoring concrete history, at least to a certain degree, as she doesn't seem to have noticed that Merleau-Ponty is writing during a time when such self-reflective acts were not *de rigueur* among thinkers of either gender; still, this does not do much to lessen the effect of her charges other than to say that his particular period in history shares in his guilt. Perhaps we could offer the following passage from Merleau-Ponty's essay "Eye and Mind" as mitigating evidence:

> Scientific thinking, a thinking which looks on from above, and thinks of the object-in-general, must return to the "there is" which underlies it; to the site, the soil of the sensible and opened world such as it is in our life and for our body - not that possible body which we may legitimately think of as an information machine but that actual body I call mine, this sentinel standing quietly at the command of my words and my acts. Further, *associated bodies* must be brought forward along with my body - the "others," not merely as my congeners, as the zoologist says, but the others who haunt me and whom I haunt; the "others" along *with* whom I haunt a single, present, and actual Being… (1969: 254; italics, Merleau-Ponty).

What an odd passage! For articulated (nearly) simultaneously are an almost comically prototypical phallocentric statement - "that actual body that I call mine, this sentinel standing quietly at the command of my words and my acts" - along with a repudiation of the same - "*Scientific thinking*, a thinking which looks on from above, and thinks of the object-in-general, must return to the 'there is' which underlies it; to the site, the soil of the sensible and opened world such as it is in our life and for our body" - as well as an explicit embrace of the other, those "associated bodies" which "must be brought forward along
with my body… the others who haunt me and whom I haunt." Perhaps the ambiguity ingrained in the very phraseology of this passage, the semantics and diction which seem to be so cross-hatched, so driven at cross-purposes, reveals the very contingency of Merleau-Ponty's historical positionality, poised as he is between a tradition which "looks on from above" as would a "sentinel standing quietly at the command" and a practice which only recognizes its body as one along with "associated others … others who haunt me and whom I haunt."

But whom are these "others" who haunt Merleau-Ponty and whom he also haunts? If one is even slightly sympathetic to Merleau-Ponty, one wants to insert: colonial subjects, blacks, women, but such a choice is never made by Merleau-Ponty himself, so one makes do with merely the notion that there are, indeed, associated bodies in his schema, without any idea as to the scars of history and the marks of possession these various bodies may bear. And so these bodies are relegated to the wings, waiting for an entrance which never arrives. At least in the work of Merleau-Ponty.

Even though Butler, Grosz, Casey, and others anoint Merleau-Ponty with at least some of the distinction of bringing the body back into Western philosophy (that is, if it was ever there in the first place), Merleau-Ponty himself does not appoint himself as the harbinger of the theory of embodiment, but instead invokes history itself, a gesture which perhaps can be taken as simultaneously self-aggrandizing and self-deprecating:

Our century has wiped out the dividing line between "body" and "mind," and sees human life as through and through mental and corporeal, always based upon the body and always (even in its most carnal modes) interested in relationships between persons. For many thinkers at the close of the nineteenth century, the body was a bit of matter, a network of mechanisms. The twentieth century has restored and deepened the notion of flesh, that is, of animate body. (1969: 94).
Though this passage precedes the positing of Merleau-Ponty's thesis regarding Freud, to wit: that "at least as much as he explains the psychological by the body, he shows the psychological meaning of the body, its hidden or latent logic," thus leading us to the conclusion that it is Freud who has irretrievably brought the body into the twentieth century, it is tempting instead to read this as a postulation of the idea that the very events of the twentieth century, events with which Merleau-Ponty had an intimate acquaintance, as being that which "wiped out the dividing line" between body and mind (1969: 96). Such events as the first and second world wars, the Holocaust, and the fateful (and perhaps fated) resolutions of idealism into Nazism and materialism into Stalinism, must have seemed as if history and philosophy had combined to deny a purely rational outcome to the general problems of humanity.

And perhaps they also combined, for Merleau-Ponty, to deny the possibility of any one causal explanation becoming absolutely predominant as the sole explanation of history: "History effects an exchange between all levels of activity so that none of them can be dignified with exclusive causality" says Merleau-Ponty in "Materials for a Theory of History" (1970: 28). And, if no one level of activity, whether of the "the mind" or of "the body," can gain supreme ascendancy as the bearer of exclusive causality, then do they not at least tend to collapse together into one layer? Or do they shatter apart into a million bits? Regardless of the answer to this question, what Merleau-Ponty is trying to do here is shatter the stranglehold of the either/or of idealism/materialism as oppositional master narratives of history:

It is often argued as though there were, on the one hand, a philosophy which ascribes to man values ascertainable outside of time, a consciousness unrestricted by any interest in actual events, and, on the other hand, those "philosophies of
history" which discover in the flow of events an occult logic whose outcome we can only wait upon…. But this is an artificial cleavage: there is no question of choosing between external events and internal spirit of man, between history and consciousness. *All the instances that one might care to oppose to history have their own history through which they communicate to history*, although they have their own way of using time. (1970: 27-28; italics, mine).

Sartre deftly describes Merleau-Ponty's thinking vis-à-vis the particular and the universal vis-à-vis history in an essay collected in *Situations*:

> History makes us universal in the exact measure which we make it particular. This is the important gift which Merleau [sic] offers us…. Setting out from the well-known universality of the singular, he arrives at the singularity of the universal. It is he who unearthed the capital contradiction: Every history is all History [sic]…. Every life, every moment, every era - contingent miracles or contingent failures - are *incarnations*. (Sartre 1965: 322-323; italics, Sartre).

Sartre finally inserts Merleau-Ponty's key term ("flesh") in his analysis of this universal-particular synthesis of the historical while also invoking a Christian genealogy of the same: *"The word becomes flesh*, the universal is only established by the living singularity which deforms it by singularizing it" (1965: 322-323; italics, mine). I will leave this somewhat jarring Christological allusion for someone else to decipher, as I find my hands more than full.

What I am clumsily attempting to bring forth here is evidence for a counter-argument to Butler's thesis that Merleau-Ponty neglects the particular body when he invokes the phenomenological body. As my last exhibit in this apologia for "Merleau," let me reference Gary Brent Madison as he cites Merleau-Ponty's *The Primacy of Perception*.
The universality of thought … is always "presumptive"; it "is never the universality of a pure concept which would be identical for every mind. It is a rather the call which is a situated thought addresses to other thoughts, equally situated, and each one responds to the call with its own resources" (1981: 300; italics, mine).³

One wants to claim (or rather: I want to claim) that if both one's thought and the thoughts of others are situated, then they must be situated somewhere in particular, in all kinds of bodies in all kinds of situations. Yet this is a claim that extends further than the evidence allows, as Merleau-Ponty, as far I know, never deigns to include precisely those (women, homosexuals, blacks, etc.) who would signify the difference that matters, that difference which has trembled as a subterranean cross-current underneath the "normative" postulation of the subject as white, Euro-American, male.

Still, we must give Merleau-Ponty credit for bringing forth the body as a possibility for others to extend, making his rendition of a particular form of flesh into universal flesh which includes the same as well as the other. Other writers, such as Maurita Harney in her "Merleau-Ponty, Ecology, and Biosemiotics" are willing to give Merleau-Ponty a lot more than this: "Merleau-Ponty…. effectively shakes off the Cartesian-derived dualisms, most notably the oppositions of mind and matter, of subject and object, of culture and nature, and of human versus natural reality" 2007: 133). Whether Merleau-Ponty "effectively" did this or not is almost besides the point, at least for our purposes: what is necessary, for us, is that he has allowed us to bring the body front and center. And speaking of front and center, let us now turn to the indexical as we carve out space for "our" flesh to roam.

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The Indexical Body

In situ, as they say, any particular body, views the world, or, rather, is in the world only in reference to its own indexical position. The here and there, the near and far, the up and down, the left and right, the above and below, and the back and front are all indexical place-holders that will vary from person to person depending on their position. Your near may be my far and my here your there, for if it was also your here we'd be in exactly the same body (though we could share the same place and so co-exist in the same here. "Each person gets information about his or her body that differs from that obtained by any other person" (Gibson 1979: 115).

This may seem rather elementary and even simplistic, but it can quickly gain complexity to the point of knottiness. How is it that besides comprehending my indexical position in situ, I can comprehend someone else's in situ? And how is it that I can understand how your there could become my here and my here your there? Schutz provides some of the answer to this when he states that:

In the everyday world in which both the I and the Thou turn up, not as transcendental but as psychophysical subjects, there corresponds to each stream of lived experience of the I a stream of subjective experience of the Thou. This, to be sure, refers back to my own stream of lived experience, just as does the body of the other person to my own body. During this process, the peculiar reference of my own ego to the other's ego holds, in the sense that my stream of lived experience is for you that of another person, just as my body is another's body for you. (1967: 102; italics, mine).

Now, while it is true that my comprehension of your indexical position "bears the mark of my own subjective Here and Now and not the mark of yours," I can imagine our places switching, given the possibilities of locomotion and a certain amount of time (Schutz
Such a possibility ‘refers back to my own stream of lived experience,’ as Schutz says; but how is this so? Through experience, we have gained the knowledge that, given the possibilities of movement and the passage of time, we can transpose ourselves into new positions. Again, elementary and simplistic. Yet this is precisely the kind of everyday assumption which makes ordinary communication and action possible. Without it, the everyday would collapse into silence and immobility.

Now, this becomes trickier when we consider Schutz’s statement that I can reference the body of the other person to my own body. Here, Schutz seems to be imagining something like a perfect speech situation a la Searle or Habermas, in which intentionality and communication flow from one person to another without obstacles or misunderstandings. Merleau-Ponty comes up with pretty much the same construal, though put more abstrusely: "I project myself in the other and the other in me, [there is] projection-introjection, productivity of what I am doing in the other and of what he is doing in me, true communication through lateral practicing" (2010: 6). Once again, a sort of normative body has been posed, in which bodies are taken to be the same and completely aligned in that sameness. Here is Schutz describing this kind of perfectly coherent and precisely comprehensible intersubjective communication experience:

If, for instance, someone is talking to me, I am aware not only of his words but his voice. To be sure, I interpret these in the same way that I always interpret my own lived experiences. But my gaze goes right through these outward symptoms to the inner man of the person who is speaking to me. Whatever context of meaning I light upon when I am experiencing these outward indications draws its validity from a corresponding context of meaning in the mind of the other person. (1967: 104).
There are a number of hypertrophic presuppositions in this passage. Is it really true that I always interpret the words of the other in the same way I interpret my own lived experiences? Does my gaze ever go right through the outer symptoms of my interlocutor to "the inner man" of the person who happens to be speaking to me? And, finally, how does my context of meaning correspond to the other's context of meaning? Do they correspond at all? Isn't it more the case that sometimes they correspond and sometimes they don't? Or that they only partially correspond in one way or another, depending on the circumstances?

It may seem that I have conflated the speech act situation with the indexical question, but the "context of meaning" bridges the gap between these two, as both speech acts and indexically oriented bodies can only proceed within such a context. The point I want to make here is that such contexts are not always aligned, one to another, not even in regards to their most basic elements. For instance, in *Getting Back into Place*, Edward S. Casey tells us that:

In the case of human animals, the here-there and near-far are culturally (and linguistically) conditioned as well. This is most readily apparent in the case of the far sphere, where what counts as constitutive varies greatly from culture to culture. For the Greeks, the Heavens (*to ouranos*), composed of circular spheres encased in each other, constituted the far realm as viewed from the "middle" realm of Earth. The Navajo designate the far as the Sky and imagine it not as circular but as an enormous flat disk lying on top of the Earth and conjoined to the latter at its edges. Contemporary Western astrophysics is continually revising its conception of what lies far out in the physical universe by positing black holes, quarks, exploding galactic "walls," etc., all far out *there*. (2009: 64; italics, Casey).

Given this, we can imagine an almost endless variety of conceptions of near, far, here, there, up, down, and so on, leading to communicative situations in which the "shared"
context of meaning had been displaced to such a degree that communication is itself
dismembered.

But it is even worse than that, as conceptions of the body itself are of course
variable to a remarkable degree:

The same effects of culturation are evident in how the body-in-place is conceived. Even if this body acts in general like a corporeal analogue of Kant's transcendental mind, it is no cultural constant to be taken for granted. Its means and modes of placing - its exact ways of assuring implacement and of falling into displacement - vary considerably. (Casey 2009: 64-65).

Even the same body can experience itself in a great variety of ways, passing from one mean and mode of implacement and displacement (to borrow Casey's terminology) to another with almost quicksilver speed. How then to expect different bodies, each subtending different streams of lived experiences (to borrow Schutz's terminology), to comprehend one another, whether it be in terms of respective indexical positionalities or the price of apples in Caracas?

The problem only gets thornier if gender differences are tossed into the mix, which of course, via the modes of necessity and obligation, they must and should be. For instance, in her "Throwing Like A Girl: A Phenomenology of Feminine Body Comportment, Motility, and Spatiality," Iris Marion Young argues that "Feminine existence lives space as enclosed or confining," leading to a bodily experience of space and indexicality in which "the projection of [such] an enclosed space severs the continuity between a 'here' and a 'yonder' (1989: 62, 63; italics, Young). So that, for "the female person who enacts the existence of women in patriarchal society" (Young 1989: 55), "the space of the 'yonder' is a space in which feminine existence projects
possibilities in the sense of understanding that 'someone' could move within it, but not I. Thus the space of the 'yonder' exists for feminine existence, but only as that which she is looking into, rather than moving in" or moving towards (Young 1989: 63). Of course, the qualifier, for 'the female person who enacts the existence of women in patriarchal society,' leaves open the possibility that a female person may not enact such a mode of being, an option that becomes more and more feasible as levels of liberation increase and society becomes less and less patriarchal. But, "until female genitals and women's bodies are inscribed and lived (by the subject and by others) as a positivity, there will always remain paradoxes and upsetting implications for any notion of femininity," as well as for the possibilities circumambient to female indexical motility (Grosz 1994: 73-74). Still, even given a precisely egalitarian society with a sexually neutral power-sharing arrangement and a "positive" view embedded in each and every subject, both male and female, regarding the female body, there is no guarantee that gender differences will not obviate differences in bodily experience vis-à-vis indexicality. Even a matriarchal society still might lead (or especially might lead) to significantly different indexical gendered-inflected understandings of such things as the here and the yonder.

