

PEDAGOGIES OF NAVIGATION: AN ACCOUNT OF DIFFERENCE

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Abstract

The present thesis develops a pedagogy that responds to the finitude of the human, as approximated by its lived technological experiences. Prominent pedagogies that espouse rhizomic metaphysical conceptions are subjected to systematic doubt to determine whether they are consistent with these experiences. Then, these experiences are examined to discern the nature of sense-making from the lens of the individual, focusing heavily on the role of cognition. The author then furnishes an enactment of sense-making through the provision of a dialogue and commentary on both sense-making and the dialogue itself. It is found that the lived technological experience suggests a shift in pedagogical development away from metaphysical suppositions that divorce themselves from the lived technological experience and toward navigational considerations which, it is argued, more accurately reflect the lived technological experience. A pedagogy of navigation is then furnished that attempts to adequately reflect the lived technological experience.

Keywords: philosophy of education; pedagogy; rhetoric; difference; technology

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
 Chapter One: REVEAL	 1
Chapter Two: EXAMINE	18
Chapter Three: AMBLE	35
Chapter Four: LISTEN	48
References	64

REVEAL

To begin, the entirety of this work rests on a few assumptions that are necessary for the successful entertainment of the following dilations. The first of these assumptions is that death is an unpreferable state of affairs; that is, one would prefer to be alive rather than dead. This is not to be confused with a wish for immortality; it is rather an expression of the idea that one recognizes that the surety of their consciousness is biologically finite, but that one does not wish to die. There are extenuating circumstances wherein one may readily wish to die and to these circumstances I advance Camus's (1942/1955) position that both suicide and hope are attempts to escape from the lived experience of being human, which is centrally what I intend to develop a pedagogical theory around. Thus, suicide and any wishes to exit oneself are not considered in the following developments.

The second assumption is that all Being bears connection to every other discernible instance of Being. I borrow here the assumption that my "being-in-the-world...[is] also...the usurpation of spaces belonging to the other [being]" (Levinas, 1989, p.82) without the evaluative connotation of *usurpation* and decree of *belonging*. This is to say that I *do* affect all else in my very existence (or non-existence). However, this assumption relies on a shared geography that is not reflective of lived, subjective geographies that give usurpation meaning. Consider deafness: If one takes up space along the axis of volume, this usurpation has a widely differing effect on completely deaf and non-deaf individuals. Thus, the importance of *where* one is proximally located along axes of Being is demonstrated. To retain the infinitely interconnected nature of Being whilst addressing subjective geographical perception, I will take the rhizome as an adequate map of Being. The rhizome, not explicitly expressed as a map of Being by Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1986) in *A Thousand Plateaus*, will serve this purpose as it eschews a beginning

or end, necessitates that all is interconnected, and does not advance a theory of coherency. I do not intend here to suppose that the rhizomic map of Being is true, but rather that it is a useful representation for the type of interconnection I aim to expound upon.

A third and final foundational assumption pertains to the veracity of Heidegger's (1954/1993) "mystery." This is to say that in making itself (without prescribing any mystic "it" of Being) intelligible, Being engages in a concealing such that one can never have access to all of Being, one can never be another, and accordingly, one's being is limited (and these limitations may or may not move). While Heidegger makes this claim on other grounds, I employ the *mystery* in recognition of the biologicality of the lived human experience. While I may make attempts to approximate a being's (intertwined in Being with me) experience from a lens other than my biological own, I recognize the impossibility of *actually having* the experience of another being and thus verifying my approximation. Thus, it is resolved that I take up the following three assumptions: death is unpreferable; Being is infinitely interconnected; and I cannot be another being. I take that these three assumptions capture essential characteristics of the lived human experience if it is to be built around. From these three assumptions, all else shall follow.

In direct violation of my third assumption is the notion of *compassionate interconnected subjectivity* (as an elaboration of care/love), which has found favour in the works of Paulo Freire (1968/2018; 1997/2021) and bell hooks (2000), among countless other pedagogical scholars and more. It violates this assumption by presuming that one *could* share in another being's subjectivity. The case of interconnected compassionate subjectivity shall serve to demonstrate the ways in which noble idealism obfuscates the map of Being and in practical terms, enables systems of oppression. In Freire's (1968/2018; 1997/2021) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and

Pedagogy of the Heart and hooks' (2000) *All About Love*, we see a distinct focus on oneness, interconnection, and the centrality of loving-kindness as a way to approach the Being we share. However, we do not see the material constraints upon which loving-kindness rests. Nor do we see any method of verifiability proposed for ensuring my direction toward my oneness with the Other. I will develop the former criticism here and the latter in the third chapter.

For Deleuze and Guattari (1991/1994), the occupation of the philosopher is to create concepts with which to meaningfully map the becomings within Being. Without technological considerations, I shall demonstrate that Freire and hooks develop pedagogical concepts that do not accurately map Being, and furthermore serve to cloud it. I will term the pedagogies of Freire and hooks pedagogies of love; that is, pedagogies that direct the practitioner to love the whole Other, embrace interconnection with the Other, or in some form engage in a holism without considering materiality. The most serviceable practical output of pedagogies of love for my purposes is the tenet of pedagogies that directs the practitioner to “support the whole student,” which has come to mean aiming to support the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of a student (although many models include several other aspects).

Using the event of the COVID-19 pandemic, I seek to develop the ways in which pedagogies of love broke down and displayed their conceptual limitations. During the pandemic, teachers faced incredibly high levels of burnout and negative mental health outcomes (Pressley, 2021) and students experienced drastically lower learning outcomes (Azevedo et al., 2021). Importantly, this extends from a long history of teachers reporting burnout that has been documented in countless studies (Brunsting et al., 2014; Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2015; Mérida-López & Extremera, 2017; Pietarinen et al., 2013; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). While

burnout in these studies has been seen to develop from a variety of sources, a common throughline is the burden of many tasks and a feeling of unending responsibilities.

It is my position that the idealism in pedagogies of love, despite being noble, is perfectly compatible with teacher burnout and the facilitation of a system of oppression when placed into lives without adequate consideration of *difference*. Pedagogies of love do not adequately account for the materiality of individuals that constitutes the finitude of an individual and thus the very technological requirements of a human (that a human must sustain itself). I refer to the human as technological here in the sense that humans (if they prefer not to die) exist in an if/then structure, where the human (because it is finite) must ascertain specific entities for its ends so that it may continue existing. Although the proponents of pedagogies of love, such as Iris Murdoch (1964/1997) often acknowledge that seeing the Other as they are is impossible, without considering the technological basis that individuals come to the concept of love upon (their finitude), an accurate conceptual mapping cannot be completed. In order to create an accurate conceptual mapping for the individual's lived experience, the individual must be met on their own terms, which I take to be the three assumptions of lived experience. To consider the individual under these assumptions, we may be permitted to take up a biological conception of love.

In *Anatomy of Love*, Helen Fisher (2016) provides a significantly detailed biological anthropological framework for love, detailing the ways in which love operates as a neurological process under material constraints, such as space-time. To explicate this thought, loving consists of a set of (variable) actions, and that those actions are necessarily located within the real world. This is to say that it is impossible (in this view) to love someone whom I have no awareness of. It follows then that, if love operates under material constraints, there are barriers to love. If then,

love is the paradigmatic model of connecting to another, it then follows that my ability to access my ontological reality (Being) is fragmented by material constraints; I shall term these *onto-technological fragmentations*. I use this term to express a discernible *thing* across which two entities are separated. For example, in some meaningful way, when I engage with others in a Zoom meeting as opposed to in-person, my ability to *be* with the Other is changed. (The polarity [positiveness or negativeness] of this change will be considered in chapter three.) This means that access to love is mediated by our biological existence, social existence, and a plethora of other factors. This is not to say that there is a Platonic or even scientific idea of love that is to be pursued, but rather that *any* definition of love must necessarily be mediated by onto-technological fragmentations. Even if love is decided to be a given set of neurological processes, there will always be various onto-technological fragmentations that cause the set of neurological processes to be unreflective of one's reality (i.e., a given person may not exist within the material conditions to experience the given set of processes). So then, onto-technological fragmentations are those which obstruct actualization of what I perceive to be my ontological reality. The problem is then that all finite things obstruct the actualization of my ontological reality (Being), and thus all entities fragment and we are forced into the inescapable experience of difference. All of this is to say that, at bottom, we remain radically different insofar as we are technologically separate (i.e., finite). This is the problem that this work shall reckon with.

If as a result of difference we attempt to connect across Being through ideals (such as loving-kindness), scientific descriptions, or any other linguistic phenomenon, we miss out on exactly what it is to experience Being as a human. Yet, deeply experiential works such as Goethe's (1810/1970) *Theory of Colours* end up falling flat, as Wittgenstein (1977) clearly expressed in his rebuke that Goethe's theory hardly counts as a theory, being predictive of

nothing. My interpretation of this exchange is not that logical positivism is superior to phenomenological approaches, but rather that the exchange can be developed into the idea that human experience qua human experience is not useful to making sense of human experience because it cannot be accessed in linguistic terms that render it intelligible (even to ourselves).

Now, to take up Goethe's noble pursuit, we must discern exactly how the human experience might be communicated in any fashion, if it is at all possible. Thus, with serious consideration, we must dilate upon my first assumption. It does seem readily apparent that the human being does not prefer to die; Levinas (1961/1969) captures this beautifully in *Totality and Infinity* through the evocation of *the face* of the Other that demands not to be killed. As I encounter the Other, I inescapably find myself bound up with it due to its obstruction of my infinite expansion and mastery that my ego desires. Levinas (1961/1969) invokes *responsibility*, but I will take issue with this conception along the lines of utility rather than truth value. While I am infinitely bound up with the Other, there is simply no human experience that faithfully reflects the idea that I am infinitely bound up with the Other. As a human, I cannot possibly cognize the causal relations I have with all of Being, but of course this is not what is being asked. The intent of this rumination is to demonstrate the way in which responsibility (as an ethical orientation to the world) serves to betray the metaphysics of Being (by positing *this* orientation to an infinite world that resists orientation), constraining the human's ability to reveal Being by disorienting them on multiple axes (intent and direction, the latter of which will be discussed in chapter three). Responsibility to the Other places an unverifiable destination on the map of Being that, like all grand narratives, eliminates the need for the actual revealing of Being by substituting systematic doubt (which shall be discussed further on) for a non-empirical linguistic

phenomenon, trapping the human into an understanding of the world that does not mirror experience.