Yet we still communicate, at least to some degree, and with at least some success. Generally, we still understand that, given enough time for locomotion, your there may become my here, your near my far, and so on and so forth. Even if these indexical transformations exist only as possibilities or as options restricted to someone of the opposite gender or of a different class, we still understand that they exist for someone, somewhere. How is this possible, given all the obstacles to such understanding, only a very few of which we have articulated? Why is Schutz at least generally correct when he
states that even though "the environment I ascribe to you … bears the mark of my own subjective Here and Now," and, furthermore, that even though this "environment I ascribe to you … has already been interpreted from my own subjective standpoint" (1967: 105), we can still communicate intersubjectively and comprehend one another's respective indexical positions, viewing them as correlates of our own?

Perhaps some of our capacity to imagine "your" specific set of indexical coordinates in relation to "my" specific set of indexical coordinates, and, in particular, how your set could become my set (given the possibilities of time and motion), can be explained by the recent discovery of the importance of mirror neurons in the functioning of the brain. Mirroring and imitation are not only necessary for learning language and motor skills, but may also be a significant factor in the intersubjective perception of relative indexical positioning. "Your mirror system may help you be a better perceiver of others' actions," writes Lawrence D. Rosenblum in *See What I'm Saying: The Extraordinary Powers of Our Five Senses*. "It may do this by helping you to see others' behaviors based on how you might perform them yourself" (2010: 219; italics, mine). In other words, the pedagogical function of imitation by which we learn linguistic and motor skills plays a primary part in intersubjective transference, in which we can imagine such things as your here becoming my here, your left my left, and so on.

But to foist off indexical coordination merely on the operations of each individual's cognitive neurology would be a mistake. In the first place, conceived in such a way, encased in the carapace of their own neurological network, a kind of hermitically sealed shell, would place each set of mirror neurons in the odd position of having nothing to mirror. In the second, a holistic comprehension of intersubjective indexical
coordination cannot be performed outside of an environment common to the subjects involved in such coordination; this seems to be a corollary of the first qualification. "If we want to understand the mind of an animal, we should look not only inward, to its physical, neurological constitution," writes philosopher Alva Noë in *Out of Our Heads: Why You Are Not Your Brain, and Other Lessons from the Biology of Consciousness; "we also need to pay attention to the animal's manner of living, to the way it is wrapped up in its place" (2009: 42). Without a doubt, there are "internal correlates of consciousness. But there are external correlates of consciousness too" (Noë 2009: 42). And consciousness itself, argues Noë, does not exist except in its relationship to its environment: in effect, there is no such thing as a brain in a vat, isolated in its own absolutely self-referential cognitive universe: "To study mind, as with life itself, we need to keep the whole organism in its natural environmental setting in focus" (2009: 45). We will return to this subject in much greater depth in the next chapter.

Gaining a sense of reciprocal spatiality designates a primary station in the developmental process of the life of a child, and such a sense eventually leads to the coordination of relative indexical positioning as well. Referencing the French psychologist Henri Wallon, Grosz writes that:

>a phase of alternation … the child becomes not only able to distinguish the roles of agent and spectator (active and passive) but, more interesting, to play at both roles, giver and receiver, actor and audience, switching from one role to the other. This transitivism positions the child in a role of *spatial reciprocity with the other*, a space in which its position of the other is reciprocally defined by the position of the subject. (Grosz 1994: 48; italics, mine).
Not only is this capacity to switch roles between the active agent and the passive spectator necessary for the development of language and motor skills, as already noted, but it is a prerequisite to the capacity of intersubjective comprehensive in terms of the reciprocity of indexical coordination. If I do not have the ability to imagine (play the role of) myself in your position, then I cannot understand how your right could become my right as well. All of this must my tied as well, one imagines, to the development of empathy, which was understood as an affect but has now been valorized into a primary instinct. For there can be no empathy without the capacity to comprehend myself as being in your position, thereby placing the senses of spatial reciprocity and intersubjective indexical coordination as primary constituents of empathetic understanding.

We should make clear that a sense of spatial reciprocity is not some unlimited domain in which one's body is automatically interjected as a free-floating entity which can project itself into anyone else's positionality. In fact, there are many thinkers who believe that the capacity of intersubjective reciprocity is quite limited, as we have already seen, for instance, in Young's reading of the female body as it is enacted in a patriarchal society. Clearly, the slave does not share a common reciprocal space with her master, in which the slave's place and the master's place are transferable units; as Hegel puts it in the famous section on Lordship and Bondage from the *Phenomenology of Spirit*: "one is the independent consciousness whose essential nature is to be for itself, the other is the dependent consciousness whose essential nature is simply to live or die for another. The former is lord, the other is bondsman" (1977: 115). However, this does not limit the slave (or the master, for that matter) from imagining the possibilities of intersubjective coordination; in fact, if the slave does not have the capacity to differentiate the master's
indexical position from her own, she will not prove to be a very able performer of the tasks assigned to her, for what the slave must do "is really the action of the lord" and so must completely conform to the lord's indexical situation (Hegel 1977: 116).

I suppose what I am attempting to clarify is the essential difference between a reciprocity of space defined as a domain of intersubjective congruence and one defined as a domain of intersubjective transference. In the former, physical coordination is maintained by a comprehension of respective indexical positioning; in the latter, bodily transference is presupposed as a physical possibility, regardless of one's status, gender, race, etc. As Young says, "The objects in visual space [including other bodies] do not stand in a fluid system of potentially alterable and interchangeable relations correlative to the body's various intentions and projected capacities. Rather, they too have their own places and are anchored in their immanence" (1989: 64-65; italics, Young).

If we return to thinking about the everyday, we can quickly perceive that indexicality is key to mundane motility. As Casey points out, this is due to the fact that our own sense of the indexical allows us to open up possibilities while closing off impossibilities, thus allowing for a feasible range of actions within limited horizons of space and time:

Even as it acts to project a field of possible actions, my body closes down the prospect of unlimited choice. Hence it poses to itself constantly (even if often only implicitly) determinate choices between, say, going forward and retreating. Being in the center of things, my body can always move here or there, up or down, this way or that. This dimorphous structuring does not, of course, preclude still other possibilities, but it does not bestow on a given field of possibilities a coherent set of routes. A spontaneous corporeal mapping or somatography arises in which, as on an actual map, meaningful alternate directions are available at each important junctures. (2009: 48; italics, Casey).
Here Casey articulates a constituent of the indexical that must be underlined. And this is that the indexical, being necessarily oriented around one's own body, as if radiating out from one's physical being, "indexes" one's body as the center of all things. We could say that this is the natural and the only position in which the indexical can be located.

However, such solipsistic physical coordination can also instigate the delusion that one truly is at the center of all things, even to the exclusion of all things other than one's own indexicality! But intersubjectivity and indexicality are intimately tied together: "We do not make contact with ourselves any more than we make contact with others" (Merleau-Ponty 2010: 134). This can be read as an axiomatic postulation of reciprocity between intersubjectivity and indexicality: there is not one without the other.

However, a fatal degree of indexical solipsism is salvaged by the fact that any orientation that one "carves out" in space must be coordinated with positions which are necessarily removed from one's body. Erwin Straus makes this clear in The Primary World of Senses: A Vindication of Sensory Experience when he tells us that:

To know right from left, to make them into locational demarcations in space, we must be able to lift ourselves out of the subjectivity and momentary particularity of sensing and effect a separation of space and time…. I can only differentiate right and left as orientation marks in an object or with respect to my own body to the degree that I can simultaneously oversee directions in their manifoldness and mutual opposition. (1963: 390, 391; italics, Straus).

Straus reports that mentally ill patients who cannot transcend their own subjectivity cannot differentiate left from right, up from down. Grosz reports on two different types of physic breakdown of the ability to distinguish indexical positionality:
hemiasomatognosia, "in which an organic disturbance, a cortical lesion, makes the subject unable to recognize one-half" of its own body, and alloesthesia, "generally manifested in a loss of the ability to distinguish between left and right sides … this occurs not only with respect to the patient's own body but also with respect to the bodies of others" (1994: 68).

We are aware of what Gibson terms "the persistence of the environment" even when it leaves our line of vision, thus encompassing the temporarily invisible into our indexical orientation:

To say that one is aware of the environment behind one's head is to say that one is aware of the persistence of the environment. Things go out of sight and come into sight as the head turns in looking around, but they persist while out of sight. Whatever leaves the field as one turns to the right re-enters the field as one turns to the left. The structure that is deleted is later accreted; this is a reversible transition, and therefore the structure can be said to be invariant under the transition. (1979: 209-209; italics, Gibson).

Now of course it is possible for the environment to vary to a slight degree while one is transitioning through a turn, but, at least in a general sense, Gibson is correct. This general persistence of the environment it what allows us to assume that indexical reciprocity is possible; it is also what allows us to assume the possibilities of coexistence and concurrence; Gibson describes such possibilities in the following passage:

Separated places and objects are perceived to coexist. This means that separated events at these places are perceived to be concurrent. What happens at one end of a corridor is seen to co-occur with what happens at the other end, even though one must look back and forth between the two. Different concurrent events, thus, can be sampled in succession without destroying their concurrence, just as different
coexisting places can be sampled in succession without destroying their coexistence. (1979: 209; italics, Gibson).

Our reliance on the reciprocity between coexistence and concurrence, between time and space, is perhaps what leads us to make the further assumption of the existence of an objective world, for it seems to be the "objective" world which guarantees the possibilities of reciprocally exchanged indexical coordinates.

However, the subjective must also be retained to a certain degree if an accurate sense of indexical coordination is to be maintained: "Right and left are always relative to the principal direction of the individual; the distinction between them depends upon the observer's standpoint and upon the direction of the person moving…. Only for me, and not for another who just passed this way, is that tree there before me" (Straus 1963: 391; italics, Straus). And so, in order to retain our indexical coordination, we must be geared into the world with equal measures transcendent and immanent subjectivity, transcending our own solipsistic orientation in order to perceive that your there could be my here, given the time to get there, while maintaining our own interior immanence as a subject with a discrete and distinct here and there circumambient to our body. No mean trick, that. But one that is very much taken-for-granted as a sort of everyday GPS somatic orientation system that moves us through and coordinates us to the rest of the world.

Another obstacle to a facile comprehension of indexicality is that every indication of the indexical (the here and there, the up and down, etc.) is "multi-locular;" Casey points this out in Getting Back Into Place: "But being here - what does that mean? Even if we grant that all being-here occurs through centration in the lived body … there is not just one way to be here" (2009: 52). "Hereness," as Casey terms it, is a very labile, slippery term:
When the range of the here includes not just the place through which I am now moving (and which therefore reflects my immediate bodily movement) but all of the places to which I can effectively move, I experience a properly regional here. Examples include the entire house in which I reside … a block on which I live, an entire neighborhood, even a country or state or nation. (2009: 53).

Casey's point here is an important one: "here" is plastic, polymer, polymorphous, and can transform from the immediate vicinity of our body to the widely-extended notion of the nation or even the globe or the universe. Indeed, we often extend our own "here" in a kind of prosthetic way as an extension of our body: this is probably most obvious when we are driving as our physical being seems to amplify itself, the vehicle itself becoming an extension of our body. Patriotic fervor can also amplify our sense of the indexical here, as we identify our body with the geobody, the "body" of the nation and its various parts, the states, regions, or provinces. However, for our present purposes (which is, let us recall, to move the body into our present discourse), we have no need to resolve the issue of the lability of the "here," constricting it so it only, say, circumscribes the immediate visual horizon of our physical being, we can stipulate that the indexical is a necessary ingredient in our thinking about the body and leave it at that. So now let us turn to our final subject of this chapter, the senses in their total indivisibility.

*Sensual Thought and The Body*

What I want to do in the final section of this chapter is to bring the senses into our schema of the body. However, I want to do this in a particular fashion, not as discrete organs that are viewed as distinct command-and-control centers of specific sensate capabilities but instead as a unified sensual system in which each separate organ is
intimately related to one another, to the point that they meld as one holistic system.

First off, breakthroughs in science seem to be corroborating a more "ecological" way of understanding how the perceptual system works:

A significant shift in how perceptual phenomena are understood and evaluated has occurred…. The ecological approach argues that once humans are observed in a context of sufficiently rich, natural sensory information - and as soon as they are asked to perform tasks that have behavioral relevance - previously unobserved perceptual skills emerge…. These skills include the ability to hear the shape of both sound-making and sound-reflecting objects; to feel the size and shape of an object simply by shaking a small piece of it back and forth; and to visually recognize people simply based on the way they move. (Rosenblum 2010: xii, xiii; italics, Rosenblum).

This `shift' is leading researchers to the conclusion that the sense organs are not stand-alone entities, with each organ solely responsible for its own perceptual "task;" instead, the sense organs seem to operate together, each organ combining to form what used to be considered percepts responding to single organs. In effect, the ears see, the eyes touch, the skin tastes, the nose hears, and the tongue smells. It is also being acknowledged that the standard count of five discrete senses has limited our ability to comprehend not only the nuanced and holistic way in which the senses operate, but also the other sensory operations of the body which have been neglected due to our overweening and myopic focus on the "five senses." Here, I am thinking of such "somatic sensations" as the sense of "kinesthesa (the sense of movement), proprioception (felt muscular position) and the vestibular system (sense of balance)" (Paterson 2009: 768). In fact, Mark Paterson writes that "current wisdom posits anything between eight and twenty-two" different senses!\(^4\)

While often slotted into the sensate "domain" of the tactile, these and other senses such as

the sense of somatic pain and the sense of felt temperature (heat) "are difficult to resolve as distinct perceptions, [which is] evidenced by the fact that western medicine, psychology and social science has only relatively recently acknowledged them within the lexicon and there remains little consensus on the terminology" appropriate for these sensate operators or whether they should be classified as bona fide sensorial systems (Paterson 2009: 768).