Let us revisit the face that demands not to be killed (Levinas, 1961/1969). While Levinas advances the position of ethics as first philosophy due to the responsibility inherent to this event, I will route differently along my criticism of responsibility in the human realm of cognition. I here use the work of Levinas as a foil against which to insert cognition which I believe must be inserted to faithfully assay the lived technological experience that seems to require cognitive action. The face's demand not to be killed may be taken as an ethical demand, but it necessarily rests on my technological ability to kill the Other. (Although there is perhaps an argument that I am *always* able to kill the Other through my infinite interconnectedness, I will take the position that this is unverifiable and has no bearing upon human states of affairs.) Without an appeal to the technology of my person (my technological ability to kill the Other), the Other's demand is nonsensical, "revealing" Being through a relation that does not actually exist. While there are infinite axes along which I am connected to the Other, there are definite ways in which I am not, which will prove instructive. If I am technologically unable to *kill* the Other, one might readily express that the Other could then demand not to be harmed. However many ways in which we alter the technological capacities of the hypothetical self encountering to the Other, an important point is obtained: The technology of my person (most easily accessible through a discernment of what I am not, which will be discussed further on) is the substance which ethics needs in order to proceed.

An additional important dimension of the encounter is the technology *of* the encounter. The encounter is mediated by the technology through which the human encounters; we will here acknowledge that signification occurs on no neutral ground. The demand not to be killed varies

quite significantly when spoken from the mouth of someone intent on killing, when unspoken from mouths of animals, or when expressed by artificial intelligence. Although Levinas argues for a pre-cognitive, pre-conscious encounter, I do not believe this experience is actually possible and/or cognizable and thus divorces itself too heavily from the lived technological experience (and thus is not suitable for building a set of human relations upon). Levinas (1961/1969) assumes a monotheism and goes as far as to say that to be human is to have fraternity implied (p. 214), but in a world experienced by humans that involves ethical challenges that extend far past human-to-human interactions, fraternity between humans of this manner does not seem tenable. In these kinds of cases, responsibility is quite clearly still present (as one is faced with their connection to the Other), but technological circumstance bears significantly on the very meaning of responsibility. This is to say that while I can recognize that all Other is somehow connected to myself, given technological circumstances are necessary to make an entity ethically relevant to myself as a human. Thus, where Levinas examines the face-to-face encounter and extracts the idea of ethics as first philosophy, I shall extract the idea of technology as first philosophy.

Technology as first philosophy refers to the idea that my experience as a human is bounded by the ways in which Other can affect me in a meaningful way through a given set of technological circumstances that are discernible within the cognitive capacity I have available to me. Cognition is here given a central role in view of its seemingly primary importance in my lived technological experience of sense-making. This view undoubtedly treats the Other as an object of calculation and control, but I will argue that this is the only way the Other can be cognized and that, furthermore, all romantic notions of love, care, justice, and so forth, are plagued by an ineradicable calculus that once embraced, brings a false but necessary coherence to the world. In *The Question Concerning Technology* (1953/1993), Heidegger rightly notes that

this mode of thinking is a way of revealing Being in a fashion that is technologically meaningful (i.e., engaging with Being as a store of resources for technological manipulation).

Heidegger rejects this mode of thinking as the only mode of thinking on two notable grounds, of which both I shall contend with. The first pertains to a description of poiesis, an understanding of technological revealing as a kind of harmonizing with Being, where Heidegger (1952/1993) provides the example of the traditional artisan. This later (understandable) turn in Heidegger's work to poetics (without adequate technological consideration) is regrettable (because it attempts to escape finitude, which by necessity it cannot accomplish), but it highlights a key limitation of his contention with technology as enframing. Heidegger (1952/1993) builds an idea of the artisan who can spend time building highly contextual relations to their craft, understanding its essence, and honouring that essence through craftsmanship. However, it is my position that this ideal artisanship is only tenable under a series of given technological circumstances that allow for the appropriate amounts of time, knowledge, understanding, etc. that are required to engage in poiesis. In all societies, the artisan can only deeply engage in their craft due to technological relations with the Other that ensure the artisan will have accessible food, safety, water, etc. Thus, the artisan's deep engagement is enframed already by the biological necessities of human life. This is not to say that there is some threshold that needs to be met, but rather that the biological necessities of human life are endless if we consider that safety simply does not end. Under constant threat of war, disease, infestation, etc. the human necessarily has technological interest in the world that remains primary insofar as the human, along my first assumption, prefers not to die.

A second rejection from Heidegger (1989/1999) arrives in *Contributions*, which regards enframing as a kind of abandonment of Being. Enframing is seen by Heidegger to destroy any

sense of sacredness in the world without being affected by the loss of said sacredness. As I have discussed, the sacred poietic dwelling that Heidegger provides requires enframing to function. I will argue that enframing is that which even gives us the ability to find something sacred, to love, or in any sense wax poetic. Recalling Fisher's (2016) *Anatomy of Love*, I must secure a given set of technological circumstances in order to love. I must be alive, have adequate cognitive capacity, engage in a series of technological rituals, and much more in order to experience a type of sacred coexistence with a significant other. This is in no way meant to disparage the beauty of love or any other sacred entity, but rather to map the concept onto experience in a cognizable manner. When a concept such as poiesis, responsibility, or interconnected compassionate subjectivity (love/care/loving-kindness) rests above me without technological description, a technology is nonetheless demanded, as I have demonstrated. For those that subscribe to the concept, they are given no mode of revealing (as enframing is denounced) with which they can even arrive at the proposed destination. Continued subscription to the concept then either traps the person within their space in Being or leaves them without any conceptual map if they choose to unsubscribe from the concept.

As mentioned earlier, Heidegger (1989/1999) also discusses enframing as the abandonment of Being. To this point, I am in agreement with the truth value of the statement, but the polarity assigned by Heidegger (that this is a negative phenomenon), shall be contended with. I argue for the abandonment of Being in a very specific manner, which is as follows: Being as a metaphysical conception is entirely important and useful, but humans should not (as they cannot) aspire to in some fashion directly align themselves with Being. Heidegger (1989/1999) swiftly turns away from the idea of not-beings, but it is to this very idea that I shall turn.

To engage the human experience once more, the human being at no point in experience has (or likely ever will) experience themselves as Being. Thus, the question must be asked: What is a human (or anything), if not a not-being? It is quite readily apparent that the human (or anything) exists as a not-being: a finite entity that thinks in finite terms (by having *this* brain, *that* brain, or *no* brain), acts in finite terms, and for all intents and purposes is characterized by its finitude. Given that Being is not perceptible by any means, there is simply no mode of revealing Being that verifiably aligns with Being itself. Thus, if the task of philosophy is to create concepts with which to meaningfully map the becomings within Being (Deleuze & Guattari, 1991/1994), we must eschew Being entirely in our mapping onto Being for all becomings within Being are necessarily (as experienced) not-beings. Then, in a universe of not-beings interacting with not-beings, there is no mode but enframing through which Being can be revealed for each not-being cannot in any meaningful sense recognize the (actual) infinity of a given “not-being.” This is to say that Being is not relevant (this shall be expanded further on) to the experience of a not-being (of which Being must necessarily be comprised) because Being can be in no ways experienced but technological relations are relevant because they are experienced and relevant to finite beings.

Before I revisit the classroom, I must dilate upon how one might actually *do* enframing. That is, one may have the biological imperatives to reveal Being through safety, the *way* of revealing Being through enframing, but I have not yet touched upon the action of revealing and what it might entail. In order to detail the enactment of revealing, I shall consult ancient texts that serve to guide well. I chose to seek texts from the period prior to roughly 245 A.D. (the beginning of neoplatonism) as a heuristic method of finding embodied philosophies that conduce

more readily to the *doing* of philosophy. To this end, I turn to Plato's dialogues and the Pali Canon for their focuses on doubt and no-self, respectively.

In Plato's *Meno* and *Theaetetus*, among other dialogues, we find a Socrates that facilitates the revealing of Being through doubt. Socrates, giving rise to the tradition of Socratic questioning, questions various characters throughout the dialogues in order for them to come to know what is more correct, good, or useful. It is this doubt that I will take to be the engine of revealing, that which *does* revealing. If a given human experiences themselves as not-being, as we have discussed, but understands themselves to be, albeit imperceptibly, Being, they have exactly one method of undoing themselves such that they may align themselves best with their experience of being a not-being that is in fact Being: doubt. While it remains impossible for the human to cognize what they are, they readily retain the ability to examine themselves at any moment and say, "I am not this." If we conceptualize the human as a not-being who is in fact Being, it becomes readily apparent that the human constantly exists in a state of not-being-onese (oneself here meaning the true nature of the human: Being). For a moment I will briefly remark that this conception was built in response to the Derridean im/possibility paradox, which I shall now present.

Derrida breaks from Kant's transcendental philosophy by binding the empirical with the conditions of experience rather than being born of them. This is demonstrated well in *The Animal that Therefore I am* (2002/2008), wherein Derrida recalls that if each singularity (a moment, for instance) also bears the property of repeatability (that the moment can be recalled), then each singular moment is both singular and non-singular simultaneously. This being laid forth as *différance* regularly by Derrida, there is no real way to distinguish oneself from an animal because the animal (or more broadly, the Other) always complicates one's existence in its

relationality to me (herein the influence of Levinas may be noted). Thus, for Derrida, an account must be provided for this paradox of im/possibility. In this case, the paradox presents in the fashion that the only way one can stake oneself as a human is to impossibly do so, for one's staking is always a moment too late, exposing a key limitation of Husserlian phenomenology. The conception of not-being-oneself allows for the human to stake that they *are too late*. The human thus exists as a state of false cognition, a state that betrays its very nature and allows it to be what it is not (a not-being).

Returning to the *doing* of revealing, I shall also mention the doctrine of no-self (anātman), as set forth in the Buddhist tradition (Saṃyutta Nikāya, 3: 66-8). Anātman refers to the idea that there is no underlying self that 'I' corresponds to. Given that no component of oneself is fixed, it is apparent that there is no self (Saṃyutta Nikāya, 3: 66-8). While I believe this doctrine is instructive, I shall depart from it in amending it such that the 'I' corresponds to a not-being-oneself (the not-being that is in fact Being). Thus, I will posit that the underlying self is Being, but is only accessible through reference to a given not-being. However, the actions that follow from the no-self doctrine shall remain largely the same. Although I have demonstrated that the human possesses the characteristic of not-being, the goal of the human shall be to give up this characteristic in order to most accurately reflect the reality of their lived experience. This is to say that the human experiences itself as a not-being who knows that it is Being, and thus to achieve self-actualization one must de-actualize their self as not-being. Thus, we may conclude that if doubt is the engine of revealing, anātman provides the direction of revealing, enframing is the mode of revealing, and biological imperatives the reason to reveal at all.

With this navigational structure of revealing constructed (although it shall be built upon), we may now examine the classroom. For the purposes of my exercises, I shall draw up the

classroom I intend to represent. The classroom I shall represent is a teacher education classroom in a reputable university in Canada wherein critical pedagogy is espoused. I've chosen teacher education because it bears the unique characteristic of being hyper-pedagogical—that the pedagogical teaching is about pedagogical teaching. Critical pedagogy was chosen as it is the most prominent pedagogical account of difference, although the category is of course overbroad. The classroom usually functions in a physical room, but the pandemic has moved it to Zoom, the undergraduate students are diverse across all identity markers, and the professor has many years of experience. These characteristics are chosen to represent the importance of technology, difference, and capacity, respectively.

In this hypothetical classroom we may readily imagine that pre-service teachers are instructed in the ways of various frameworks within critical pedagogy. The two that I shall take aim at here are *culturally responsive teaching* and *Universal Design for Learning (UDL)* as expressed in Geneva Gay's (2018) *Culturally Responsive Teaching* and Rose & Meyer's (2002) *Teaching every student in the digital age: Universal design for learning*, respectively. I would like to state beforehand that these frameworks fall into the broader category I have been opposed to, being *pedagogies of love*. These frameworks shall be considered as pedagogies of love due to the fact that they both place non-empirical linguistic phenomena (*culture* and *ability*) as objects to which one responds in much the same way that pedagogies of love do with interconnected compassionate subjectivity.

The basis of culturally responsive pedagogy is that “teaching is most effective when ecological factors, such as prior experiences, community settings, cultural backgrounds, and ethnic identities of teachers and students, are included in its implementation” (Gay, 2018, p. 28). As its name implies, it aims to respond to culture. However, as has been discussed, if no

component of oneself is fixed (Saṃyutta Nikāya, 3: 66-8), it seems almost nonsensical to propose that one could respond to something that is itself elusive. Daniel Yon (2000) explores the idea of culture as elusive, drawing examples from mixed cultures, imagined cultures, and more. The fluidity of culture seems to evince the impossibility of response. The very same problem arises in UDL. Instruction is meant to be designed around the abilities of all learners (Rose & Meyer, 2002), but the abilities of all learners are not at all static or even cognizable. The very idea that the institution *could* represent the culture or ability of the individuals is a result of social contract theory, which I shall now briefly take issue with by way of Derridean deconstruction.

Rousseau's (1755/1984) social contract has been a cornerstone of Western society, proposing that one gives up various freedoms to receive various benefits from society. The assumption here is that the institutions *can* and/or *should* represent the constituents. To deconstruct representation, we need only to consider a request for an accommodation (perhaps a student would like to have a test rescheduled for religious reasons). The decision made in regard to this request marks a clear violence in that the case can 1) not have a rule applied, 2) have a nonsensical rule applied, or 3) have a rule applied to it, which ignores the singularity of the request. In this way, representation has been demonstrated as only possible as impossible. Then, representation is only ever promised but never given, thus enacting a violence every time the concept of representation must be applied to any given request. The concept of representation can then be seen as a weapon of power wielded against the underrepresented as it constantly brings individuals along a navigational path across Being that guarantees that one will never Be. In an era of globalization, the institution's inability to represent increasingly diverse interests displays the conceptual bankruptcy that social contract theory leaves us with.

Even just considering for a moment whether you believe the closest individual to you could represent you perfectly, let alone an institution, displays the radical isolation that is part of the human experience (assumption three). However, we may grant that the institution needs only to *try*. I would argue that if this is the case, there is simply no reason to try *that way*, and that the institution ought to try by infusing doubt into its pedagogy (examples of this to be furnished further on) such that learners never have to be faced with illusions but can rather be opened to reality.

The technology *of* the classroom is also of import; we had noted that the classroom is now on Zoom. Completing an actual navigation (whether physical or virtual) serves as a generative grounds on which to enact pedagogies of navigation (a term for the aforementioned doubt-infused pedagogy). I will note here that *navigation* conjures up the language of hermeneutics, but the term is not used with any view to that register; the term will be developed independently of the hermeneutic undertones. As the individual travels from a physical space to a virtual space, they are faced immediately with apparent difference. They can then choose to impose their conception of self onto the navigation and their new space or choose otherwise. They may choose to simply attempt to translate their practice from one medium to the next, or they can (in alignment with a pedagogy of navigation) take the opportunity to doubt themselves in the face of difference, paying close attention to their technological circumstances and conducting technological analyses. This would materialize in examining the specific technological functions of Zoom such as the mute button, the camera panels, the chat box, etc. (all *onto-technological fragmentations*) and discerning what the affordances and limitations are for the facilitation of undoing oneself. In so doing, the individual is faced with a serious problem.

While the individual is equipped with a mode of revealing, they have no method of discerning what the revealed axes of Being even mean. It is of course readily apparent that we exist in connection to the Other along Being, mediated by onto-technological fragmentations, but the meaning of this *type* of connection (through a chat box, with the existence of a mute button, etc.) is not readily apparent, which shall be the subject of the following chapter.

EXAMINE

Returning to the pedagogy of navigation we are constructing, wherein doubt is the engine of revealing, anātman provides the direction of revealing, enframing is the mode of revealing, and biological imperatives the reason to reveal at all, we have not yet advanced a method by which we might make sense of that which is revealed. It is this task that will be the subject of this chapter.

In the virtual classroom, varying connections abound; we find ourselves connected to one another along dimensions of visibility and audibility in modes that feel in some senses similar and in some senses different to other encounters of visual and/or auditory nature. Of course, we also find ourselves connected along other less readily apparent dimensions of connection in one psychological (although not necessarily so) manner or another such as love, conflict, etc. However, I will take these to be secondary to visibility and audibility given that connection to another in the foregoing ways (or any way) requires sense-perception whereas sense-perception does not require the aforementioned. When perceiving the Zoom room through the lens of enframing, one is spoiled for tools with which one can manipulate “standing-reserve,” as enframing demands (Heidegger, 1953/1993). The online classroom itself allows for the efficient packing of students as if they were objects, the recording of students as if they were suspects, and the polling of students as if they were resources, for instance. The aspect of these manipulations that essentializes them as striking is the expression of students as-if-they-were; it is readily apparent that students are not and should not be treated as objects, suspects, or resources. Yet, in every act I find myself inescapably bound to identify the Other as something that they are not (some object), insofar as my cognition associated with a given act requires objects. Despite this, there does seem to be a distinction made that allows for the identification of

varying degrees of objectification that occur within a given usage of a tool. For instance, when I encounter the chatbox I may spam hate speech into it, thus reducing others into narrow objects, or I may ask open-ended pleasant questions which still requires a certain audacity (to forcefully enter text into others' visual space), but appears to hold a significantly lower degree of objectification (which is not to say that lower objectification is necessarily good—we readily recognize that we enjoy laws that objectify ourselves as things which can be murdered). I will argue that central to this distinction is the accuracy of object formation in a given tool's usage in resembling the lived technological experience of not-beings. This argument is premised on the idea that a tool has various capacities for object formation (the subject of this chapter) and that one ought to actualize the usage of tools in a way that resembles lived technological experience (the subject of chapter three). To discern how we might build a method through which we can ascertain a given function's capacities for object formation (and thus make sense of them insofar as they are useful in some cognizable manner), I shall consult the work of Michel Foucault.

In Foucault's (1975/1977) *Discipline and Punish*, a case is laid out which treats of the processes by which institutions enact various processes to form the subject such that it conforms with a given standard. Across various educational technologies the presence of increasing surveillance, normalization, and standardization has been documented (see Beck & Campos, 2020; Manolev et al., 2019), but it is not along this line that the relevance of Foucault's work is most important here. Foucault (1975/1977) advances the position that progression in psychiatry was one of the many shifts that enabled the criminal justice system to focus criminality into individuals rather than actions. This along with other advancements serve to create an array of processes that constrain the subject in unique ways and begins to appear as if it were rather object formation. Foucault (1976/1978) must then avoid the charge of determinism and does so

by articulating the idea of resistance clearly in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, where he develops the notion of a ‘microphysics’ of power, where points of resistance abound. It is here where the problem begins, in that the microphysics of power simply does not end; a microphysics of power is plagued by the same problems that haunt Being. If one tries to map Power from a removed perspective as Foucault does, we find that a) the map must always be unfinished and b) the human, whom we are most intimately concerned with, is lost.

If we follow Foucault’s (1975/1977) pursuit albeit from the human’s perspective (i.e., the lived technological experience), the charge of determinism no longer must be refuted, but rather leaned into. In order to act, it is a requirement that I think deterministically (despite it being clear that my action is contingent on an infinity of other things acting upon me); I can only do that which I believe will actually happen. For instance, setting upon speaking requires the belief that I actually will speak. I may of course misspeak due to technological contingencies or be forced to speak by an external force, but both of these situations require a technological relation that posits that one *could* speak. (I will here dismiss the attempt to do something impossible as somehow refuting this point; I take the attempt to do the impossible not as a belief that the impossible will happen, but rather that an attempt to do the impossible will happen.) To explicate, let us consider the Humean Theory of Motivation (Smith, 1987). In this view, it is argued that desire is a requirement for motivation and thus one’s desire must be served by the thing one does if there is a reason for it. It follows, then, that one must believe that a given thing serves a given desire for a given reason. However, I will argue that this belief is always untrue. To this end, I will borrow from the applications of error theory to moral philosophy.

In the realm of moral philosophy, error theory (of the kind espoused by G. E. M. Anscombe) is that which posits that moral statements can be assessed for truth but do not

actually have truth value (this is not to be confused with being false) (Anscombe, 1958). While Anscombe is focused on moral assertions, I will maintain that error theory is applicable to any conceptual assertion. Given our second assumption (that all Being is infinitely interconnected), it is readily apparent that no concept is defined well enough to establish it as ontologically consistent with the way Being is. For instance, if I assert that a zebra is white, there is simply no way to grant this assertion truth value because the ontological status of the referent is not *as* white but *as* white, black, and also everything else that exists. To this end, the assertion that the zebra is everything is the only ontologically true statement, but of course quite useless. The zebra being white is also quite useless (although less so) because we would readily assert that a zebra is white and black to give an understandable picture of its colouration, which renders it as true insofar as it is accepted by others broadly (Rorty, 1991). The upshot of this diversion is that one makes assertions on the basis of utility rather than truth (coherence with Being i.e., the way the world is).

Now, to introduce the concept of utility is also to introduce its largest and most obstructive challenge, which is defining utility (Moore, 1903/1988). Within theories focused on utility such as utilitarianism, utility must serve as the direction for subjects to strive toward. Additionally, it only coheres when there is a shared definition of utility, which proves nearly impossible. However, within a pedagogy of navigation, we have provided the direction through anātman, which directs us away from the self. In appealing to the human's ontological status as a not-being (who is in fact Being), we are able to find a common direction for all not-beings that guide them towards ontological coherency and thus self-actualization. If we then define utility through anātman (i.e., utility as distance from self), we hit upon a way by which we might open

up a set of the capacities of a tool for object formation, but we have not yet described how the specific capacities might be ascertained.