In a study conducted at UCLA in 2011, psychologist Ladan Shams found that "interaction between sound and vision led to a significant improvement in detection of visual motion" (Wolpert and Menon 2011: 1). Shams compares her study, which involved three groups of participants tracking dots and sounds moving across a screen, with the process of playing ping-pong: "Imagine you are playing ping-pong with a friend who serves the ball. You receive information about where and when the ball hit the table by both vision and hearing …. at least in regards to perception of moving objects, hearing and sight are deeply intertwined, to the degree that even when sound is completely irrelevant to the task, it still influences the way we see the world" (Wolpert and Menon 2011: 2). Shams and the lead author of the study, Robyn Kim, report that "There are connections between the auditory and visual portions of the brain at the cognitive level. When the information from one sense is ambiguous, another sense can step in and clarify or ratify the perception" (Wolpert and Menon 2011: 2).\footnote{For more on this study, see the December 2011 edition of Psychological Science.}

However, rather than being a mere ratifying or clarifying tool that only function when possibilities of ambiguity arise, the "cooperation" between the senses seems to be much more foundational. Think of gazing at a concrete wall. Via memory, we know that its surface is rough and this haptic memory informs our sight so that our vision "feels" the
wall as well as sees it. In fact, in *Sculpture and Enlivened Space: Aesthetics and History*, F.D. Martin uses the example of a stone wall to "illustrate" the same concept of the intra-sensory system: "We do not know about the surface, volume, and mass of these stones by sight alone but by sight synthesized with memories of tactual and kineesthetic perceptions" (1981: 59).⁶ Husserl describes this in the aptly titled essay, "The World of the Living Present and the Constitution of the Surrounding World That Is Outside the Flesh" as perceptions which are:

possibilities … "prefigured" through experience. They are possibilities containing in themselves ontic validities. They are not mere fantasized possibilities; they are precisely inductive possibilities, which are suggested … by prior experience which includes the entire course of the living present, even though no ontic certainty is motivated in the individual details or in the whole. (2002: 135).

This process, in which sense memories can be transferred through our imagination to objects perceived in the present moment, pervades our perception of the everyday world. However, Mark Paterson in *The Senses of Touch: Haptics, Affects and Technologies*, asserts that intra-sensory "teamwork" might be innate and biological, and so precede any instigation of memory: "Memory alone is not the intermediary of cross-modal [from one mode of perception to another] transfer. Instead, there are underlying encoding processes at a 'lower cognitive level' than memory, encoding experiences from different sensory subsystems" (2007: 45). While this could be true - that cross-modal transfer systems exist at a lower cognitive level than memory and therefore are prior to the instigation of specific memories - it seems to me that experience (and the up-take of experience through memory) must be one of the primary feeders of such transfer systems; we are not

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⁶ This is cited in Paterson, 2007, 94.
born with "memories" of the textures of concrete walls, for instance, but only gather them through experience. That such discrete memories may inform sense perception does not negate any prior existence of a cross-modal system: it merely makes them fully functional and renders them comprehensible to reason.

"Our research shows that your brain can detect … detailed information about sound-obstructing objects," writes Lawrence D. Rosenblum in *See What I'm Saying* (the very title of which of course is a reference to the fecundity of cross-modal sensorial transfer systems) (2010: 26).

It turns out that untrained, blindfolded subjects can hear the *shape* of small panels that obstruct loudspeakers. One of our experiments showed that subjects can hear whether a small board is wider than it is tall or taller than wide with impressive precision. And in a particularly astounding feat of auditory perception, untrained, blindfolded subjects showed that they could determine whether a sound-obstructing panel had the shape of a triangle, square, or circular disc. While subjects were not equally good at the task, all were able to recognize the three shapes with accuracy that well exceeded chance performance. (2010: 26; italics, Rosenblum).

Rosenblum, a professor of psychology at UC Riverside, who has done work with blind painters who can tactiley "feel" the difference between colors, and sightless mountain bikers who use echolocation devices "to follow trails and avoid large obstacles" (2010: 2), states that "new imaging technologies … show that your brain is much more ecumenical when it comes to your individual senses than once thought…. areas of your brain once assumed to be dedicated to a single sense actually help out with multiple senses" (2010: xii). As Oliver Sacks puts this: "There is increasing evidence from neuroscience for the extraordinarily rich interconnectedness and interactions of the
sensory areas of the brain, and the difficulty, therefore, of saying that anything is purely visual or purely auditory, or purely anything" (2003: 55).7

Such interconnectedness, such cross-modal perception, is typical, not unusual. For instance, the interdependence of vision and somatic motility is not incidental but foundational to the sense of vision:

Seeing is, in many ways, a bodily activity. Seeing involves moving the eyes and head and body. More important, movements of your eyes or your head or your body actively produce changes in sensory stimulation in your eyes. Or, put differently, how things look depends, in subtle and fine-grained ways, on what you do. Approach an object and it looms in your visual field. Now turn away: it leaves your field of view. Now shut your eyes: it is gone. Walk around the object and its profile changes. In these and many other eyes, there are patterns of dependence between simply sensory stimulation on the one hand and your own bodily movement on the other. (Noë 2009: 60; italics, mine).

It could even be said that the rods and cones of the eyes, those basic instrumental receptors of vision, operate through motility, as they move and send signals when certain waves and particles of light "touch" them. Gregory Bateson explains this by telling us that what is "typical of all sensory experience" is that our "sensory system … can only operate with events, which we call changes" (1980: 107; italics, Bateson). In regards to vision, Bateson admits that:

It is true that we think we can see the unchanging. We see what looks like the stationary, unmarked blackboard, not just the outlines of the spot. But the truth of the matter is that we continuously do with the eye what I was doing with my fingertip [sensing changes on the surface of a blackboard with his fingers]. The eyeball has a continuous tremor, called micronystagmus. The eyeball vibrates through a few seconds of arc and thereby causes the optical image on the retina to move relative to the rods and cones which are the sensitive end organs. (1980: 107).

7 This is cited by Paterson, The Senses of Touch, 56.
And couldn't it also be said that the visual signals sent from the optic nerves to the brain are motile or depend, essentially, on motility? For how could they "travel" from the eye to the visual cortex if they could not move? However, J.J. Gibson in his *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*, downplays the entire notion of a motile conception of optic capabilities as a mechanical reduction of visual perception:

It is not necessary to assume that *anything whatever* is transmitted along the optic nerve in the activity of perception. We need not believe that *either* an inverted picture or a set of messages is delivered to the brain. We can think of vision as a perceptual system, the brain being simply part of the system. The eye is also part of the system, since retinal inputs lead to ocular adjustments and then to altered retinal inputs, and so on. The process is circular, not a one-way transmission…. The eye is not a camera that forms and delivers an image, nor is the retina simply a keyboard that can be struck by fingers of light. (1979: 61; italics, Gibson).

Gibson also asserts that it is the very conflation of the eye with the camera which has so confused those formulating visual theory:

The orthodox theory of the formation of an image on a screen, based on the correspondence between radiating points and focus points, is rejected as a basis for an explanation of ecological vision. This theory applies to the design of optical instruments and cameras, but it is a seductive fallacy to conceive the ocular system in this way. One of the worst results of the fallacy is the inference that the retinal image is transmitted to the brain. (1979: 64).

Furthermore, Gibson believes we compound our misconstrual of the visual system by basing our analysis of it on our understanding of communication systems: "The concept of information with which we are most familiar is derived from our experience of communicating with other people and being communicated with, not from our experience
of perceiving the environment directly" (1979: 62). Our tendency to comprehend systems by analogizing them to other systems leads to a miscomprehension of the visual system:

The information for perception is not transmitted, does not consist of signals, and does not entail a sender and a receiver. The environment does not communicate with the observers who inhabit it. Why should the world speak to us?.... The world is specified in the structure of the light that reaches us, but it is entirely up to us to perceive it. The secrets of nature are not to be understood by the breaking of its code. (1979: 63; italics, Gibson).

Returning to Noë's point, somatic motility and visual perception are intimately united: as our bodies move, so our eyes see. Merleau-Ponty recognizes this as well:

We must habituate ourselves to think that every visible is cut out in the tangible … as, conversely, the tangible itself in not a nothingness of visibility, if not without visible existence….. It is a marvel too little noticed that every movement of my eyes - even more, every displacement of my body - has it place in the same visible universe that I itemize and explore with them, as, conversely, every vision takes place somewhere in tactile space. There is a double and crossed situating of the visible in the tangible and of the tangible in the visible; the two maps are complete, and yet they do not merge into one. (1968: 134).

So, then, in Merleau-Ponty's construal, the visible and the tangible are not one, are not identical, but are still deeply implicated in one another. It should be noted that the interdependence or "teamwork" of the visual and the tactile has been recognized for quite some time; indeed, in A Treatise of Human Nature, first published in 1740, David Hume states that "The idea of space is convey'd to the mind by two senses, the sight and touch; nor does any thing every appear extended, that is not either visible or tangible" (1978: 38). Noë simply states this interdependence of sight and body as: "Blinking, turning the eye or head, or moving in relation to objects bring about characteristically eye-based
sensory events" (Noë 2009: 60). Eye-based these 'sensory events' may be, but based solely on eyes alone they are not: there are no eyes in a vat. "What is remarkable is that the world can show up for visual consciousness - objects can show up with all manner of spatial and visible properties - thanks to our fluent appreciation of the ways that eye-related visual sensory stimulation depends on our movements" (Noë 2009: 60). This contrasts sharply with Husserl's claim that "the still body is the normal body," upon which are received sensations which are in turn transposed and registered as perceptions by an activated brain (2002: 133). Indeed, the "normal" body is normally in motion and the senses move with the body, as they are in the body and with the body, and so must move as the body moves.

But what is even more remarkable than Noë's claim that the world 'shows up' for visual consciousness is that the world also 'shows up' for those who are without sight, the blind. In Senses of Touch, Paterson underlines the intimate connection between everyday epistemology and the sense of touch by invoking the shopper inquiring of the "shop assistant 'Can I see that, please?'' when what the shopper actually wants to do is to touch the indicated object, to handle it, to feel it (2007: 66; italics, Paterson). What this also underlines is the intimate connection between the visual and the tactile (as well as the intimate connection between touching and feeling). For the blind, space "shows up" despite the absence of visual stimuli; though the "collocation of senses of sight, touch and kinesthesia" are "a prerequisite for the production of sensory space…. It is nevertheless possible that another sense can become associated [with the creation of a sense of spatiality], one that offers the necessary spatial component such as audition" (Paterson 2007: 54). Indeed, the example of ping-pong, wherein the ball is located via its sight and
its sound, as well as the example of echolocation, serving as a navigational tool both for
the motility of creatures such as bats as well as for blind mountain bikers, testifies to the
efficacy of the association between audition and spatial fluency. "Bats determine the size,
location, density, and movement of prey such as fruit flies 100 feet away in a pitch-black
cave by use of sonar, emitting frequencies of some 100,000 cycles per second, about five
times what we can hear" (Sagan 2010: 23). The association between spatial features and
audition "allows blindness [or, rather, allows blind animals, including humans] to
produce a non-visual, tactile and kinesthetic space independently from visual space,
thereby reasserting the existence of true spatiality for the blind" (Paterson 2007: 54). The
tactile sense is just as necessary for the sighted in constructing their sense of spatiality. A
"feeling" for depth and the entire creation of spatial dimensionality is developed in
sighted children through motile exploration and the associative pedagogy of the visual
and the tactile working together as sensory "tutors" to instill in the child an appreciation
as well as a knowledge of space.

The senses also never present anything to us as if the thing presented is
"possessed" by separate senses and "intended" to be perceived solely through one discrete
sense; Sartre describes this nicely in Being and Nothingness:

The lemon is extended throughout its qualities, and each of its qualities is
extended throughout each of the others. It is the sourness of the lemon which is
yellow, it is the yellow of the lemon which is sour…. The fluidity, the tepidity,
the bluish color, the undulating restlessness of the water in a pool are given at one
stroke, each quality through the others. (1956, 186). 8

Analysis can separate these qualities in order to study them in the laboratory, and with much useful benefit. However, that capability and its benefits should not deter us from recognizing that the senses (all eight to twenty-one of them!) operate tout court, not as separated units. And even in the laboratory, as we have seen, scientists are now discovering that the reciprocity of the senses is what is foundational to perception, not their autonomy.

As early as 1979, scientists such as J.J. Gibson were warning that experimental methods which treated vision as if it were a stand-alone entity should not be conflated with a reality that in actuality tends to holism rather than singularity:

The vast quantity of experimental research in the textbooks and handbooks is concerned with snapshot vision, fixed-eye vision, or aperture vision, and it is not relevant.... The single, frozen field of view provides only impoverished information about the world. The visual system did not evolve for this. (1979: 3, 2).

Gibson's research on "the ecological approach to visual perception" supports Merleau-Ponty's and Noë's thesis that vision is embodied and operates in tandem with movement: however, "looking around and getting around do not fit into the standard idea of what visual perception is" (Gibson 1979: 2). But, of course, looking around and getting around, and, even more so, looking around while getting around, are exactly what most animals, including humans, happen to do with the vision they happen to have. Gibson continues: "Note that if an animal has eyes at all it swivels its head around and it goes from place to place.... The evidence suggests that visual awareness is panoramic and does in fact persist during long acts of locomotion.... Ecological optics is required instead of classical optics," that is, if one desires to understand optics as it occurs in the
field, as it were (1979: 2). Gibson notes that those who practice classical optics rely on evidence gained from studying subjects outside of the typical conditions in which the eye functions; such methods inevitably lead to the conclusion that a disembodied, still eye subject to laboratory conditions is the proper unit of visual analysis even though vision operates in mobility through a changing and heterogeneous series of environments. Even the "still" eye moves as it blinks or switches its focus, shifting from one position to another: the conceit of a still eye is just that, a conceit.

Gibson attributes much of the confusion in our notions about vision to a conflation he traces back to the discovery of perspective representation in the Renaissance by Alberti and Bruneshelli:

When the Renaissance painters discovered the procedures for perspective representation, they very properly called the method artificial perspective. They understood that this had to be distinguished from the natural perspective that governed the ordinary perception of the environment. Since that time we have become so picture-minded, so dominated by pictorial thinking, that we have ceased to make the distinction. But to confuse pictorial perspective with natural perspective is to misconceive the problem of visual perception at the outset. (1979: 70-71; italics, Gibson).