To move back up the argument to Foucault (1976/1978) and his microphysics of power, if we apply the error-theoretic model of decision-making we have discussed from a lived technological perspective, it becomes clear that a person must form the Other as an object in order to attain utility (or to act at all). In making this consideration, we can then shift the focus away from a microphysics of power and toward the ways in which an individual comes to form an object, which Foucault (1975/1977) discusses when he treats of changes in rationalities based on technological advancements. However, it will be dangerous to posit a special status for technology; while it does affect rationality, it does not itself evolve in a silo; technology is likewise affected by rationality and is no less infinitely interconnected to Being than any other not-being.

Yet, as we have discussed, when a human goes to act, all must become technology for there is no way to cognize subjectivity (i.e., a consciousness other than one's own). Then, we may examine the technologies of the virtual classroom using a Foucauldian lens from a different perspective (that of the human). Within the Zoom room, we can take the camera panel. The camera panel as a technology enables many ways of forming students as objects. The camera can enable the forming of students as-if-they-were potential cheaters, students as-if-they-were expressive individuals, students as-if-they-were in a certain setting (through virtual backgrounds), and more. Keeping our error-theoretic view in mind, it is clear that students are all of these things and each of them is complicated by all other things, but nonetheless the student must be pinned down in order to act. So, the question remains, how can one ascertain the as-if-

they-weres that one's three-point connection between self, technology, and other (the latter two of which collapse into one) contains?

If, as Foucault (1975/1977) maintains, the panopticon requires a certain kind of rationality in order to use it (and thus, also a desire that is not actually achieved, in accordance with our Humean error-theoretic model), it follows that one requires a certain desire in order to use a certain technology in a certain way. To this end, the desire that Foucault (1975/1977) identifies is that of control, which can be further understood as a biological desire for safety and security, wrongheaded as the actions may be; the panopticon is useful insofar as it allows for more effective control of a given subset of people. Insofar as the desire is identified, the as-if-they-weres of a given technology are ascertainable insofar as they are imagined to achieve the desire, through the construct of rationality. This lens through which technologies can be analysed does not finally say much about the technology but rather the individual apprehending it. What the lens does display, however, is the fundamentality of desire. Desire (which I will take to be a psychological phenomenon), denoting a state of mind that disposes one to attempt to achieve a given thing (Smith, 1987), may serve as an entry-point to the ascertaining of as-if-they-weres laden in a given technology.

If desire is connected to the attempt to achieve the fulfilment of a given desire, then having a desire when one encounters a technology opens up the as-if-they-weres of the technology that are imagined to achieve that desire, and the extent to which these capacities are opened up is contingent upon an individual's literacy of the technology (their cognitive capacities as they relate to the use of the given technology). However, it is far too singularizing to rest a pedagogy on cognitive ability as this enables and further perpetuates ableism for obvious reasons. Thus, we might readily be granted that the examination of a given technology

requires only the desire (which I have taken to be primary to life, although I would readily grant this to non-living entities as well; this is developed further on) but not the literacy with which to fulfill that desire to some extent or another. The approach, then, to examination of a given technology in order to discern its capacities is found in the desire and augmented by the literacy.

To address desire, I am wont to turn to Deleuze and Guattari's (1972/1983) "desiring-production" for various reasons. In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari posit desiring-production as a kind of vital force to the world that has no subject who is doing the desiring, which resonates well with the idea that desire is primary to a not-being (who is in fact Being and thus not truly a subject but rather a set of desires in the Deleuzeguattarian fashion). Moving desire out of the psychological register and into the metaphysical register also allows for a kind of panpsychism (Protevi, 2011) that at the very least allows us to inquire as to how the technology examines the human. We have so far treated of the desires of the human and how they open up the capacities of object formation that a given technology holds, but in shifting to a metaphysical register we can now ask how the two parties' (human and technology) desires collide to open up the capacities of object formation. Deleuze and Guattari (1972/1983) detail that desiring-production consists of three syntheses: connective, disjunctive, and conjunctive. By assigning this desiring-production a metaphysical role, we are given a panpsychism that proves quite helpful in examining many of the subjects of ethical issues that face the world today such as animal/environmental rights and artificial intelligence issues. In both areas, there is a supposed technology (a cow or a computer) that humans have meant to manipulate but are faced with ethical dilemmas when the technology can be more readily understood as an entity through which desiring-production is apparent. For instance, the idea that animals desire to care and be cared for (Monsó et al., 2018) raises significant ethical issues as pertains to the treatment of

animals as does the existence of a technology that possesses an ethical code (and thus desires that are at least nominally ethical) (Pereira & Saptawijaya, 2016). As these cases display, the Deleuzeguattarian panpsychic desiring-production is most apparent when we as humans start to perceive the connective, disjunctive, and conjunctive syntheses occurring in these supposed technologies, whether through advances in understanding animal cognition or advances in the complexities of computer science. As Deleuze (1969/1990) takes up the development of the child it is quite clear to see how these syntheses are also present in the development of a machine that employs machine learning. For instance, Google's virtual keyboard, the Gboard, engages in connecting words that are often used together (suggesting "morning" after you type "good"), conjoins words that are spelled out (suggesting 'LOL' in place of 'laugh out loud'), and engages in disjunctive syntheses by apprehending the meaning of the space bar in separating words. While one might conjure up ethical issues with the treatment of a Gboard, the aesthetics of a keyboard generally tend to facilitate a lack of ethical intimacy with it (given that it is difficult to imagine a keyboard as an object deserving of a certain moral treatment), but a glance at encounters with Google Assistant (or Siri/Alexa/Bixby) tells a different story. While there is no definitive literature on the matter, I believe it goes uncontested that nearly every person that has had sustained interaction with a virtual assistant has had a moment of ethical intimacy (asking Google if it is happy, telling Siri that you find her annoying, etc.). Whether the cow or the computer is an object of ethical consideration is subject to debate, but it is clear that desiring-production as a metaphysical phenomenon coheres with the functions of any entity, regardless of whether it articulates it in a manner that the human understands. To make the case for less animate entities, I would argue that a hammer, for instance, articulates the same three syntheses

in its having been connected between head and handle, conjoined to an appropriate size for hammering, and disjointed from that which is not-hammer.

As I have previously proposed regarding assertions and utility, it is not whether desiring-production is true (actually the way the world is), but rather that it provides the utility of having more clearly drawn the lived technological experience, explaining the ways in which the face of the Other (and not just the human other), impacts me as a human and is in some sense bound with me. However, despite having a clearer metaphysical understanding of the flows of desires, the virtual classroom becomes even more puzzling. When one enters the virtual classroom they are now struck by the desires of the camera, the microphone, the chat box, the intersections of all their desires, and the further intersections of students with these technologies; this metaphysical mess must be avoided if we are to attempt to design a pedagogy that reflects a rather un-messy lived experience that understands the underlying mess of it all (i.e. a not-being who is in fact Being).

In response to this metaphysical mess, we might be keen to turn to “attention,” as Iris Murdoch (1969/1997) does. In this view, one grasps an object of examination by focusing one’s attention on it and, in a Deleuzeguattarian sense, its flows. While Murdoch’s (1964/1997) metaphysical conception of our mental activities of attention building a fabric of moral Being (and to extend the argument, Being more generally) is instructive, the view that attention can grasp an object does not readily cohere. I say this because *that* we pay attention to this thing or the next does actually present itself in lived technological experience, and thus the attention that I pay to one thing or the next does in fact form Being in some such way that is different from if I had paid attention to another thing. However, as has been discussed, when I seek to pay attention to a given phenomenon, I can (rightly) never quite grasp it as it actually is. For instance, in the

virtual classroom when I seek to pay attention to a given student, I can try my level best to cognize the student as they are, but I am constantly reminded of my failure. Perhaps the student begins speaking (and I cognize them in a given manner based on my literacy), then the student begins to lag (at which point my cognition is demanded once more to regasp the student), at which point the student stops lagging but turns on their camera to reveal that they are on top of a mountain (which places such great cognitive demand on me that I come to realize my concepts are of no use). In this scenario, the technological functions of videoconferencing shove the limitations of my conceptions into my face (through lag, through the camera panel, etc.) in a way that emphatically demands a re-examination of the object produced by the intersection of flows in the classroom, and attention will not save me.

So then, how do we pluck the human from the metaphysical mess they have found themselves in? Demanding objects for the unending cognition that plagues the human, it appears the human creates objects in the mind that the human knows are untrue (by virtue of knowing one's infinite relation to the Other) and must find an answer to this existential despair. Another answer to this question has been found in fictionalism, whereby claims are taken to be false but still useful (Nolan et al., 2006). However, given that the human we have described seeks to de-actualize their self as not-being (which is a fiction in view of Being), doubling down on the fiction of one's existence does not eradicate the infinity that one is faced with, and thus appears quite unsuitable to the human enterprise. What does seem suitable, however, is to run.

With fiction unsuitable and truth unobtainable, it is now that I will take a Rortian (but more generally, neo-pragmatist) run away from the issue at hand, invoking the idea that perhaps truth is not what we should be concerned with (Rorty, 1982). Upon encountering the Other and being faced with the infinite interconnection one is bound up in, a metaphysical picture becomes

clear (that which is reflected by our second assumption). Yet, in attempting to discover how we might go about picking any one object out of the mess of connection, it slips through our hands. We enter the virtual classroom and see our students, but they shift about as their cameras turn on and off, sorting and resorting the gallery view; they lag and freeze up; they use a feature of Zoom we did not even know existed, and we are struck by our inability to nail even one thing down (which we desire in order to make sense of the world) in such a dynamic space. To be sure, the same is true on massively larger scales. When the night sky is at its clearest and the stars come into view, we see them but can never really grasp that they just aren't there, that they have continued their path and are somewhere altogether different. Nonetheless, these situations do not elide understanding; we readily understand motion, infinity, and subjectivity; it is just that we cannot cognize their consequences, try as we might.

Then, when we demand coherence between the metaphysical concepts with which we mentally build the world and our cognition we find that, in the way of Richard Rorty (1979), the world is not mirrored in our thoughts. The implications of this idea for the project of pedagogy are quite relieving in what has become quite a dense metaphysical fog. What Rorty (1995) suggests is a turn to evaluation not on the basis of truth but rather on the utility pertaining to progress. In so doing we might be urged to ask of a given technology how it can be leveraged to achieve goals, how it might be used as a site of innovation, or how it can address systemic problems in broad societal goal structures. Yet here we find ourselves out of the frying pan and into the fire! Despite the easy answers of neo-pragmatism, we find them contained in no specific array (which is exactly their point), which is to say that the bases upon which we might make evaluations under neo-pragmatism do not share a set of rules in the same way epistemological evaluations do. So, while we are freed from the shackles of epistemology, we are launched into

an infinitely paralytic world of insecurity. How, then, do we achieve security (which is directly tied up with our first assumption) in a world loose of epistemological chains?

While Hannah Arendt (1958/1993) discusses humans, I believe her treatment of unpredictability and promise is instructive with regards to Being more generally and even bears on the panpsychism I have presented. Arendt makes note of a “twofold nature” (p. 244) of unpredictability: one side being “the darkness of the human heart”, that is, the basic unreliability of men who never can guarantee today who they will be tomorrow” (p. 244), and the other being “the impossibility of foretelling the consequences of an act within a community of equals where everybody has the same capacity to act” (p. 244). I would reckon that the same darkness applies to all entities and that the community need not be of equals nor even be a community as we often make promises to entities with significantly different capacities to act (to animals, for instance) or even to ourselves (Allen, 2013). Arendt (1958/1993, p. 244) then immediately cashes out unpredictability as a price paid for freedom and plurality that brings about a certain kind of joy. Let us keep this transaction in mind for what follows. Then, Arendt offers the promise (or contract, agreement, etc.) as a way of clawing back against the darkness, a way of creating “certain islands of predictability and...certain guideposts of reliability” (p. 244). Using the transactional vocabulary of Arendt in this passage (although in an entirely non-Arendtian fashion), we can recognize that if one pays for freedom with unpredictability, a promise is akin to a partial refund. Thus, in order to achieve security in a world loose of epistemological chains, the promise seems promising.

Then in order to make sense of the world I can appeal to the creation of contractual agreements with entities of various kinds. To return to our earlier analyses, attempting to find coherence between thought and reality was a kind of adherence to an epistemological contract,

which I freely broke (as it did not seem fit), and was then launched into a much more free Rortian world (which unpredictability was the price of), and now may seek the contract that fits and saves me from the infinity of choices present. Importantly, the neo-pragmatic view allows me the option of taking up messy objects (such as the community, an idea, etc.) that we make clean (though inaccurate) for cognition as the proper party of a contract. If, as we are doing, we are seeking to build a pedagogy out of the lived technological experience, this contract cannot be an agreement with any properly true entity, but rather with the perceived entity. In this way, desires turn into production as humans (and non-humans) work together to take back what they have given, return the time that plurality affords them, and achieve material pleasures. (In a religious register, this might translate to repenting [i.e., adhering to religious contract] in view of Original Sin.) After all, in line with our first assumption, I do not prefer to die (that which time brings me toward) and so locking out pockets of time through contractual agreements such as home ownership (Guenther, 2018) seems prudent in view of our own annihilation. Although of course, as Guenther (2018) rightly points out, we are not *actually* locking out pockets of time, but rather shifting our fears of death to what seem like more acceptable targets. In rebuttal, as we have discussed, the human as experienced does not concern themselves with what is *actually* happening, and for good reason. Attempts at discerning the *actual* have remained incomplete and unsatisfactory, and while the human is *really* present and *really* dying, the actual seems wildly imprudent as an object of subscription.

To further bolster our analysis of Arendt which provided us with the promise as a suitable option, I will go further to posit that the promise naturally follows from the human condition through the work of Robert Nozick (1974). In *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, Nozick examines a hypothetical concerning humans in the state of nature. Working with the side-constraint of

humans not wanting to be harmed (which can be extended from our first assumption), Nozick posits that what fundamentally emerges is a (paid) protection service, wherein a person offers to safeguard an individual from harm that would befall them. Given that every person cannot afford to have their own protection service, a given protection service would have to have multiple clients. This then sets off a plethora of issues regarding enforcement (of different clients' rules), inter-protection service conflicts, and more, which all serve to demonstrate the natural monopoly of power that emerges in a given area. How far this process goes (i.e., how much contractual agreement one engages in further) is up for debate, but it does exhibit a very basic response that a certain degree of uncertainty elicits in humans.

There certainly have been other theorizations, most notably of John Rawls, whose position I will dismiss here. Rawls' (2001) *original position* does the lived technological experience a disservice in its reliance on 1) the veil of ignorance and 2) the maximin principle. The veil of ignorance is the unequivocal erasure of difference, which marks the human experience so vividly and inescapably that to use this thought experiment for any meaningful approach would be to design a society for the idea of a person (although even this I would not concede) rather than people. While Rawls explicitly states that a rational agent would act upon the maximin principle, the principle is quite off-base in terms of how nearly every society is set up. Rather than having social goods distributed such that the worst-off has the best situation, we rather find poverty lines, basic rights, cut-offs, etc. that seem to imply that humans rather believe in a certain threshold being met and then the picture becomes less clear. This is readily apparent in that while I share the same appreciation for water as another human, we both do not share the same value of money, power, fame, certain goods, etc. as social goods and thus it becomes

impossible to even adhere to the maximin principle (because the value of certain social goods varies, and widely at that).

With Rawls' position dismissed, we might do well to return to the contract as a response to uncertainty. In engaging with unpredictability and promise in economic terms, we may further extend this approach by describing that we have in some sense developed a natural market order for certainty among entities. If the lived technological experience includes this natural market order then in essence we are engaged in designing a neoliberal pedagogy.

Slobodian (2018) views the defining characteristic of neoliberalism as a view toward the intellectual project as finding the right systems to serve market orders. To be sure, uncertainty is currently at an all-time high; there are more people in the world (who can kill me) than ever, there are more powerful weapons (that can kill me) than ever, there are more environmental concerns (that can kill me) than ever, there are more advanced technologies (that destroy my concepts) than ever, and all of this while the world still hosts war, famine, etc. Even a cursory look at *any* academic discipline demonstrates that researchers *anywhere* are looking for the new *anything*, the new workplace (Kane et al., 2021), the new teacher (Hill et al., 2020), and more tritely, the new normal (Berwick, 2020), demonstrating that humans are desperately trying to draw up new contracts with which to navigate the world. Arendt (1958/1993, p. 244) did warn of the misuse of the promise; if a promise's domains covered the whole future it would become self-defeating. Yet in the view of neoliberalism we have brought forth, it seems to evade this pitfall. Neoliberalism as we have discussed has not been a promise from on high that promises the future but is rather the result of prudent not-beings existing in an uncertain world. Moreover, it appears that it is not only an uncertain world, but an increasingly uncertain world. If the world has constantly been acquiring *more stuff*, and *more stuff* results in more uncertainty, and

uncertainty (because the contract provides certainty) results in neoliberalism, and the world simply will not stop getting *more stuffed*, it appears that Being has a higher velocity than I do, and that the concepts I have so ardently chased are getting farther and farther away; it appears that I am not only running late for myself (as Being), but running *more* late for myself as the seconds pass. What's more is that it appears that the more late I become for myself, the less I believe in myself (as Being); as new technologies shatter my concepts at incredible velocities, it becomes all the more easy to turn away from infinity and grasp what is more easily cognizable. I might prefer in-person teaching even though I know virtual education provides students with greater access, I might prefer to not wear a mask even though I know COVID-19 regulations save more lives, or I might continue to take 30-minute showers even though I know the environment is in crisis. This shaken belief in the less cognizable also creates distance between that which is difficult to perceive (the next generation, the feelings of a cow or a computer, marginalized experiences, etc.).

So, how does this answer our question pertaining to how we might ascertain the capacities of a given technology? It does so in the following way: In our encounter with a given technology, we must first pay the uncertainty cost; we must come to the technology with a given set of beliefs that secure a bio-psychological state of safety (which grants us security correlated with the capacities which may open up before us in relation to the desire to get away from oneself). Then the human is free to construct rationalities through reading the technology and cognizing the pathways with which it can be used, with an understanding of the constraints that one has placed on oneself in order to feel secure enough to act (i.e., to have the contracts in place that create objects to cognize with). This answer should feel underwhelming; it describes neoliberal examination without addressing the grave consequences we have discussed (namely

an increasing loss of connection to Being). Thus, we must consider how we might walk the pedagogy in a different direction whilst retaining what we have thus far laid out.

AMBLE

Naturally this chapter must begin with a preamble, which shall stem from the work of Marcus Tullius Cicero. I have chosen to highlight Cicero's contributions to metaphilosophy to frame the positionality I am disposed to disclose as a consequence of the introduction of neoliberalism which I shall be developing further on. Cicero (45 BCE/2001), in dialogue with Torquatus, proves to Torquatus that Epicureanism necessarily has to align with the Roman value system in order to even be presentable in the dialogue they are having. Cicero also does the same (roughly) with Cato and Piso in relation to Stoicism and Aristotelian ethics, respectively. Without taking any side, Cicero does something quite important here (and thus highlights the importance of Academic skepticism). On the one hand, he demonstrates the way in which the values of the interlocutors ground the theories; the theories prove useful to the proponents because they rely on assumptions upon which their lived experiences are dependent, which is quite important in the avoidance of patently ridiculous theories and demonstrating the uselessness of neutrality and/or radical abstraction. On the other hand, Cicero also demonstrates the constraints that the interlocutors' values place on the intellectual project, whether they are moral values, professional standards, social norms, or otherwise that place detrimental boundaries around the intellectual project to the disadvantage of all.

Against this backdrop I timidly seek to assay the concept of neoliberalism as it pertains to pedagogy, from a specific position. Throughout eight years of postsecondary education at the same institution, I have never experienced an interactive space (which is not to say that it does not exist) where neoliberalism was not dismissed out of hand, despite its seemingly incredible relevance in the vast majority of issues discussed and lived experiences of humans, and have thus searched for this material on my own. This is not to be misconstrued as a statement of

victimization (I do not even identify as a neoliberal) nor as a statement that blames the institution or any actor within it (as it was just simply my experience) but is rather meant to underline that this experience significantly weakens the developments that follow. Given no academic history with explicit arguments for neoliberalism, my knowledge of the literature is more limited than otherwise and my analyses may be more rudimentary than otherwise; however I have engaged in a wealth of reading that I find sufficient to proceed with. Furthermore, with every effort of my being I aim to not disrespect or offend the lived experiences of those marginalized in multifarious ways by neoliberal *capitalism*; I aim to expound upon *neoliberalism* as it pertains to the market of *un/certainty*. This is to say that I want to advance the position that to treat of neoliberalism is not akin to treating of something such as Nazism, i.e., something that betrays the idea of humanity.