Gibson also critiques "natural" perspective as well, for, according to him:

It geometrizes the environment and thus oversimplifies it. The most serious limitation, however, is that natural perspective omits motion from consideration. The ambient optic array is treated as if its structure were frozen in time and as if the point of observation were motionless. (1979: 70).

Vision must be theorized, then, with two sets of motion in mind, one attributable to the point of observation (the eye) and the other to the ambient array of light (sunlight and its various reflections). To do otherwise is to ignore obvious empirical conditions.
Yet Gibson himself ignores another set of conditions which impacts vision as well as all the other senses, no matter how many senses we may tally as being "actual," or if we conceive of the sensorial system as one unified structure or composed of discrete units; and that is the issue of cultural variance vis-à-vis the sensorium.

In her *World of Senses: Exploring the Senses in History and across Cultures*, Constance Classen states that "in the West we have two basic sensory paradigms for understanding the cosmology of other cultures," that of the visual paradigm adopted by the West and reflected in such terms as "world-view" and "perspective," and that of the oral-aural paradigm, which "scholars" typically assign to pre-literate societies (1993: 121). Yet Classen reports that there are completely other sensory modes by virtue of which societies "view" the world, thus demonstrating that sensory organization is not necessarily an either/or selection structured around *either* the visual *or* the oral-aural. For instance, "Thermal symbolism is widespread among the indigenous cultures of Latin America. Classificatory schemes based on concepts of heat and cold can be found from the southern Andes to northern Mexico…. And indeed can vary widely from place to place" (Classen 1993: 122).

For the "Tzotzil of the Chiapas highlands of Mexico" who are:

descendants of the Maya…. Everything in the universe is thought to contain a different quantity of heat, or dynamic power…. Thus the social order of the Tzotzil community is structured according to the thermal order of the cosmos, with the most important members associated with the hot rising sun, and the least important with the cold setting sun. Through their placement in communal rituals, individuals know their degree of importance in the 'thermometer' of social status. At the same time, such rituals serve to establish an exchange of heat-force between humans and deities. (Classen 1993: 122, 123, 125).
Such an emphasis on the thermal does not obviate the perception and appreciation of other sensate modes:

At the same time as Tzotzil rituals emphasize heat, the participants have their senses of smell and taste engaged by fragrance and food, their sense of hearing by music and speech, and their sense of sight by colourful decorations. Thermal symbolism is thus integrated into a multi-sensory symbolic system. (Classen 1993: 124).

For the Ongee, "a hunting and gathering people" who live on Little Andaman Island in the Bay of Bengal, "smell is the fundamental cosmic principle.

Odour is the source of personal identity and the reason for living in society, [smell is also a] a system of medicine and a system of communication; it determines temporal and spatial movements, it produces life and causes death. By controlling odour, the Ongee control the cosmos. (Classen 1993: 126).

And for the Desana of the Columbian Amazon, it is color which codes and controls the universe. This, then, is an order based on the visual, yet one that places its primary emphasis on the color of things rather on a visual perspective of things:

All people are said to receive an equal amount of colour energies at birth, and at death these energies return to the Sun [sic]. Animals and plants also contain chromatic energies in differing proportions according to their distinct natures. Indeed, the whole process of the distribution, procreation and growth of people, animals and plants is seen by the Desana as a chromatic energy flow that has to be carefully watched over and controlled by the shamans. (Classen 1993: 131).
Historical trends also play a role in the valorization of one or another of the sense systems. For instance, according to Classen, the olfactory sense was privileged in England throughout the Victorian era: this was reflected by the dissemination of fragrances through "pot-pourris, sachets, stationery, gloves and handkerchiefs" which "allowed for a discrete but intimate romantic discourse" (1993: 32). This came in handy, for "In a society in which there were so many things which one was not allowed to see or say or touch, perfumes were charged with hidden meaning" (Classen 1993: 32). This olfactory regime slowly lost its power, first through an emphasis on the visual form of flower arrangements, and then, much more resoundingly, with the negative association of the olfactory with the mustard gas of World War One:

The harsh realities of World War 1 dealt a death blow to Victorian sentimentalism with its flower-languages and pot-pourris. People who had been through the horrors of war were no longer content with catching a whiff of the mysteries of life through some quasi-mystical olfactory discourse…. Although the Victorian love affair with fragrance retained some influence up until the thirties, it had begun to appear absurdly quaint and even indicative of a corrupt society and an unhealthy emotional repression. (Classen 1993: 34).

The valorization of the olfactory can be traced back to antiquity: "The heyday of the rose [and of fragrance in general] in the West was in the ancient world, where it was not only exalted in literature and mythology, but also used for a multitude of profane and sacred purposes" (Classen 1993: 17). Sight began to displace the olfactory as well as the auditory with the invention of the printing press and the discovery of linear perspective; the Enlightenment, with its emphasis on the "light" of reason, privileged sight to an even greater degree. As Constance Classen tells us, "Using the adjectives `bright' and `brilliant'
to mean intelligent only came into vogue during the era of the Enlightenment, when the cultural importance of sight was on the rise" (2005: 5).

It seems to me that the close of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century has witnessed a gradual transformation in our conception of the senses. First, we are coming to the realization that the senses are not autonomous systems, operating as stand-alone entities. For instance, note Paterson's claim that "haptic knowledges involve multiple relationships between the visual, the non-visual and the somatic senses" (2009: 781) as well as Rosenblum's assertions that the senses work together in a myriad of ways:

The growing evidence for our ability to use multiple senses for what until very recently were considered single-sense functions (perceiving speech from seeing faces; perceiving a person's attractiveness from smells) supports the emerging notion that the brain is designed around multisensory input. In some way, the brain doesn't much care which sense organ provides information. This fact is even true of the supposed "visual" and "auditory" brain centers that, we now know, incorporate multisensory input. (2010: xi; italics, Rosenblum).

Second, it seems to be that the tactile and the haptic in general are on the rise, their status being driven forward by feminist and queer thinkers, frequently working in opposition to the predominance of the "phallic gaze," as well as by "objective" scientists who are beginning to realize that the tactile pervades our sensorium. The tactile is also in ascension due to the gradual change in computer and communication technologies from one oriented to the visual (the screen) to one oriented to the haptic (the touch-screen). "The role of touch in computing is becoming established and the various technologies of touch are becoming increasingly prevalent," writes Paterson in The Senses of Touch, published in 2007 (129). "Whether for research or for entertainment, these devices
augment interaction with virtual objects" (Paterson 2007: 129). In works such as Adam Greenfield's *Everyware* and Emile Aarts and Stefano Marzano's *The New Everyday: Views on Ambient Intelligence*, a haptically oriented world of ubiquitous computing (Greenfield's phrase) or ambient intelligence (the term of choice for Aarts and Marzano) is envisioned in which computing surfaces are embedded into nearly every available surface and are responsive to tactility, both at the proximate and the distal scales. In an essay titled "Towards a New Sensorality" in *The New Everyday*, Marion Verbücken writes that:

*The skin or surface of an object* is the point of interface with users, and conveys the identity of the thing as well as containing its controls. Much new work is going into developing skin materials that can be both sensitive and responsive. Touch screens can be seen as the embryo of this work that will eventually lead to fully sensitive skins. *Future skins will incorporate other sensors including touch, heat and light sensitivity*, and different display technologies including foldable displays and electronic inks. (2011: 57; italics, mine).

In such a world, the "skin" of the computer (or device) mirrors the skin of the user, creating a haptic interface between the two. Such technology does not nullify the visual (or the other senses, for that matter), yet it does lead to a "upgrading" of the tactile at the possible "expense" of the visual, perhaps creating a horizontal or holistic appreciation of the senses rather than the vertical hierarchy of the senses, with vision as the crown jewel of the sensorium, which has pretty much been the case in the West since at least the Renaissance. Designers of computers and other technologies are becoming more and more aware of the importance of the haptic "feel" of devices to their prospective consumers: "Those who have to do with designing for mass production by the machine will do well to go the museums and study the handiwork of those early men who loved
the feel of things in their hands. The sense of touch may prove to be one of our best salesmen, once we have relearned its secrets" (Sheldon and Arens 2007: 428). And we can see this concern with tactile compatibility reflected in marketing; for instance, on their website, Apple's iPad is advertised in the following "haptic-friendly manner:

With iPad, you use your fingers to do everything. And thanks to Multi-Touch technology, everything you do — surfing the web, typing email, reading books, swiping through photos, and switching between apps — is easier and a lot more fun. When your fingers touch the display, it senses them using electrical fields. Then it instantly transforms your taps, swipes, pinches, and flicks into lifelike actions. Just like that. (2012: apple.com/ipad/features/).

Vaulting from the most contemporaneous technologies to some of the most ancient, we can also recruit the navigational techniques of South Sea Islanders to our promotion of a haptic, corporeal turn. For the Puluwatans of Micronesia, though “acute visual powers enable them to read and follow the myriad nocturnal constellations with close discernment…they are by no means entirely dependent on vision, since difficult weather conditions can render unaided sight useless" (2009: 27). Indeed, Puluwatan navigators deploy all their senses when sailing between islands in the South Pacific:

Not only do they actively imagine the unseen reference island over the horizon; they sometimes deliberately shut out sight (even when it is unobstructed) in order to draw more fully upon the other bodily senses. This is particularly true of estimating the direction and identity of ocean swells: to become fully sensitive to these deep currents, Puluwatans “steer by the feel of the waves under the canoe, not visually.” One navigator reported that he would sometimes “retire to the hut on his canoe's outrigger platform, where he would lie down and without distraction readily direct the helmsman onto the proper course by analyzing the roll and pitch of the vessel as it corkscrewed over the waves.” Here the navigator is relying on auditory and kinesthetic data – including sensations in his testicles – as they form rhythmic patterns within his lived body…. “I have heard from several sources that the most sensitive balance was a man’s testicles, and that at
night or when the horizon was obscured, or inside the cabin this was the method used to find the focus of the swells off an island.” (Casey 2009: 27, 28).

So perhaps what is required is not a generalized corporeal turn but a specialized testicular turn!

In general, according to Paterson, the sense of touch reveals a "rich, complex world, a world of movement and exploration, of non-verbal social communication.

It is a carnal world, with its pleasures of feeling and being felt, of tasting and touching the textures of flesh and of food. And equally it is a profound world of philosophical verification, of the communication of presence and empathy with others, of the co-implication of body, flesh, and world. (2007: 2; italics, mine).

It is to this last item - 'the co-implication of body, flesh, and world' - that I will turn to in the following chapter. But, first, let us attempt to recapitulate and summarize what we have covered in this chapter.

What I have attempted to do - via admittedly cursory explorations of Merleau-Ponty, indexicality, and the pansensorial mode of perception - is to bring the body in as a constitutive element of the everyday. For, without it, no experience of the everyday is possible. We bring our body with us wherever we go. It underlies our experience, one could say. But accepting such a phrasing would be giving a false picture of the experiential situation, as if our body is something subsisting "underneath" us, somehow subtending experience as an adjunct "thing." The body is there, right in the middle.

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9 Casey references David Lewis’s *We, the Navigators* (Honolulu-University of Hawaii Press, 1972, 87) for the last two citations and Thomas Galdwin’s *East is a Big Bird* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970, 171) for the last citation. Casey also adds that Lewis states on page 87 that “holding courses by swells seems always to be a matter more of feel than sight.” For more on Micronesian navigation, see Norman Thrower, *Maps & Civilization: Cartography in Culture and Society* (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 2007).
cannot be theorized away, a la Descartes. It persists, demanding recognition. And it is finally getting its due, as we have seen. To add one more instance of this, in their *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought*, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson critique “mainstream Western” philosophy’s reliance on “transcendent reason, independent of human bodies or brains” has the potential to destabilize the entire edifice of traditional philosophy (1999: 21). For, as Lakoff and Johnson put it, at the core of that tradition are the propositions that “human reason and human concepts are mind-, brain-, and body-free and characterize objective, external reality. If these tenets are false, the whole worldview [of traditional Western philosophy] collapses” (1999: 22). Given such a collapse and the introduction (or re-introduction, depending on one’s understanding of the chronology of the deracination of the body from the essential workings of the mind) of an embodied mind into our philosophical schema, Lakoff and Johnson assert that a radical rearrangement of our metaphysical worldview is required:

Suppose human concepts and human reason are body- and brain-dependent. Suppose they are shaped as much by the body and brain as by reality. Then the body and brain are essential to our humanity. Moreover, our notion of what reality is changes. There is no reason whatever to believe that there is a disembodied reason… (1999: 22).

In the next chapter, what I will try to do is to project out from the body into the things of the world. As we make this move, we will also come to the realization that the world, the *umwelt*, that which surrounds it in the indexical here and how, the environs, is a constitutive part, not only of our bodies, but of our minds as well.
"Lies! Lies! All of it - lies!"
Chapter Ten:

Bringing in the Rest

I turn left, I’m going to crawl into that hole down there, at the end of the row of gaslights: I am going to follow the Boulevard Noir as far as the Avenue Galvani. Any icy wind blows from the hole: down there is nothing but stones and earth. Stones are hard and do not move.

There is a tedious little stretch of street: on the pavement at the right a gaseous mass, grey with streams of smoke, makes a noise like rattling shells: the old railway station. Its presence has fertilized the first hundred yards of the Boulevard Noir – from the Boulevard de la Redoute to the Rue Paradis – has given birth there to a dozen streetlights and, side by side, four cafes, the Rendezvous des Cheminots and three other languish all through the day but which light up in the evening and cast luminous rectangles on the street. (Sartre 1950: 37).