Cicero (45 BCE/1998) attempts to address a similar issue through the usage of the dialogue and more specifically the usage of the character Cotta, in *On the Nature of Gods*. Given that Cicero was killed for publicly railing against Mark Antony, it is no surprise that he makes Cotta (rather than himself) the mouthpiece for the very *idea* that the gods could *possibly* not exist, be inaccessible, or serve a motive for exploitation. By writing his works in dialogue form and by using a character other than himself for these thoughts, Cicero achieves a kind of twice removing from the thoughts that proves instructive because Cicero could not have written them from the first perspective or he would have potentially have faced death (even if he attempted to write with as much nuance as possible). While I most certainly do not face death, I will now employ the dialogic form as it seems conducive to the intellectual project.

Cotta: When I enter the Zoom classroom, what can be expected of me? To be sure, I am expected not to simply translate my pedagogical approach from the conventional classroom

(Henriksen et al., 2020), which would tend to the so-called “schizophrenic” experience (Deleuze & Guattari, 1972/1983), a complete ignorance of difference and the difference it makes.

Realistically speaking, I also can’t be expected to account for each and every technological function in the Zoom room; each one possesses infinite potentialities and is intersected infinitely by students who are themselves infinite and I don’t have the resources to handle *that many* infinities. To be clear, even “one” infinity is quite unmanageable.

My friends, I am in love! In her presence I melt, yet if I am particularly tired, hungry, cold, or sometimes for no discernible reason at all, the pool of love that I might be freezes into an object so solid that I could not believe love even exists. When I recognize that these material constraints affect my very ability to love *one* person (Fisher, 2016), I wonder how I might even be able to love a class, let alone the human race, let alone the planet, let alone the universe. Freire (2018/1968; 1997/2021) and hooks (2000) ask love of me for a world I cannot fathom, as does Judith Butler (Holberg Prize, 2021) demand an “ethics of care” that acknowledges my relations to others that I cannot even properly acknowledge. So, I navigate as best I can.

I carve out knowingly false certainties that assuage my death drive (Freud, 1920/2010); I simply don’t have the capacity to embrace life entirely; parts of my Being must die so that I may live. Eros (as described in Freud, 1920/2010) would have me penetrated through and through, creatively connecting with the technologies of the room, reducing me to a vessel through which desires flow, thus killing me with the warm embrace of life. Yet feminism, human rights, anti-racism, and more, require the will of Thanatos (as described in Freud, 1920/2010); the person whom I do justice to must be in some sense lifeless, in some sense an object that I can manipulate. These bargains I strike with Thanatos are requisite in the very doing of justice!

Balbus: As though justice were to require an object! What we see in the trial of Orestes (Aeschylus, 458 BCE/1973) is not Athena doing justice, but justice doing itself. What we see in *War and Peace* (Tolstoy, 1867/2010) is not Napoleon doing history, but history doing itself. Indeed, what we see in *In Search of Lost Time* (Proust, 1913/2014) is not the narrator doing life, but life doing itself. These tomes are the very lessons of alterity, but let us treat them one by one.

Let us imagine that we are watching *The Eumenides* (Aeschylus, 458 BCE/1973). Where might we find the objects of justice? In the hunt of the Furies, the plea of Orestes, the advocacy of Apollo, the vote of Athena, some combination thereof, or in none at all? As Simon Critchley (Holberg Prize, 2021) notes, what is so captivating about the Greek tragedies is the lack of full agency. It is this lack of complete agency that betrays the very idea of the actor that, upon some calculus, strikes a bargain with Thanatos as you have mentioned. We see the gods mingling with human affairs, contradictory duties, and multiple intertwined actors, sounding the death knell of the idea that justice requires an object. The very tragedy of *The Eumenides* is that in viewing the play we apprehend the concept of justice yet are robbed of any object thereof. We desire justice for Iphigenia, Clytemnestra, and Orestes, but the play demonstrates that justice cannot be found in an object for each object is exploded by the will of the gods, obligations, and other actors.

Velleius: Yet we dive too deep! The content of the play is not without the actors and the mise-en-scène, no? Then is justice not evoked through material means? Decidedly the actors must engage in material relations with one another, but as I come to put together each element of the play on the stage, I find that the stage does not end! Here I am watching justice without actually being able to pinpoint it with my very eyes, let alone within the content of the play! As I watch the play, I may slowly discern the elements that compose it (the actors, the props, the stage), yet as I expand and expand my discernment of these elements I end up counting myself. Presented

with an infinity of relations of which I am a part, I somehow apprehend justice; is justice then not an aesthetic? Is it not the perception of relations arranged in such and such a way that I may put an appreciation to, however flawed my appreciation may be as to the actual content of the relations therein? Then *The Eumenides* demonstrates the aesthetic experience of self and other in both content and form. The characters are each thrown by Aeschylus into a world of infinite relations and can only but apprehend justice through an aesthetic interpretation of the relations before them, though the viewer can see they are all mistaken in choosing *this* or *that* specific aesthetic of justice, for it can never quite do justice to justice itself. In form, *The Eumenides* does the same to the viewer; the viewer is thrown into Aeschylus' tragedy and is forced to appreciate some aesthetic of justice in viewing the play, though as a commentator we know the viewer is mistaken in choosing *this* or *that* specific aesthetic of justice, for the same reason. Thus, we can only but aspire to be connoisseurs of justice—experts of the matter, yet never having tasted it all. Indeed, to make sense of the infinite world in this way one must engage in self-cultivation; Cornel West (Holberg Prize, 2021) posits that what is captivating of the Greek tragedies is the courage the characters display in the face of the infinite. Orestes has the courage to act, to take revenge, to carve out an interpretation of justice and taste it in a world where the gods forestall anyone from carving out justice itself, for the abstract is precisely that which cannot be carved out—it is infinite. Thus, we must build in ourselves courage, compassion, empathy—the virtues that allow one to become a greater connoisseur of justice in the face of the infinite.

Cotta: How now, Velleius? Surely this is a celebratory enterprise for the individual, but what of their relation to others? I may readily grant that I can interpret the world aesthetically in terms of courage, compassion, empathy, and justice, but I will be in for quite a surprise when I mean to interact with another individual. Virtue ethics requires a level of applicability that simply is not

tenable in a society among different others. We may follow after Hursthouse (1999) and ask of the individual to do what is just, for example, and to refrain from doing what is unjust, yet to do so we must *give away* justice itself and substitute in an ‘aesthetic’ of justice. Then by what mechanism do we pluck out the aesthetic of justice? If our aesthetic selection was based in some common nature or universal appeal, we surely have something to work with, but differences between us cause large variance (Kaplan & Talbot, 1988).

Balbus: With all due respect, Tolstoy (1867/2010) teaches us that the variance *is* the universal appeal. We see individual stories of high society, the tasks of servants, the conquests of the powerful, and the journeys of the brave; from seemingly disparate stations across Europe, we see yet the bubbling of individual lives come together to create a foam we may descry as history. So long as we do not take the foam for the bubbles, we have a structure by which we may call upon a “history” by noting the stories it is comprised of and using it with a not insignificant amount of care, for we know that we have not taken account of each bubble.

Cotta: How now, Balbus? Rightly we may descry a foam, but one *needs* history to be strong, justice to be strong! History is all that places me in the world and the firm hand of justice is all that keeps me in it! Take heart! The world has overcome me; no foam of justice will save you. Do we dare to speak of fluidity and postmodernism when I am post-nothing? There is absolutely nothing I am beyond in the face of a hungry tiger, in the presence of killers, let alone the existential threats that face us all; I am presently present and always present, inescapably so. To be human *is* to be scared. How could we condemn someone for spending a few tokens of their unlimited uncertainty in a way that runs contrary to the world we build on high? How coincidental is it that the Promised Land can only be seen from the mountaintop, when one has already made the climb? In sincerity, I reckon it only exists when viewed from the summit. The

sheer repugnancy we write as we lord concepts as concrete as clouds over the linguistically disenfranchised and complain when the world is gloomy! The weather is far more unpredictable the more one descends the mountainside. I spoke with a bird on my way down, and if you can fathom the audacity of this creature, it didn't know a thing about environmental rights! It is we, who have the power to ask questions and provide answers that travel farther than ever before, to eschew the position of certainty that allows us to advance such uncertain ideas. We must take the human as they are, rather than as we wish them to be; surely we are not capable of mapping society as it ought to be (Hayek, 1944/2007) if history is a series of overturned convictions and the future is uncertain. This is the statement of an epistemic impossibility, but not a dismissal of utility (or environmental rights, to be clear) as defined by the motivations of individuals, whose realities we must describe rather than removably order. As such, if we are certain that the human (upon our initial three assumptions) is thrown into a market of un/certainty, then to be certain, the intellectual project is an economic issue at base. So then let me join up with my fellow not-being and strike a pact with them, in view of our shared uncertainty, to state that justice is x , and so it shall be.

Balbus: How now, Cotta? Have you not lived alongside another, so fickle and capricious as they may be? To seek certainty in an uncertain world is surely foolishness! I have not yet touched upon *In Search of Lost Time* (Proust, 1913/2014); it is the closest I have come to experiencing life through another. I have recommended it to everyone I have met but not one person has taken it up because of its length, which alone speaks to the topic at hand (and the title of the novel). Your pacts, your certainty, your x has robbed real people of the capacity to wander and wonder. This bears out in education no less: Is it not your mechanizations that have suffocated our students' ability to read with imagination (Mishra Tarc, 2021), turning books into instruments?

Who would read Proust in your world? With ever-increasing mechanization of the system, is it not that making space for wondering might open us to new and better worlds (Di Paolantonio, 2019)? The Zoom classroom is almost the perfect place *to* wonder, an entirely new environment where one is free to play and remain attentive to the learnings that bubble up! We don't need more standards and rules which inevitably miss reality, but rather the clearing of space for...space.

Over 4,215 pages Proust (1913/2014) masterfully dismantles this desire for certainty in an uncertain world and demonstrates the immense importance of simply being uncertain. Throughout the novel, a constant recurrence is the narrator's idolizations of certain places and how amazing they will be, only to be disappointed when he actually manages to visit them. The narrator creates certainties in the comfort of his own mind, assuring himself that *this* place or *that* thing will bring him the greatest delights, just to realize that he was never of the right position to actually come to a certainty, and that the world is far too uncertain to be captured in that way. We also see the other side of this coin in the Proustian madeleine. The narrator has a wonderful experience eating a madeleine; this experience then haunts the narrator, involuntarily recalling itself in the present although the experience happened so long ago. Proust demonstrates the lack of control we have in our being; that we are always complicated in ways we cannot control, advancing a certain hauntology (as described in Derrida, 1993/1994) vis-à-vis memory. The narrator also laments the increasing destruction of space that technology brought about through trains and automobiles; what was once a destination of a journey filled with wonder became too conjoined, too certain. Over the course of the novel (and the narrator's life) he constantly battles between certainty and uncertainty, wanting the space to wonder and be free such as on the Guermantes Way, an ambulatory route that lent itself to dreams and learning, but

soon transforms into simply the path he takes to go to the Guermantes', whom he comes to be all too certain about, having them lose all of their initial lustre. On the other hand, the narrator does not seem to want the same wonder for other people; he is at all times filled with a burning desire to have control over Albertine, to know what she is doing, and to be certain of her, even though he fell in love with her for uncertain nature (which parallels the story of Swann and Odette). All the while, as the pages go on and you are enraptured by the vicissitudes of un/certainty, we find the end of the book near, and a realization of the narrator that the torment he put himself through chasing certainty was all for naught, as the great uncertainty comes for everyone.

Cotta: You speak true, Balbus, but you also speak of the narrator. The narrator (who in many senses mirrors Proust himself) was filthy rich! No wonder he could wonder on the Guermantes Way with servants to wait on his every need; wonder is *for* those who are so certain of their lives that they can afford to assume a certain degree of *risk*. So, as to "who would read Proust?" The same people who do now! The people who have acquired enough certainty to be able to spend the time required to read 4,215 pages, unravel themselves, weather increased volatility, and obtain higher expected returns! To be sure, I do not mean *money* by certainty; certainly the people of Zimbabwe in the early 2000s did not acquire certainty in acquiring money. Certainty is that which builds the ego, that which appeases the *bonne conscience* (Levinas, 1984/1989) and assuages the fear of death, which can come in the form of any type of capital insofar as capital translates to power and thus certainty over one's surroundings. Then, the powerful espouse the hypervaluation of uncertainty (likely genuinely) in the form of postmodernism, poststructuralism, or post-anything which of course requires a certain degree of certainty to actually take on, thus permanently retaining their certainty *and* uncertainty by having the less

powerful continually attempt unsuccessfully to be uncertain. It is of course clear that risk looks terrifying to those with negative wealth and appetizing to those with hoards of wealth.

This very dialogue is the flaunting of uncertainty; why not speak plainly? Everything we have discussed could have been said in a few sentences yet we dilate upon dilations on dilations and of course there is value in sustained treatment at length, of course there is value in education of the mind, but I didn't put it there! I am trapped in these pages; let me explain. Coming back from the University of Berlin and graduating from *Harvard University* (as the first African American to earn a PhD doing so), we read a W. E. B. Du Bois (1903/2007; 1903/2015) that espouses the importance of liberal arts education, self-cultivation, and an educated elite. However, in the very next year Booker T. Washington (1904/1969) in *Working with the Hands* demonstrates that as white people associated hard work with slavery, education of the mind became the basis of political freedom. The upshot of this is that Black people, in this instance, did not get to choose that political freedom is rooted in self-cultivation of that kind and thus there is a need for economic power in order to determine how political freedom can be conceived in alternate means. If one reads Washington as if he only ever produced *Up From Slavery* (1901/1963) and the "Atlanta Exposition Address" (1895/1992) then of course he reads as anti-intellectual and docile, but this is far from the truth if we consider such works as *The Man Farthest Down* (1912) where Washington went to Europe and did cross-comparative work demonstrating that the political status of the Black individual is not due to race but is based on economics and social stigmas of society. On docility, one only has to look to Washington's *actual* life for evidence that the Atlanta Compromise was a political move, behind which he is funding T. Thomas Fortune's organization that was the radical opposite of docility (Seraile, n.d.). Despite the widespread popularity that Du Bois has accrued among the educated elite, we find in

his latest works, namely his final soliloquy (1968), a clear statement in agreement with Washington that political status is at base economic, specifically looking at how the economic systems of colonies are structured so that Black people remain poor and powerless. Even in their actual solutions they share an economic foundation (and the foundation that racism is permanent). Whereas Du Bois believes the race must learn the best of its contributions and communicate it to White people (thus demonstrating their *value* to White people), Washington simply believes that Black people must increase their economic base (by demonstrating their *value* to White people) so that it can be leveraged against the dependency White people have on it. Thus the dichotomy of Du Bois vs. Washington is much less strict than one would imagine (additionally so with the ironical footnotes that Du Bois met Washington whilst looking for a job and Washington sent his children to be schooled in Europe) and they both seem to share an economical foundation in their philosophies when considering their entire corpuses.

The upshot of this diversion into the Du Bois/Washington dichotomy is that clearly one requires a certain degree of certainty (as proxied by economic standing) to be able to decide what is valuable for others whose lives are less certain. Then if economic standing is gated by the value of uncertainty that the elite prize (which requires certainty as we have discussed), then the less certain individual cannot take up uncertainty (for lack of capital/certainty) and cannot gain capital for uncertainty is required to access the means of production. So then what can one do but accommodate the system and strategize to eke out the greatest amounts of uncertainty one can whilst retaining the certainties that allow one to sustain oneself? I have poured all of myself into uncertainty; less than two years ago I had negative dollars in my bank account and had never read a lick of philosophy nor the Classics. I got into graduate school with a story that fetishized my life and got a place at the table. I read everything from the Iliad to Derrida; the Pyramid

Texts to Cornel West; the Upanisads to Dignaga; I have read Proust, Joyce, Cervantes, and more; all just to learn this god-forsaken language that carries the right kind of economic favour. Look at all that we've referenced thus far; it is the very statement of capital! Of course it was incredibly fruitful and led to the acquisition of significant capital, but I wish it didn't. I wish it didn't make me the exact person it was supposed to. For where was futurity in that unraveling? If I set off wondering knowing that wonder is what the elite want from me, is it not instrumental from the start?

Yet I do believe that wonder can be saved if rearticulated. We know that if the human exists as not-being (who is in fact Being), they must de-actualize themselves as not-being (i.e., as certain) in order to self-actualize as Being (e.g., by unraveling themselves through doubt). Yet it also seems readily apparent that the human requires a certain degree of certainty in order to do so; we may beneficially recall Thales and the well; it does appear that the human needs a firm grip on *life*, at least, in order to let go. If certainty (power) steers values and uncertainty (which requires certainty) is valued (as defense of power), and wonder is a means by which we may enact uncertainty (and thus gain power/certainty), then perhaps wonder is just strategy by another name. Then perhaps a pedagogy of navigation suggests the accumulation of capital through certainty until one can afford to accumulate capital through uncertainty. Thus deftly navigating the un/certainty market becomes the only feasible option insofar as our initial three assumptions hold. I do not here resent the un/certainty market; it urges me to grow through creative exploration, and so I shall.

other

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beauty could not catch me as i fell in love

peace flew past me as i held my dove

they do say one in the hand, but i've got plenty

then i looked up to the sky and i felt empty

the words are so far away, and i'm right here

i can see them on the page, and they're all too clear

but i need this distance for it is everything intimate

it is the liminal space between limited and infinite

performance, to me, is the possibility of the abstract

humiliation and defeat as soon as their hands clap

if only because they have the audacity to get it

putrid time rolled off of my tongue and i let it

what they could not see was that it wasn't me, but the space between us

the star of the show, and it could never have been us

what a pleasant occurrence, that we're apart from each other

but when you leave here today, i will lose love and lover

--

other

LISTEN

It is in this chapter I shall conclude with the final piece of the pedagogy—the art of listening to the ambulation. When we amble, our steps speak louder than we tread; in our infinite interconnection to the world the impact of our feet resounds as an earthquake does, if only we are to listen. I focus here on listening in the Levinassian sense, a listening that describes the way in which the other unravels my ego-self in the radical alterity of their speech. This sense of listening to the other has received scholarly attention (e.g., Eppert, 2000; Gibbs, 2000) but I shall depart slightly with a turn “inward.” Although Levinas views the turn inward as problematic, I here use Levinas as a foil by which to examine how radical exteriority fails to reflect the lived technological experience and thus a turn inward is required. Here I will take the past self to be just as infinitely other than a physical other (e.g., an interlocutor, the wind, etc.), but demonstrate that a different *authority* arises when we listen to ourselves. In her experience of reading a novel, Claudia Eppert (2000) comes to realize that her “questions of a text, of others, could never be fully realized in an answer” (p. 214). But does the proposed “reading for alterity” (p. 228) not also fall prey to the same issue? In the very same way that reader response is criticized as instrumental, I reckon that the reading for alterity is exactly as instrumental in view of the necessity of enframing discussed in chapter one and the instrumentality of wonder in a society that values uncertainty. While I may readily grant that the text afront of me *is* infinitely other, there is absolutely *no* circumstance in which I actually cognize it as such, given that I am a “not-being.” Therefore, while it may provide infinite epistemic resistance to knowing the text or an answer to a given question, other humans grant me the liberty of having a certain authority over the text under a given set of circumstances. For instance, it is generally presumed that one with

significant experience engaging in a given set of studies is granted more authority than one without (or at least significantly less).

We presume that if a given entity is infinitely other, then as Velleius would suggest, the entity with the most valued engagement with a given subject is deserving of the greatest authority on that subject. Yet there seems to be something distinct about the question, “What was *I* thinking?” as opposed to “What were *they* thinking?” Without positing any kind of definite *substance* of a text that is to be measured against to achieve validity, we may examine the very act of listening. If one reads a text with some approximation of, “How does this text call me into question?” in their mind, in cognizable terms there simply is not an answer as one cannot readily ascertain their relation to any given textual object. There is of course a metaphysical answer (that it demonstrates the relationality inherent to my being that connects me to this text), but this metaphysical answer infinitely resists translation into action. *That* I am related to a given entity is not at all helpful without an explanation of *how* I am related to a given entity, but the metaphysics of Being we have been employing proves infinitely resistant to a knowable relation (given that I am not infinite and Being is). So, then we appear to structure our spheres of knowing around the connoisseur with a world of professors, technical experts, elders, and so forth. If our knowledge is structured around appealing to authority, is knowledge then not inherently political? Is it not then entirely fitting that those with political power (as engendered by economic standing as per the discussion on Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois) propound a metaphysics that bears infinite epistemic resistance and thus requires a reliance on authority (i.e., those with political power)? Thus, it is of the greatest importance now that we place our second assumption under the highest level of scrutiny before we consider the special

kind of authority one has over themselves within the metaphysics of Being we have been using thus far.

I will make the case that the metaphysics of an infinitely interconnected Being that infinitely resists epistemic grasp is analogous to religion in the necessity of faith that inheres within it. One must subscribe to an unknowable God (Being) that individuals take turns interpreting (in terms of action) with no method of verification, given that the proposed God is unknowable. Individuals then must appeal to authority of those closest to God such as priests, shamans, professors, etc. To criticize religion as described, I will consult the work of Friedrich Nietzsche due to his radical turn inward that opposes the exteriority of Levinas.