I begin this chapter with this excerpt from Sartre's *Nausea* because the passage can serve as a kind of foreshadowing of the main conclusion I wish to draw from this, our concluding chapter. And that is the idea that the mind does not stand alone in the world, but is deeply implicated in the world. In effect, brain, mind, and world, are one. Or, better, they cannot be taken as separated, which is perhaps a lesser claim but one much easier to ingest. In other words, what we might call cognitive brain, affective mind, and the *umwelt* (the indexically coordinated surrounding environment) work together, in an essential and co-constitutive manner.¹ Given this, not only is there no brain in the vat, there is also no mind in a vat and no world in a vat as well. Using material gleaned from the allied disciplines of cognitive psychology, biosemiotics, and the philosophy of mind, we will make an argument that geography - conceived in a broad sense as the

¹ Deely states that the umwelt "is not merely the aspects of the environment accessed in sensation. Far more is it the manner in which those aspects are networked together as and to constitute `objects of experience" (2001: 127). While von Uexküll describes it rather poetically as "the perceptible world that has been given to us [animals, plants, and humans], it contains everything we can see" (2001: 107).
environment in which we move and which simultaneously moves past us, the geographical features we encounter on an everyday basis, including everything from geographic features such as hills and creeks to components of the built environment such as buildings and roads - is a basic constituent of the brain. In other words, the brain not only functions in the world, it is the world, that world through which we move and to which we react on a moment to moment and place to place basis.

And so I will be making a pitch for a kind of neuro-geography. I suppose this stance may be judged as opportunistic, a mere following of a fad, as one after another scholar jumps on the academic bandwagon of neuro-science. That's fine: let the accusations fly. I would not take the stance unless I thought it could stand. For I cannot ignore what seems to me to be at least a tacit recognition in much of this recent scholarship that the surrounding geography, the umwelt, the indexical geography, if you will, of our own respective somatic positions, is a fundamental and constitutional part of the brain.

Starting with the Vibrancy of Matter

In her Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things, Jane Bennett writes that:

On a sunny Tuesday morning on 4 June in the grate over the storm drain to the Chesapeake Bay in front of Sam's Bagels on Cold Springs Lane in Baltimore, there was:

one large men's black plastic work glove
one dense mat of oak pollen
one unblemished dead rat
one white plastic bottle cap
one smooth stick of wood
Glove, pollen, rat, cap, stick. As I encountered these items, they shimmied back and forth between debris and thing - between, on the one hand, stuff to ignore, except insofar as it betokened human activity (the workman's efforts, the litterer's toss, the rat-poisoner's success), and, on the other hand, stuff that commanded attention in its own right, as existents in excess of their association with human meanings, habits, or projects. (2010: 4).

One thing that, at least at first glance, seems rather curious about Bennett's catalogue of materials encountered that sunny June morning outside of Sam's Bagels in Baltimore is her negligence at not including herself: her eyes picked these things out, her mind engaged with this particular concatenation of stuff, her brain sorted them into discrete units to be itemized and tucked away, later to be retrieved for use in *Vibrant Matter*, a book intended, among other things, so says Bennett, "to paint a positive ontology of vibrant matter, which stretches beyond received concepts of agency, action, and freedom sometimes to the breaking point" as well as "to dissipate the onto-theological binaries of life/matter, human/animal, will/determination, and organic/inorganic … to induce in human bodies an aesthetic-affective openness to material vitality" (2010: x). It is not that she completely ignores her own complicity in this assemblage of things: notice she does write that "As I encountered these items, they shimmied back and forth between debris and thing…" And so she has brought herself into this spool of things, invoking her own spatial-temporal proximity to the stuff she stumbles upon; yet she does not offer herself the same status that she offers to the glove, the pollen, the rat, the bottle cap, and the smooth stick of wood. They are numerated in the encounter while she is not. But this seems "natural," as she is not a thing, is she, as they most certainly are, all so present in their very thingliness, as it were. Bennett's status as a human being gives her the necessary abilities and the requisite distance to gather the observed collocation of stuff.
together in her mind, postulate its existence as a theoretical bundle, and then return to it at a later time, at the moment of composition.

Yet, later in the book, Bennett does invoke her own materiality as a thing among things, as the stuff of the body is pitched as congruent and contiguous with the stuff of the world:

Each human being is a heterogeneous compound of wonderfully vibrant, dangerously vibrant, matter. If matter itself is lively, then not only is the difference between subjects and objects minimized, but the status of the shared materiality of all things is elevated. All bodies become more than mere objects, as the thing-powers of resistance and protean agency are brought into sharper relief. (Bennett 2010: 12-13).

So, oddly enough, Bennett is claiming that, by identifying with our own thingliness, by fully incorporating our selves, 'bodies become more than mere objects.' In other words, we elevate our selves by incarnating our selves. Which of course is the opposite of the history of abasement to which the body has been "exposed." From being blamed for our own mortality to being castigated for its desire for physical contact to being shamed for its "lack" of thought, the body, at least in what is called the Western tradition, has served as a kind of handy whipping boy, a thing that must be hauled around with us until we die, a tiresome burden, a fardel-bearing drag, unwieldy and ungainly when not downright ugly or outright monstrous, an obstacle to clear and distinct thinking, as well as a profound impediment to any and every form of enlightenment. Is there any need to catalogue the genealogy of the hysterical denigration of the body and its absolute bifurcation from the "higher" powers of the mind and/or spirit in the history of what is
called "Western thought"? From St. Paul to Descartes to the valorization of quantification and rationality, the body has been a fugitive from both the academy and the temple.

This has led to a multitude of unfortunate consequences, most of which we have no time to examine; however, one we should record is that this exile of the somatic has led to the odd and counter-intuitive notion that the study of perception should be sectored off from bodily experience. Unmasking this strange tendency, Straus says, "Sensations belong to our mind. Because this mind is understood as extramundane, uncorporeal consciousness, sensations, too, are taken out of the natural connection of experiencing and the corporeal being-in-the-world" 1963: 16; italics, mine). The notion that consciousness is solely "incorporated" within the brain and has no structural or logistical connection with the body and its environment may have been bolstered by "the fact that neuroscientists can produce sensations by direct stimulation of the brain," says Noë in *Action in Perception* (2004: 210); Noë rejects this idea on two counts: first, by snipping away at the logical deductions of such experimental results: "that it is possible to produce *some* experiences, it does not follow that it is possible to produce *all* experiences" (2010: 211; italics, Noë); and second, by reminding us that "the fact that one can manipulate experience by manipulating the brain" is not in any way, shape, or form tantamount to demonstrating "that the brain is sufficient for experience" (Noë 2004: 211). Furthermore, Noë concludes that:

Experience is not caused by and realized in the brain, although it depends causally on the brain. Experience is realized in the active life of the skillful animal. A neuroscience of perceptual consciousness must be an enactive neuroscience—that is, a neuroscience of embodied activity, rather than a neuroscience of brain activity…. On the enactive approach, *brain, body, and world work together to make consciousness happen.* (2004: 227; italics, mine).
Let me repeat that, for emphasis (as they say): 'Brain, body, and world work together to make consciousness happen.' This may be a rather crude way of putting the thesis (which, by the way, is the main thesis of this chapter), as it suggests some sort consciousness workshop, in which the elves of the brain join together with the sets of elves representing the body and the world, to "make consciousness happen," that `make' also giving the entire operation an odd sense of misplaced agency; however, I concur with Noë: it is precisely this triad, functioning in unison, which produces consciousness. But no, that's rather clumsy as well. For my thesis is that it is precisely not as a triad that consciousness occurs, but as one thing which can, for purposes of speculation or experimentation, be abstracted into three parts but which is one bio-physical whole "in reality." I would also substitute the terminology "cognitive mind, affective mind, and environment" for "brain, body, and world," but, otherwise, this is the very nub of the matter.

Yet it is not simply through the experiments of neuroscientists that this notion of a disembodied brain as the seat of all experience, as it were, arises, for this is one the primary strands of our Cartesian legacy. In "Of the Senses in General," the Fourth Discourse in his Discourse on Method, Optics, Geometry and Meteorology, Descartes states that:

We already know sufficiently well that it is the mind which senses, not the body; for we see that when the mind is distracted by an ecstasy or deep contemplation, the entire body remains without sensation, even though it is in contact with various objects. And we know that it is not properly because the mind is in the parts serving as organs to the exterior senses that it experiences sensation, but because it is the brain, where it exercises that faculty which is called common sense. (1965: 87; italics, mine).
The parameters of much of the clinical experiments conducted by scientists (be they social, life, or earth scientists) hinges on just this body-mind bifurcation stipulated by Descartes.

Part of the problem of this approach is that it can lead to assumptions which fail to pan out when deductions based on experimental conditions are applied to the much more nuanced and variable conditions of the world. Dorion Sagan makes a nice case for this in her introduction to Jacob von Uexküll's *A foray into the World of Animals and Humans, with A Theory of Meaning*:

Focusing on one aspect of the environment, as science does to isolate objects for study, presents an abstracted, truncated version of the elements under study that eventually comes back to haunt those who overgeneralized on the basis of an incomplete sample. For example, Max Delbrück's decision to investigate life's molecular mechanism by studying bacteriophages (bacterial viruses that do not have their own metabolism, making them easier to study) helped lead to an overemphasis on genes as the all-explanatory secret of life. So, too, particle physics discovered the necessity of including the observer, her apparatus, and measurements to fully account for observed behavior. And in thermodynamics, the initial simplified studies of matter and energy in thermally sealed systems were prematurely extrapolated to suggest that all natural systems inevitably become more disordered, even though most systems in the universe, including those of life, are not isolated in experimental boxes but open to material and energy transfer. The phenomenon might be described as the return of the scientifically repressed: what is excluded for the sake of experimental simplicity eventually shows itself to be relevant after all. (2010: 7-8).

Incidentally, the comment that 'particle physics discovered the necessity of including the observer, her apparatus, and measurements to fully account for observed behavior' comports snugly with the claim I making here: the fully incorporated human being is a being in relationship with his or her environment: such a construal defines the human being as co-constituent with her environment. There is no human being outside of those
definitional parameters. Certainly, Descartes can state that "I examined closely what I was, and saw I could pretend that I had no body," but, as he readily admits: he is only pretending: for the pretense to be taken as actuality was one of the most monumental mistakes of the Western tradition (1965: 28; italics, mine); Avicenna's "Floating Man" thesis smacks of the same pretence.

In his *Putting Science in its Place – Geographies of Scientific Knowledge*, David N. Livingstone makes a related claim by arguing that the truths of science are contingent upon location: “the meaning of scientific theories is not stable; rather, it is mobile and varies from place to place. And that meaning takes shape in response to spatial forces at every level of analysis – from the macropolitical geography of national regions to the microsocial geography of local cultures” (2003: 4). Livingstone justifies this claim by first noting that science is an activity performed by humans and then by reminding us that “human activities always take place somewhere” (2003: 5). Next, those quite obvious claims are complicated by a "placing" of place within a wide array of contingent impingements: “where an individual, a social group, a state, or a subcontinent is located in material space is … highly significant” (Livingstone 2003: 6). Livingstone acknowledges that the scientist “must also be sufficiently ‘disarticulated’ from their social environments to permit them to reshape the very settings they emerged from. Spaces both enable and constrain discourse” (2003: 7). Once experimental results are postulated and published, they can be met with all the contingencies susceptible to the vagaries of reception: “As ideas circulate, they undergo translation and transformation because people encounter representations differently in different circumstances. If theories must be understood in the context of the period and place they emerge from,
their reception must also be temporally and spatially situated” (Livingstone 2003: 11-12). Yet even experiments conducted in the same place can lead to disparate findings: “Every experimental physicist knows that very dissimilar things may happen under what appear to be precisely similar conditions” (Popper: 1944: 133). Given this admission, that dissimilar results can happen under precisely similar conditions, is it any wonder that dissimilar results can happen under precisely dissimilar conditions? In “The Poverty of Historicism,” Karl Popper admits that though “it is an important postulate of scientific method that we should search for laws with an unlimited realm of validity,… We can never be quite certain if whether our laws are universally valid, or whether they hold only in a certain period (for example, perhaps, only in a period in which the universe expands) or only in a certain period (perhaps in a region of comparatively weak gravitational fields)” (1944: 136-137). Sagan's, Livingstone's, and Popper's arguments all go some way to supporting the thesis than bodies and their varied locations within various environments have profound effects, and that, in the final analysis, they must be taken into account when considering the "real-world" ramifications of the findings of scientific experiments.

An acknowledgement of "embodied consciousness" is an acknowledgement of reality (or the truth, I suppose), for where else could consciousness be? (Paterson 2007: 22). How could the mind ever be extramundane? Does it not only exist in the world? Even the most austere lab is of this world. Perhaps I am engaging in my own jeremiad here, but, after all, it is quite something to consider, this astonishing record of a kind of genocidal intolerance of the somatic. As if the body could be exterminated, it has been
railed against almost to the cusp of obliteration. Resilient, however, and patient, it waits, scarred perhaps, yet surviving.

Bennett reminds us that some ninety percent of our bodies is composed of bacteria, thus weakening the case for some sort of purely human subjectivity existing in absolute separation from "the world." The porosity of the skin (the organ of touch not being an impregnable blockade against foreign "invasion" but a skein through which much "alien" matter finds passage) also testifies to the intimate conjunction between human beings and their environment, as atmospheric as well as a wide variety of other elements seep into the flesh despite whatever prophylactic effects we take against the "intrusions" of the world. But if we accept that there is such a connection, turning the stuff circumambient to the body into members of an assemblage which includes "us" as "actants" in this assemblage as well - so what? In other words, what are the consequences of human bodies being more than "mere objects"?

It seems that Bennett wants to draw two conclusions from such a connection, one generally political and the other generally ontological, although the latter may have political ramifications as well. On the first score, Bennett wants:

to highlight what is typically cast in the shadow: the material agency or effectivity of nonhuman or not-quite-human things…. Why advocate the vitality of matter? Because my hunch is that the image of dead or thoroughly instrumentalized matter feeds human hubris and our earth-destroying fantasies of conquest and consumption…. The figure of an intrinsically inanimate matter may be one of the impediments to the emergence of more ecological and more materially sustainable modes of production and consumption. (2010: ix).

By attempting "to bear witness to the vital materialities that flow through us and around us," or, in other words, by attempting to link "us" to the things of the world, Bennett
hopes to forge an empathetic connection between human beings and things, which category includes worms, forests, and ponds as well as dead rats and bottle caps (2010: x). This concern (which may remind readers of much recent and no-so-recent literature of environmental philosophy, including such writers and naturalists as John Muir, Henry David Thoreau, Barry Lopez, Wendell Berry, Gary Snyder, and Sarah Whatmore) speaks to the need to counter a purely anthropocentric relationship to the things of the world with a biocentric relationship with the things of the world, things in the latter slot including both animate and inanimate material. Now, while it may be true, as Noël Castree points out in a review of Vibrant Matter, that Bennett fails "to suggest both why and how our current societies could feasibly encounter the world in this way," and, furthermore, that Bennett demonstrates a "hesitation - or is it an inability - to spell-out why a new politics is not only necessary but achievable," for our purposes we can let Bennett slide on this score (2012: 5). For what we wish to garner from her book is not so much a handbook outlining the contours of the necessity and the feasibility of a new politics, but a first step to a basis for a neuro-geography, which, as part and parcel of its ramificatory reverberations, will require not only a new politics but a new biology, a new sociology, and a new geography as well.

Bennett's other purpose is what she calls the re-enchantment of the world. This of course assumes the acceptance of two things: one, that the world was indeed enchanted at some previous point in time, and two, that this era of enchantment ended at another point in time. Weber enunciated the disenchantment of the world as it was folded within the "iron cage" of the bureaucratic order during the nineteenth century, that period of governmental consolidation and state centralization. Bennett's claim is that such a re-
enchantment can occur if the material elements of life "once again" are assumed to possess vitality: the notion is "that moments of sensuous enchantment with the everyday world - with nature but also with commodities and other cultural products - might augment the motivational energy needed to move selves from the endorsement of ethical principles to the actual practice of ethical behaviors" (2010: xi).

Now, as I may have already implied by indicating the assumptions underlying Bennett's notion of re-enchantment, it is not a given that the world was ever enchanted in the first place. Such a notion smacks of the thesis of a golden age to which we may, can, should, or must return (depending on the modality in which we choose to approach such a return). Hobbes of course scoffs at such a notion while Rousseau hails it, believing we can return to such a state of affairs once we assent to the common will. However, let us assume that Weber was correct and that the world became disenchanted with the ascension of the bureaucratic state. This would mean that the Egyptian, Persian, Greek, and Roman Empires all existed within the era of enchantment, when matter was vital, imbued with agency, and humans and the various things of the world were united in some kind of intimate relationship. But who were these subjects of these empires who were so enchanted? Many were slaves. Indeed, it could be claimed that the Egyptians building the Great Pyramid "enjoyed" a vital connection with matter; in fact, it could easily be claimed that their connection with matter was so intimate that there was little to no differentiation between their physicality and the stones upon which they labored.

The point I am trying to make here is that for a large portion of humanity, in antiquity as well as in this, the twenty-first century, transcendence from matter is not a choice: they are locked into matter, their muscles and bones so materialized their very
beings are smothered in material. For such people a "return" to the "vitality" of matter may translate into their present condition, a condition to which they may not aspire, indeed a condition into which they are locked into by grim necessity. For those who have escaped from an overly "intimate" relationship with matter, re-enchantment may be a thing to struggle against rather than something to struggle for; such possibilities seem to have escaped Bennett's notice.

Nevertheless, Bennett's concept of the self as a thing in a web or a network of other things is a necessary first step in the formulation of the trinity (the three-in-one and the one-in-three) I am attempting to construct of cognitive mind, affective mind, and umwelten. For it is always in a circumambient indexical perception of stuff that we exist, a subject into which we will delve deeper further on this chapter.

From Bennett's string of self, dead rat, bottle cap, work glove, stick, and oak pollen, all come together outside Sam's Bagels one sunny June morning in Baltimore, I want to interpolate a similar string brought together by that great materialist and prototypical aficionado of every variety of ephemera, Walter Benjamin. First we should note that Benjamin himself was the ur-excavator of everyday existence: *The Arcades Project* can be read as a document outlining a methodological approach for such a operation, with the phenomena explored by Benjamin ranging from "the literary and philosophical to the political, economic, and technological, with all sorts of intermediate relations" (Eiland and McLaughlin 1999: ix), a method encompassing everything from the "revised title page of [Charles] Meryon's" *Etchings of Paris* (Benjamin 1999: 414) to the "politics of finance under Napoleon III" (Benjamin 1999: 135) to the "true fairies of these arcades … the formerly world-famous Parisian dolls, which revolved on their
musical socle and bore in their arms a doll-sized basket out of which, at the salutation of the minor chord, a lambkin poked its curious muzzle" (Benjamin 1999: 693). The history of the nineteenth century, Benjamin's object of research in The Arcades Project, "could be realized only indirectly, through 'cunning,'

it was not the great men and celebrated events of traditional historiography but rather the 'refuse' and 'detritus' that was to be the object of study, and with the aid of methods more akin … to the methods of the nineteenth-century collector of antiquities and curiosities, or indeed to the methods of the nineteenth-century ragpicker, than to those of the modern historian. (Eiland and McLaughlin 1999: ix).

But perhaps Benjamin himself puts it better when he states that "It [The Arcades Project] corresponds to a viewpoint according to which the course of the world is an endless series of facts congealed in the form of things" (1999: 14).

Let me put forward just one of Benjamin's many examples of chains of matter which has some family resemblance to Bennett's; this is taken from The Arcades Project, Convolute G, "Exhibitions, Advertising, Grandville," the first sentence of which is also an expression of the essence of Benjamin's aesthetics as well as the core of his methodology:

Many years ago, on the streetcar, I saw a poster that, if things had their due in this world, would have found its admirers, historians, exegetes, and copyists just as surely as any great poem or painting. And, in fact, it was both at the same time. As is sometimes the case with very deep, unexpected impressions, however, the shock was too violent: the impression, if I may say so, struck with such force that it broke through the bottom of my consciousness and lay irrevocable somewhere in the darkness. I knew only that it had to do with "Bullrich Salt" and that the original warehouse for this seasoning was a small cellar on Flottwell Street, where
for years I had circumvented the temptation to get out at this point and inquire about the poster. (1999: 173-174).

So here we have Benjamin, the streetcar, the poster, the street, Flottwell, the warehouse, the cellar, and the salt, Bullrich. We also have two other interesting items, the ramifications of which could eat up several more volumes, that is, the passage of time, and its human adjunct, memory, in this case in particular, Benjamin's specific memory of this poster, a poster which, `if things had their due in this world,' would be valorized as a great poem or a painting. Now to the second part of Benjamin's invocation of this worthy poster when on his way "to Lützow Street to pay customs duty, according to the weight of its enameled blocks of houses, on a china porcelain city which I had had sent from Rome," itself an invocation of things and places worthy of a poem or a painting, Benjamin, "prior to this incident," that is, the paying of the duty on the porcelain city:

stood with my two beautiful companions in front of a miserable café, whose window display was enlivened by an arrangement of signboards. On one of these was the legend "Bullrich Salt." It contained nothing else but the words; but around these written characters there was suddenly and effortlessly configured that desert landscape of the poster. I had it once more. Here it what it looked like. In the foreground, a horse-drawn wagon was advancing across the desert. It was loaded with sacks bearing the words "Bullrich Salt." One of these sacks had a hole, from which salt had already trickled a good distance to the ground. In the background of the desert landscape, two posts held a large sign with the words, "Is the Best." But what about the trace of salt down the desert trail? It formed letters, and these letters formed a word, the word "Bullrich Salt." (1999: 174).

And then Benjamin takes a metaphysical turn:

Was not the preestablished predestination of a Leibniz mere child's play compared to this tightly orchestrated predestination in the desert? And didn't that poster furnish an image for things that no one in this mortal life has yet experienced? An image of the everyday in Utopia? (1999: 174).
A richly textured chain of material, this, stretching from the window display in front of
the 'miserable café' to the salt piled up in the cellar on Flottwell Street to the poster
called forth from 'irrevocable' memory to stand once again in Benjamin's mind ('I had it
once more'), its trail of pictured salt weaving words on an everyday Utopian desert
landscape. The last thing I want to indicate here is the indexical centrality of Benjamin's
perceptual system as he first spots the poster, then, four years later, retrieves it from the
vault of memory, and, even later, inserts it into Convolute G of *The Arcades Project*, and
also that every object he cites is linked to his mind, not only coterminous and contiguous
with his mind, but part of the thing, indeed, the thing itself.

*Once More, with Emphasis: The Perceptual System*

In his *Action in Perception*, Alva Noë cautiously approaches the conclusion that
we have also come to, namely, that brain, body, and environment ("world") are
intertwined all the way down:

A reasonable bet, at this point, is that *some* experience, or some features of some
experiences, are, as it were, exclusively neural in their causal basis, but that
full-blown, mature human experience is not. This is supported by such facts as
that, until now, neuroscientists have been able to produce only relatively primitive
experiences by direct stimulation of the cortex. More, important, it is just not
clear, given the virtual character of perceptual content, why an internal
representation would be any better than access to the world itself. (2004: 218-
219; italics, Noë).

This tippy-toe method, carefully fretted with numerous qualifications, gets bolder and
bolder as Noë gets closer and closer to his commonsensical deduction: why are pictures
accessed in the brain better than direct access to the world itself? No matter what
conception one has concerning the origin of life - whether of the religiously hued intelligent design variety or of the functional, utilitarian variety - it simply makes more biological sense that we are imbued with access to the world as well as access to our brain, the pathway between being the billions upon billions of our neuro-receptors. Noë brings in Wittgenstein before arriving at a simple yet startling conclusion:

This harkens back to Wittgenstein's idea that anything a picture in the head could do could be done by a picture held in the hand. We go a step further. Why do we need a picture at all? We are in the world. (2004: 219; italics, Noë).

As he reiterates this point in Out of Our Heads, published in 2009, Noë simply states that "It is a mistake to think that vision is a process in the brain whereby the brain builds up a representation of the world around us" (2010: 185). As early as 1966, J.J. Gibson was saying pretty much the same thing: "The traditional theory of visual perception based on a retinal picture or image of each object is profoundly misleading" (1966: 54). It is misleading partially because, even though the visual system "registers some kinds of information that no other system can, such as the pigment color of surfaces," it also "combines with all the others and overlaps with all of them in registering objective facts" (Gibson 1966: 54, 53).

Where does this idea of a mind, not only cut off from its own body but also cut off from the world, come from? Where is the mind that operates without a body? And where is the mind that operates outside of the world? These are obviously rhetorical questions, to a certain extent, as I have spent much of this study tracking down the sources of this mistaken notion. Body and mind do not exist as separate entities, despite whatever "appeal" the idea may have: "The idea that consciousness is distinguished from
physical being by being intrinsically directed toward or upon an object has so much
intuitive appeal that there has not been and will not likely be an end of thinkers who are
persuaded that there must simply be a way to avoid the idealistic and solus ipse
consequences" of such a line of thought (Deely 2007: 6-7). Reasonable as this sounds, it
seems to me that there is very little 'intuitive appeal' to the idea that consciousness is
essentially 'intrinsically directed.' Frankly, I don't get it. Intuition, in my opinion, runs in
exactly the opposite direction. And so does science:

There is no empirical or philosophical justification for the idea that the brain
alone is enough for consciousness…. There is something perverse about the idea
that we are our brains, that the world we experience is within us…. The idea that
we are our brains is not something that scientists have learned; it is rather a
preconception that scientists have brought with them from home to their
workbenches. It belongs not to well-established theory, nor even to that category
of proposition - such as "I exist" - whose truth can require no verification. It is

This prejudice in favor of the brain as the sole seat of consciousness "naturally" works
against the idea of the participation of the body in consciousness (and by extension, or,
perhaps, in its very essence, against women as carriers of the embodied through their
capacity for pregnancy, against those who engage in physical labor, and against the
pleasures of the body), leading to a misplaced epistemology, or, perhaps better, an
epistemology that completely lacks a place. Wendy Wheeler describes this tendency in
*The Whole Creature: Complexity, biosemiotics and the evolution of culture*: "Conceptual
knowledge is the product not of a disembodied mind, but, on the contrary … by an
embodied and enworlded, indwelling mind" (2006: 61).
We are "enworlded" not only because we are in constant contact with "our" environmental surroundings (our environments as indexically oriented around us, our umwelten), but also because our minds have evolved as if they are connected with the environment, which of course they most assuredly are; otherwise, one is dead. The former notion is supported by Gibson's construal of the haptic system in The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems; to the question, "How does a perceiver feel what he is touching instead of the cutaneous impressions and the bone postures as such?" (1966: 112; italics, Gibson), Gibson answers that:

In brief, the suggestion is that the joints yield geometrical information, that the skin yields contact information, and that in certain invariant combinations they yield information specifying the layout of external surfaces. At any one moment the orchestrated input from the joints … specifies a set of bone directions relative to the spine, to the head, and to the direction of gravity. The bones and the extremities are thus linked to the environment. At any one moment, the total input from the skin likewise specifies a pattern of contacts with touching surfaces, one of which is always the surface of support. The skin is thus also connected to the environment by this simultaneous pattern. (1966: 113; italics, mine).

This information from the joints, the bones, and the skin is "inputted" into the mind, thus connecting the mind directly to its environment, allowing us to traverse through and across gradients that are multifarious in texture as well as constantly shifting their shapes and forms as we move through the world. Neurons in the brain do not operate in a vacuum: they operate in the world:

This is the key to our puzzle. What governs the character of our experience - what make experience the kind of experience it is - is not the neural activity in our brains on its own; it is, rather, our ongoing dynamic relation to objects, a
relation that … clearly depends on our neural responsiveness to changes in our relations to things. (Noë 2009: 59).

And where are these "things" and "objects" Noë refers to? Of course they are in the environment around us! For where else could they be? This conception therefore implicates neural activity "happening" in the brain as happening in the environment as well.

In his *Action in Perception*, Noë claims that perception of *any* kind is absolutely dependent on bodily movement: “The world makes itself available to the perceiver through physical movement and interaction…. all perception is touch-like in this way: Perceptual experience acquires content thanks to our possession of bodily skills” (2004: 1). Noë goes on to make the case that perception, even of the visual kind, relies on “sensorimotor knowledge,” that is, the “practical grasp of the way sensory stimulation varies as the perceiver moves.” Our vision is coordinated with our movement: it is a self-adjusting mobile feedback system gauging distance, perspective, and other “visual” indicators as they are correlated to bodily awareness. Noë emphasizes that this dependence on the body is not limited to the visual – the haptic also relies on the corporeal: the specifically tactile quality, for instance, of a rectangle and “the layout of furniture in a room” are “made available thanks to the way in which your sensation co-vary or would co-vary with actual or possible movements. In perceiving the thing as rectangular, you understand, implicitly, that, for example, if you move your hands like so, you’ll encounter corners that stand in a certain relation to each other, and so forth. The same sort of point can be made about the tactile perception of the layout of furniture in the room. Your tactile impression that things are arranged thus and such consists not in the sensations in your hands and feet, but in the way those sensations result from attentive movement through the space. (Noë 2004: 14, 15; italics, Noë).
Noë reports on a “prosthetic visual system known as the tactile-vision substitution system” which first receives visual information gathered by a “head-mounted camera” and then activates “an array of vibrators on the thigh of a blind person;” these images, translated into bodily sensations, allow the blind to move with “the experience of objects arrayed in three-dimensional space. She [the blind subject] is able to make judgments about the number, relative size, and position of objects in the environment” (Noë 2004: 26). Noë doesn’t claim that this is a haptically-oriented system: “Crucially, it is not a mode of perception by touch…. For touch is a way of perceiving by bringing things up against you, into contact with your skin” (Noë 2004: 26, 27). But it is “seeing (or quasi-seeing) without the deployment of the parts of the body and brain normally dedicated to seeing, for example, the eyes and visual cortex…. Somatosensory neural activity realizes visual experiences” (Noë 2004: 27).

Noë also raises a question about whether there are discrete sensory cortexes, a question we have already covered but worth emphasizing again; in a footnote, he refers to the work of Alvaro Pascual-Leone who:

has advanced the theory of the metamodal brain. Pascual-Leone questions the very identification of sensory processing in one modality or another with patterns of activity in brain regions. There aren’t modality-specific regions of the brain. For example, normal touch has been shown to depend on neural activity in “visual” cortex [sic]. (2004: 248, f.n. 9).2

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So the entire sensory apparatus may not be composed of discrete units at all, but may be *essentially* intertwined, a system so utterly reliant on its parts it can only operate as a whole.

The logical step I want to make here is that mind, brain, and body do not constitute our whole being. There is no human being who exists outside of his or her environment. Just as there is no brain in a vat, there is no human being in a vat. We exist in environments: "the whole creature" is an environmental one, our evolutionary history only traceable as it is coordinated with and shaped by environmental influences, and our brains specifically constituted on an ongoing basis as an organ not apart from but in the world. In his conclusion to *Out of Our Heads*, Noë states that:

The last twenty-five years have witnessed the gradual shaping of an embodied, situated approach to mind. This approach had flourished in certain regions of cognitive science such as philosophy and robotics, but is has been all but ignored in neuroscience, in mainstream linguistics, and, more generally, in the domain of consciousness studies. If we are to understand consciousness - the fact that we think and feel and that a world shows up for us - we need to turn our backs on the orthodox assumption that consciousness is something that happens inside us, like digestion. *It is now clear, as it was not been before, that consciousness, like a work of improvisational music, is achieved in action, by us, thanks to our situation in and access to a world we know around us. We are in the world and of it.* (2009: 186; italics, mine).

Now, if this is so, that is, if consciousness is formed due to `our situation in and access to a world we know around us' (in other words, our respective umwelten), that means that our indexical geographies are constitutive components of our minds. That will be the subject of our next, and final section.
First, let me stipulate what I am not proposing. I am not claiming that a sort of objectified universal geography is part of the mind. In other words, we are not walking around with the world in our heads, the oceans and continents of the globe embedded within our skulls; as Bateson puts it: "Thought can be about pigs and coconuts; but there are no pigs and coconuts in the brain" (3). What I am claiming, rather, is that we have made a blunder by formulating the brain as a stand-alone entity, bereft of contact with both the affective mind and the outside world (our indexically coordinated geographies). It is nothing other than a supposition that brain, mind, and world are essentially separated, and this supposition is akin to that contingency we examined previously, that of place, space, and time. The formulation of these triads, each abstracted out from each other first linguistically and then as objects of research, has led to the conflation of the abstraction with the reality. The trinity of brain, mind, and world is a unified entity, each combination of the three oriented around our own biological and geographical indexicality. As Noë says, we are in and of the world, and there is no way around this ontological-existential state of affairs.

Neither am I claiming that there is some "neutral" subjectless subject that stands in as the universal object for our postulated "collective" mind. As we saw when we investigated Merleau-Ponty's work, such a "neutral" construction, if simply left blank, has a very strong tendency to be captured by whatever is taken to be the normative subject in whatever era and place in which our writer happens to be writing. Noë is right when he states that we are of and in the world, but he misfires by not stipulating that this world is differentiated along a thousand degrees of otherness, and that the multifarious subjects of

3 Find citation.
the world come to their worlds from a cornucopia of bio-geographical angles. John Protevi analyzes precisely this problem in his *Political Affect: Connecting the Social and the Somatic* as he reminds us that every subject is not only synchronously located but diachronically configured as well. What Protevi terms the "embodied-embedded school" (that is, such thinkers such Noë and Bennett) tends to ignore is that in order "to understand fully the complex interplay of 'brain, body, and environment,' … we have to understand the diachronic, not just the synchronic, social environment. That means we have to study populations of subjects and the way access to skills training and cultural resources is differentially regulated along political lines" (2009: 29). And, while I agree with this assessment (think of the differentiation, for instance, between the educational resources available for the children of Watts as compared to those available for the children of Malibu and the difference that differentiation makes to the lives of these children), these differentiations are still inserted and experienced by subjects using minds that are embodied, embedded, and enworlded. And, as we saw in chapter three of the present study, the verticality of history is a constituent part of our schema and needs to be factored into any portion of our analysis (or any other ontological-existential analysis, for that matter).

"The dispute about the actuality or non-actuality of thinking - thinking isolated from practice - is a purely scholastic question," states Marx in the second "Theses on Feuerbach" (1994: 99; italics, Marx). On the face of it, it may seem odd to haul Marx in at this conjuncture; yet, what he is claiming here matches, I think, the point I am attempting to make even if he is positing it from a different perspective: thinking does not exist outside of practice and practice is located in the world. And it is purely scholastic to
suppose otherwise, that is, it is academic folderol, a confusion between life and a realm of pure thought only available through the methods made available within the artificial constraints of laboratory conditions, quantifiable analysis, or the truth tables of logical propositions. The materialism of Marx also belongs in our analysis: "My relationship to my surroundings is my consciousness," states Marx parenthetically in *The German Ideology*, aligning him snugly with the vital materialism of Bennett and the philosophy of mind of Noë, albeit again coming from a totally different direction wherein class struggle trumps everything else (1994: 117; italics, mine).

"And when you want to try to understand why scientists do what they do, especially biologists, one of the things you have to allow for is that they are trying to deny the reality of mind in a world which has mind" (Bateson 1991: 162). Gregory Bateson may seem a bit intellectually flabby here: what does he mean when he posits `a world which has mind'? However, Bateson unravels this, albeit obliquely, when he tells us that "if you are going to understand things and build explanatory systems, especially mental explanatory systems," that is, of one wants to comprehend systematically the way in which the mind works, then "you will want to have within the system you're talking about pathways that are relevant to that system" (1991: 165). This seems eminently commonsensical: of course pathways relevant to any system must be incorporated into any holistic analysis of such a system. Bateson continues:

That is, if you want to account for the route followed by a blind man, you will need to include the blind man's stick as a part of the determinant of his locomotion. So, if a mind is a system of pathways along which transforms of difference can be transmitted, mind obviously does not stop with the skin. It is also all the pathways outside the skin relevant to the phenomenon that you want to account for. (1991: 165).
Again, the same conception, coming from yet another direction: the mind *obviously* does not stop with the skin. What he is claiming is that it is difference which "makes a difference;" in other words, differences trigger transformations in all sorts of ways: the difference in the direction of sunlight vis-à-vis the location of a plant causes heliotropic growth, the difference of hunger in an amoeba causes physical locomotion towards food. But how do such differences create "trains of effect," which, in turn, "become material of information, redundancy, pattern and so on" (Bateson 1980: 121)? In *Mind and Nature: A Necessary Unity*, Bateson tells us that:

First, we have to note that any object, event, or difference in the so-called "outside world" can become a source of information provided that it is incorporated into a circuit with an appropriate network of flexible material in which it can produce changes. In this sense, the solar eclipse, the print of the horse's hoof, the shape of the leaf, the eyespot on a peacock's feather - whatever it may be - can be incorporated into mind if it touches off such trains of consequence. (1980: 121-122).

Well, that's OK, as far as it goes. But as he continues, Bateson prompts more questions.

The difference itself does not *provide* the energy, it only *triggers* the expenditure of energy. We talk then about differences and *transforms of difference*. Obviously a neural impulse is a very different sort of thing from a difference in light or a difference in temperature…. When such differences are transformed in successive ways through the system, mind becomes a very complex network of pathways, some of them neural, some of them hormonal, some of them of other kinds, along which difference can be propagated and transformed. (Bateson 1991: 164-165; italics, Bateson).

What the heck does Bateson mean by 'transforms of difference' which are transmitted along systems of pathways? Well, it seems to mean that successions of differences in our
indexically oriented surroundings create differences in our minds as we move through
and between various environments: our minds reflect these differences as they are
engaged in a continual process of reconfiguration as we move through these differences.

The mind doesn't work as if it is divested of differences: it works through and in
these differences, differences in light, temperature, heat, form, shape, color, and so on:

Brains don't think. The idea that a brain could represent the world on its own
doesn't make any more sense than the idea that mere marks on paper could signify
all on their own (that is, independently of the larger social practice of reading and
writing). The world shows up for us thanks to our interaction with it. It is not
made in the brain or by the brain. It is there for us and we have access to it. (Noë
2009: 164).

And how is it that the world shows up for us? Is this just more intellectual fiddle-faddle,
more fanciful balderdash, is it not? No, actually, it is not. The world of the self, our
umwelten, as it were, is created in the nexus between our beings and the environment as
we encounter the environment. If the world does not show up, if we are subjected to
sensory deprivation of an extreme kind, the world will not show up: "Take the
mammalian visual system: If an infant were prevented from using his eyes … the lack of
stimulation would prevent the establishment of the rich arbor of neural
interconnectedness that is in fact necessary for mature vision" (Noë 2009: 94).

That idea that connection to the world is a constituent part of the mind is bolstered
by the philosopher and semiologist John Deely when he reverses Cartesian ideational
causality by stating that:

The of in the idea refers not to the mind as producing the idea but to that of which
the idea makes the mind aware in producing it. In other words, the of distinctive
of the idea as such refers not backward to the idea's productive source as my idea
or your idea, but outward to the objective term of an experience in principle suprasubjective and, insofar, accessible to others besides the one here and now forming the idea making that object present. (2005: 44; italics, Deely).

In effect, this is equivalent to Wittgenstein's claim that private languages do not exist:

"Here I should like to say: a wheel that can be turned though nothing else turns with it, is not part of the mechanism" (2001: 81, remark 271). The primary mistake Descartes made was imagining that the cogito exists by itself: the thought must have its object (a thought is always about something) and, in any final analysis, that object always leads back to the world. Every cogito must have its cogitatum; that is, “consciousness is always consciousness of something” (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 5). Merleau-Ponty is picking up from Husserl who, in his Paris Lectures, delivered in 1928, states that, despite Descartes being "France's greatest thinker" (he is speaking in Paris, after all):

Descartes commits this error, in the apparently insignificant yet fateful transformation of the ego to a substantia cogitans, to an independent human animus, which then becomes the point of departure for conclusions by means of the principle of causality. In short, this is the transformation which made Descartes the father of the rather absurd transcendental realism. We will keep aloof from all this if we remain true to radicalism in our self-examination and with it to the principle of pure intuition. We must regard nothing as veridical except the pure immediacy and givenness of the field of the ego cogito which the epoche has opened up to us. In other words, we must not make assertions about that which we do not ourselves see. In these matters Descartes was deficient. It so happens that he stands before the greatest of all discoveries – in a sense he has already made it – yet fails to see its true significance, that of transcendental subjectivity. (1964: 9).

Without adjudicating the relative merits of transcendental subjectivity versus transcendental realism, we can, I believe, agree with Husserl that every cogito must have its cogitatum. In other words, Descartes mislaid the cogitatum in his enthusiasm for the
**cogito:** it is not accurate to report that “I think, therefore I am,” for every thought is a thought about something, or a thought with an intention attached to it, as Husserl puts it. And so, returning to the citation from Deely, the idea doesn't have its matrix in the idea itself, for its matrix is, in Deely's phrase, ‘outward to the objective term of an experience in principle suprasubjective.’

By constituting ideas as that which the mind is directly aware of, Descartes, Locke, and those after them must posit *something else* on the basis of which the "idea-objects" are presented. What this "something else" would be - the mind itself precisely as acting, perhaps, as opposed to any results of such acting - they do not discuss in express detail. (Deely 1986: 16; italics, Deely).

The idea (or for that matter, the brain or the mind) cannot have as its locus itself because that would consist of a doubling back upon itself and therefore be redundant and thus, unnecessary. "Brains don't think," to repeat Noë's blunt decree.

"The relations of the subject to the objects of its surroundings, whatever the nature of these relations may be, play themselves out outside the subject, in the very place where we have to look for the perception marks. Perception signs are therefore always spatially bound…” (Uexküll 2010: 54). And if perception signs are ‘*always* spatially bound,’ does that then mean that perception per se is bound to its environment and bound to it in a necessary way? Well, where else could it be bound except to its environment? Exclusively to the mind itself? The mind and all its percepts rolled up in the brain? Yet how could this be? The mind as a plenum from its very inception, its perceptions always already intact, just waiting for the right moment for them to unravel and reveal themselves? No, that simply cannot be. Yet Uexküll's other notion articulated in this passage, i.e., that ‘the relations of the subject to the objects of its surroundings …
play themselves out *outside* the subject,' seems off somehow or simply wrong. Those relations do not play themselves out outside the subject, but are constituted *both inside and outside* the subject, as they exist simultaneously in the subject and in the subject's object of thought as well, i.e. its environs. One strong line, as in Bennett's and Benjamin's thingly conceptions.

"When we apprehend of some natural or cultural entity - a tree, say, or a flag - we are not aware directly of any mental state as such" (Deely 1986: 17). For how could we be aware of a 'mental state *as such*' without reference to something outside of the mind? Here we might like to bring in Wittgenstein from the *Philosophical Investigations*: "One would … like to say: existence cannot be attributed to an element, for if it did not exist, one could not name it and so one could say nothing at all of it" (2003: 21, remark 50; italics, Wittgenstein). This of course does not translate into the axiom that only things encountered "in reality" can exist and therefore only they can be named: e.g. what about unicorns? But unicorns *do* exist, insofar as we have imagined them, painted them, written about them, and so on. To continue with Deely's line of thought:

Rather, we are aware of a tree or a flag, something an idea most definitely is not. At the same time, it is clear that a tree we are looking at, in order to be present not merely in the physical environment but in our awareness as well, requires for this relative-to-an-observer existence some factor within the observer on the basis of which the tree presumably existing in nature *also* exists as terminus of awareness (as item in the Umwelt and intersection in a web of sign relations … ). This intraorganismic factor on the basis of which a given object, concrete or abstract, perceptual, real or unreal, exists for an individual as something of which that individual is aware… (1986: 17; italics, Deely).

As item in Umwelt *and* as intersection in a web of sign relations, the tree (or the flag, or what-have-you) exists then in a mutually constituted - constituted in the moment of
perception mutually by the object (the tree), the subject (the perceiver), and the world (the Umwelt) - biosemiotoic relationship. This triadic constitution is a unified action; one thing. It does not exist as three separate components joined together to form a percept in the human brain. It is absolutely one thing, and does not exist except as a conjoined entity suspended between object, subject, and Umwelt.

"It would be astonishing to learn that you are not your brain," states Alva Noë in *Out of Our Heads* (2009: 7; italics, Noë).

All the more so to be told that the brain is not the thing inside of you that makes you conscious because, in fact, there is no thing inside of you that makes you conscious…. To understand consciousness in humans and animals, we must look not inward, into the recesses of our insides; rather, we need to look at the ways in which each of us, as a whole animal, carries on the processes of living in and with and in response to the world around us. (Noë 2009: 7, italics, mine).

If the mind is part and parcel of the process of living, which it surely must be, and if, as Noë claims, the processes of living are carried on `in and with and in response to the world around us,' which they also surely must be, then that means that geography, as a stand-in for 'the world around us' and the mind are intertwined to the point of unification, or at least inextricability, which amounts to the same thing. Such a construal places geography at the epicenter of neuroscience, as the world around us, our indexically coordinated geographies, must be accounted for in any viable conception of the brain and/or the mind. And what this means is that geographers must start paying attention to the necessary interrelations between their discipline and neuroscience. For if they do not, they will miss the cognitive boat, just as they missed the environmental boat and the global studies boat. The discipline of history is not making this mistake: in November of
2011 the history department of UCLA hosted a colloquium on history and neuroscience at which cognitive psychologists and historians from Harvard and UCLA gathered to discuss a neuro-historical approach to both neuroscience and history; geographers should not be left once again in the academic dust, floundering while others take their rightful place. End of lecture.

Now I want to return to Protevi's admonition that those investigating the "new cognition" not simply ignore social and political effects and their influence on the development of the mind. If Marx is correct when he claims that "My relationship to my surroundings is my consciousness," then every aspect of one's surroundings must be incorporated into a study of what constitutes consciousness (1994: 117). An investigation of consciousness which leaves out such factors as access to shelter and food, the role of gender in society and its possible impact on intellectual development, racial variations in access to employment and educational opportunities, is an investigation which has not fully encompassed the variety of factors which are encountered by an embodied, embedded, and enworlded consciousness, i.e., a human being. Keeping that caveat in mind, it seems to me that a conception of cognition which melds brain, mind, and world is one in which a conception of a more optimistic politics can be formulated. For, once we have assumed that we are creatures whose minds are constitutively connected to our bodies as well as our respective environments, then a more responsible, progressive, and revolutionary politics becomes possible. Divorced from our bodies and the world, we can easily be manipulated into believing that we are discrete and distinct self-interested entities cut off from one another. Connected to our bodies and the world, we become
much more prone to perceive the world as a collectivized whole, our flesh one flesh, our ground one ground.
Legal Notice

Application for Publication – Case # YD058965

Petitioner Plaintiff Mohammed M. Lawal.

I, Mohhammed M. Lawal hereby declare and if called as a witness would and could competently testify to the following:

1. I am the partitioner in this action. Charmed T. Hardman is my spouse and respondent in this action.

2. I have not seen or heard from respondent 3 years. Despite a diligent search, I do not have any information of Respondent’s whereabouts. My search to find Respondent included: I do not know where any of Respondent’s family member live and/or who they are. I do not know and/or remember Respondent’s last known place of employment and/or Respondent was not working when we were together. On 2/14/11 and 3/24/11, the sheriff went to two of her last known addresses that I provided them in order to serve the respondent. But they were unable to serve the divorce papers because the respondent is no longer at that address. On 3/31/11, I sent two letters to the addresses that came up during my internet searches, but all the letters were returned to me by the post office as returned to sender. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the state of California that everything in this declaration is true and correct.

The summons and petition for dissolution was filed herein on 2/25/11

Mohammed M. Lawal

Cinema Four: *The Bourne Ultimatum*

Everything is given to Jason Bourne. Everything except his identity. When Bourne arrives in a city, any city, its schematics and logistics are already in his head: Tangier, Madrid, Moscow, London, New York or Paris, it makes no difference: all of it is given to Bourne. He has the city-grids and the transportation schedules embedded in his brain; languages are handy, ready-to-use, absolutely given: whether in Russia, France, Spain or Morocco, Bourne is fluent: languages are given. He can pick any lock, hot-wire any vehicle and then drive it like Mario Andretti on Benzedrine, out-think any adversary, and physically destroy any opponent. Plus, he’s a good-looking American from (of all places!) Nixon, Missouri (though of course that information has been set adrift in the lost and forlorn vastnesses of his eroded memory).

Only one thing is un-given: the givenness of his identity. Thus, his quest for his own history.

“What connects the dots?” asks Simon Ross, security correspondent of The Guardian to CIA station chief, Neil Daniels (Gilroy, Burns, and Nolfi: 2007).

Connecting the dots of the separate and distinct parts of the case of Jason Bourne constitute the unfolding of this film. The constellations formed from surveillance systems and computerized information fields constitute the intersecting four-dimensional planes (the fourth dimension being time in all its permutations) on which these systems and fields interact. The bloated given of overloaded information nexuses are wielded in efforts to pry apart Bourne’s whereabouts and identity.

“Something happened to me and I need to know what it is.”
“Behavior modification. They had to break down the agents before they become operational. You were the first one.” Bourne is “square one. The dirty little secret.” And yet he’s such a nice, clean-cut guy. Where’s “the give” in the givenness of that?!

“Kill the cameras. We have a situation.” The cameras must be liquidated, on account of a situation: what terrain for a sociologist!

“Listen to me: This isn’t some story in a newspaper. This is real.” What audacity to put that line in a movie! And then say it with the straightest of straight faces, as only the obsessively normative Matt Damon can.

“You have no idea what you’re into here.” Note the diction: ‘what you’re into here.’ Meaning you’re already immersed in it, this configuration, this immersion, thus submersion. And: You do not know the given of the given of that which has been given to you.

“Get me an elevation and a floor plan, Tic-Tac-Toe, give me the room.” Locating “subjects” on the givenness of the grid, using computers thousands of miles away: this is the New Brave World of the given world.

“The asset is deviating off course.”

“Let it play.”
The “asset” is a programmed assassin, faces appear on the screen of his cell phone and then he eliminates them. Hasn’t he already deviated off course, just a tad? Oh well, such is Hollywood and the big-budget block-buster of the action genre.

It all begins and ends in water. Highly symbolic, that. Holiest of trinities: the womb, the vagina, the sea. Spit, mucus, wine, sweat, semen and soda-pop. And don’t forget piss. Back at Square One, it was simulated drowning. Hood on his head, Bourne was forced into submersion. “Really give yourself to this program.” His girlfriend, Marie Kruetz, drowns in a river in India, womb of all countries. Bourne jumps into the East River, back into the waters of that which gives life and that which takes it as well. “You are no longer David Webb. You are Jason Bourne.” He floats under the water, suspended between life and death, the waters of the Holy Mother’s fluids and the salt waters of the ocean deeps, those drowning deeps. And then, life revivified, off he swims, light hovering above, arms sweeping through the water, breaking the givenness of those waters away.
Conclusion

While I think it is fair to say that we have covered a considerable amount of ground since we commenced this dissertation, it is just as fair to ask if we are any closer to capturing that elusive creature, the everyday. While it never will be possible to demonstrate that the everyday has been captured, it does seem to me that the everyday becomes at least much less elusive when geography is inserted into the equation. That is, instead of starting from a theoretical nowhere (which, in effect, is tantamount from a theoretical everywhere), if we actually place our investigation somewhere, our odds for success (howsoever defined) improve significantly. Once grounded in a place – the urban villages of China, Dreamland in Egypt, a Nigerian oil field, a subterranean mansion in London, a battlefield in Vietnam, or a coffee shop in West Los Angeles – the mystery of the everyday diminishes considerably.

I hope that the work done in this dissertation has at least equalized the field upon which we hunt the everyday, narrowing the everyday's chance for continual escape while broadening our chances to nab the thing. For it seems to me that if we take our tools and apply them, always remembering that they can only be implemented in free-form fashion in no necessary sequential order and with no structural prerequisite for the locus of their application, then they can be of invaluable assistance in formulating the workings of the everyday. What I would like to suggest is that bringing in geography might help many an elusive endeavor; however, that suggestion may be beyond the scope of our immediate concerns and will have to wait for its articulation until a later endeavor.
However, before hailing the efficacy of our tools and the triumph of our project, perhaps we should review our itinerary, that is, recall the route we have traversed in this study and thereby also renew our acquaintanceship with our set of instruments. We started with Goffman and the situation, a loose-limbed thing as "theorized" by Goffman, and a thing also restricted by its "Anglo-American" matrix. But Goffman's analysis of the minutia of the situation, his micro-sociology, should never be discounted: his powers of observation are sound and his terminology and conceptual frameworks, variable as they may be, are extremely useful in analyzing any and every situation, no matter what its location. Then we "nailed down" the situation by laminating it with time, space, and place while also arguing for a timespaceplace "thing" as a replacement for the scientifically antiquated notion of those discrete entities, time, space, and place. Next, we added the vertical element of history, as no present-day intersection of time-space-place exists without a diachronic axis running through it, deepening it with the residue of time. Typification came next, as it is one of the most basic ways by which we navigate through the straits of the everyday. Here we also began to expand out of our constrictive Anglo-American context, as we brought in the example of Vietnamese field commandeers to elucidate the concept of typification. Next was reproduction, the necessities pertaining to daily reconstitution, and again we moved our geographical coordinates wider as we brought in the housing situation as it is being played out in China, London, and Egypt. The horizon of spatial secretion was next in line, with Nigeria's oil assemblage taking center stage. Foucault's milieu was then compared and contrasted with Goffman's situation, and we concluded that Hacking's construal of a top-down Foucault being matched by a bottom-up Goffman is a bit simplistic, if not simply mistaken. The somatic
was brought in at that point, as no one has ever set foot in an everyday place or
maneuvered their way through an everyday situation without bringing their body along.
Finally, we conjoined body, mind, and environment, wondering if this schema of what
has been called the brain might be the proper mental-somatic-geographic method by
which to not only construe the mind but to approach the everyday as well.

And so we might envision using our tools in the following way. Taking up the
situation of Goffman and the milieu of Foucault, we make a sighting of that which
appears before us, fixing it as a case that can be calibrated through this mobile analytical
toolkit. We then remember that this is a situational milieu in which time-space-place are
operational as one indivisible whole, and that the case also has its own horizontal
spatiality as well as its own vertical historicity. Bring in typification as we parse the
particular from the general, and then haul in a reproductive analysis as we reckon how the
present case may be satisfying any requirements necessary for reproduction. Last, we add
in the body and things, pulling these elements into our analysis to form a holistic diagram
of the situation at hand. If this methodical sequence doesn't tell the whole story, we can
apply our tools in sets of alternative sequences until it does.

This dissertation is obviously a work of synthesis. I have ranged across various
fields, including philosophy, physics, political economics, sociology, anthropology,
history, neuroscience, and geography. However, it is produced under the aegis of the
geography department of UCLA. And so I would like to say something about geography
as a synthesizing discipline. Long troubled by a disciplinary identity crisis, geography has
had "trouble" deciding what its task is and what its role should be within academia
(Sullivan 2011: 151 ff.). To many scholars, both within and without the discipline, this
has seemed to be a source of great concern. I, however, regard it as geography's greatest strength in that such a lack of any definitive definition allows geography a wide scope upon which to ply its wares. If we assume a rather simple definition of geography, to wit: "The study of the surface of the Earth and all the life thereon," we can immediately discern that such a definition allows for and even calls for great "latitude," both in subject matter and methodology. We can, following such a definition, allow for such studies as the variables of beach erosion as well as the elusiveness of the everyday. And we can recruit works of scholarship from an expansive ambit, from Marx to Einstein and from Hesiod to Mauss. However, it may have appeared that during the course of this dissertation the net has been cast too wide, almost as if the net was intended to cover every ocean and every sea. But this dissertation was from its very inception intended to be comprehensive and, therefore, an almost circumpolar tossing of the net was required.

Now, a final note of vindication. Where we are must be included in any analysis. Just as there is no brain in a vat and no body in a vat, there is no analysis in a vat and no dissertation in a vat. Geography matters. Without it, there is no everyday. With it, the everyday appears.
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