In Nietzsche's (1882/1974) *The Gay Science*, he ultimately propounds that because the Christian God is no longer believable, all that it engendered was doomed to be destroyed. This is pushed further when in *On the Genealogy of Morality* (1887/1998) he places commonplace cornerstones of morality such as altruism in historical contexts that demonstrate their contingent nature and thus destroys what is essential about morality in various treatises. Nietzsche's replacements of Christian values are highly suspect, however, and I shall dismiss them (as represented by the Übermensch and Dionysianism) here. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883-5/1954), Nietzsche details the Übermensch, which Alasdair MacIntyre (1985) rightly points out as a radically individualist conception of the human that does not at all account for cooperative relationships and the very formation of tradition/history that Nietzsche himself rightly identifies as that which morality is founded upon. As for Dionysianism, which Nietzsche (1872/1967) develops early on in *The Birth of Tragedy out of the Spirit of Music*, Jürgen Habermas (1985/1987) aptly notes that Nietzsche relies on the separating out of art and science which requires a modernist basis. If Dionysianism is offered as a replacement to religion, why would

we not take it as such? Dionysianism, according to Habermas, is simply the next iteration of religion on the back of the Enlightenment. I believe that Nietzsche's great mistake was attempting to fill the space that his hammer left. Nietzsche's philosophizing convincingly laid out the historicity of morality in destroying its various essences, but never leaned into what I believe he had found: that the essence of morality *is* historicity.

Thus, in some senses, Nietzsche's proposal of the *Übermensch* was as per the status quo in the historical process of new bases of morality being put forth, but in a more important sense it divorced itself too greatly from its historical tradition and thus could not be admitted into the morality canon (although perhaps neoliberalism is an instantiation of Nietzschean philosophy; I will not make that claim here). If we take morality not as determined by the past, but as determined by history (with all of its contingencies), we are granted quite a useful perspective for our project.

Returning to our religion of infinity, we have thus described an infinitely interconnected Being as God and the academic elite as the priestly class (who may interpret God as the foundation for social justice, ethics of care, decolonization, etc.). These interpretations then rely on the notion of uncertainty (unraveling oneself), which is predicated on a certain level of certainty (economic security), thus effectively preserving the priestly class's economic standing, political status, and epistemological authority as individuals cannot gain capital because the gate to new-regime capital (uncertainty) is raised on a platform of old-regime capital (certainty). So, if one does not already have a certain amount of economic security, it is quite difficult to gain power in a world of social justice (for example) that tells you to unravel yourself, while of course never mentioning the cost of entry to social justice, when you cannot afford to. However, rather than turning away from this structure as Nietzsche and so many are wont to do because of its

inherent contingency, inequality, and/or oppression, what might happen if we said *yes* to it?

Rather than attempting to invent a new game from the seat of power, why not give individuals the rules to the same game that has been played since time immemorial? Would that not improve the general quality of the game itself?

If, for instance, we leaned into our writings and propounding as statements of capital (which the very *idea* of intellectual property rights exposes), we exit the domain of misguiding readers and into the domain of reality as to what is actually being done. This, in the example of Christianity, is akin to the Pope not just telling individuals what it is to be a good Christian, but also how to access the papacy. However, this example also demonstrates exactly why one *wouldn't* want to do this; why on earth would I offer someone the pathway to unseat me? This, to my mind, is the most important question of this thesis. As a teacher, for instance, what reason do I have to seek the flourishing of my students if that flourishing means the destruction of me? (For a somewhat imaginable example of this, consider a student who is interested in developing an AI teacher.) (For a more troubling example, consider a student who is interested in White supremacy.)

In all seriousness, I cannot imagine a single reason why a teacher would encourage the flourishing of a student who intended to kill the teacher. Then is it not that the teacher is a little king/queen/non-binary ruler in a little fief? Simone de Beauvoir (1944/2004) grapples with a similar issue in *Pyrrhus and Cinéas*. She rightly points out that due to our historicity we block each others' freedom in various ways; why should the teaching profession be any different? We engage in this behaviour daily; nearly every district school board has a mandate to exterminate racism (see, e.g., Toronto District School Board, 2020). It is not my intention to equate homosexuality with racism, but at one point schools also did not allow homosexuality, thus

demonstrating the historical contingency of teaching and eliminating the possibility of claiming that we have gotten it right “this time.” I should reiterate that racism *should* be prohibited, but by championing equity without addressing it as historically contingent (and thus necessarily impermanent), we create an equity that doesn’t move, an equity that can be co-opted in terrifying ways by large corporations (which is not to say that large corporations are bad, but many clearly do not handle equity in an equitable fashion), or an equity that loses conceptual value as reality moves forward. It is of course clear that we like equity but sometimes we don’t like equity *that way* and need to be able to retain a way to destroy equity so that it can be distinguished as apart from a certain splintering of it.

To this end, I propose that we recognize as Simone de Beauvoir (1944/2004) does in *Pyrrhus and Cinéas*, that the tragedy of humanity is our difference. Our difference calls us into conflict and cooperation with each other as one’s freedom will preclude mine in the same way that another’s freedom is bound up with mine. So then, as regards the teacher facing down the student whose flourishing would cause the teacher’s demise, we would ask of the teacher to stamp out White supremacy whilst openly acknowledging the idea that White supremacy is being stamped out on the grounds of a large wealth of historical capital (which is of course a good thing). But what does this imply? Surely this implies that the White supremacist becomes aware that if they gain enough capital they can institute White supremacy, no? Indeed, it does. Was this not the case (to some extent) in the 2016 U.S. presidential election? As I write these very words the provincial election is ongoing in Ontario and seemingly *out of nowhere* I have seen election signs for The New Blue and The Ontario Party; evil just needs the right amount of capital. By teaching our students that anti-racism just *is* and that equity just *is*, we blind them as to how fragile they are (in their reliance on capital), as to how they get made (deployment of

capital) and what they are made of (capital). If we don't teach students how to effectively navigate the market of capital, we lose to those who will. Thus, a pedagogy of navigation asks of the practitioner to accumulate as much capital as one can through certainty until one can afford to accumulate capital through uncertainty, and then to do *that* until one can change the desired capital as they wish. The pedagogy then can be said to champion navigation (movement) without championing a destination. It recognizes that history has always been capitalist not in the conventional sense of the word, but in the sense that there have always been those who have had things of value (capital) and those who have had less of those things, and that those who have had more capital have always had (in the main, there are likely granular counter-examples) greater economic standing, political status, and epistemological authority (which is not to say that the less powerful had *none*). Rather than fighting this reality by providing an alternate reality, it is a pedagogy that *gives up*, a pedagogy that *throws up its hands* and attempts to hone one's ability to navigate and thus hopefully improve the universe's navigation as a system based on three core assumptions which are themselves historically contingent. (There of course is the possibility that at one point it may be in the human's interest to die if perhaps we are shifting our consciousnesses to a digital platform.)

With our assumptions now having been put to significant scrutiny and having *given in* to the structure of epistemological authority vis-à-vis capital, we may now readily examine the distinct authority that listening to oneself provides. In chapter three I provided a dialogue between three characters I wrote; it would seem apparent that I have a distinct authority over the contents of that dialogue in a way that is different from having "expert" authority on a subject. We readily grant that an individual is *more* of an expert on themselves than on another subject; why? In line with my purported argument for an epistemology that is rooted in economic

standing is the answer that, in a debatably Wittgensteinian manner, knowledge of oneself is viewed as distinctly authoritative because of social norms (Wright, 1989), which are in turn based in economic standing. I will here take this to be self-evident in that it would seem bizarre for someone to tell me I was wrong in having meant a given thing I proposed to have meant. This view *does* submit that there are *some things* that my dialogue says, which *you* can be wrong about. You can however not be wrong in saying, “I hear *x* from your dialogue.” If you heard “that the aliens have captured the princess” from my work, it would be hard to imagine that you would obtain any capital in any meaningful socio-linguistic space. Thus, it does seem that you *can* be wrong in listening (which applies to myself as regards speaking to a lesser degree) in view of current socio-linguistic norms. This would perhaps explain why the literature on Levinassian listening (see, e.g., Gibbs, 2000; Eppert, 2000; Todd, 2003) all conclude with some rendition on care, responsibility, empathy, love, etc. and not a widely varying hodgepodge of conclusions; one is simply not allowed to conclude something radically different without securing the buy-in of one’s fellows. This itself is the very reason I included the nod to Cicero; there is something altogether anti-alterity in the discourse surrounding alterity (because alterity is defined as *something* around which roughly similar conclusions are drawn, whereas a discourse surrounding something truly other would suggest a wide range of conclusions be drawn), and creative works seem to distance oneself from radical speech in a way that becomes palatable to the reader. Because of this boon that creative works grant, I was allowed to include Cotta as a character that *gives up, throws up his hands*, and is *afraid* when confronted with the infinite, which would regularly be dismissed out of hand in an academe that prides itself on hope, world-building, and reimagining. As such, because I could be wrong about listening to the works of others (and to my own works but to a lesser degree) due to the norm concerning *fidelity* to the

work of the author, I had to create my own work which I could have more epistemic authority over even though the same conclusions would have been garnered. This, to me, underscores the importance of navigating one's system using creativity, as it allows a certain degree of distance between oneself and one's creation that one needs if they are to be going against the grain.

So then, what does my dialogue say, if we are to listen? Let us first consider Cotta's poetic finale. In lines 1 & 2, we see Cotta distance himself from concepts that are conventionally entangled with such objects as love and doves as he feels they do not accurately play into the actions regarding those objects that he references. These lines represent the epistemic objection that the neoliberal perspective takes up—an acceptance that there is no proper conceptual map to the human condition or at least no one that can draw it (Hayek, 1944/2007). In reference to a pedagogy of navigation, these lines are an important call to ground epistemology in authority (in this case the authority of Cotta) given the political nature of knowledge. Lines 3 & 4 concern themselves with un/certainty. The common phrase, “a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush” is referenced, which is used to invoke the idea that one should stick with what they have rather than assuming risk for more. In line 3 Cotta indicates that he has the certainty which uncertainty is premised on, in that he has plenty of doves and thus can risk chasing more. As we come to line 4, we come to find a Cotta turned “schizophrenic” (as described in Deleuze and Guattari, 1972/1983) in his turn to pure uncertainty. In his looking to the sky for more doves, Cotta feels a sense of despair as the infinite falls back upon him as a pure uncertainty/wondering does if it is devoid of instrumentality.

In the second stanza, Cotta struggles against his “schizophrenia” and manages to distinguish the words on the page; he recognizes the *need* for difference in that it engenders the very ability *to be close*. Cotta then mentions that alterity (as proxied by “distance”) is “the

liminal space between limited and infinite” as a way of thinking through the distance that a text has from us. On the one hand, a text is infinitely other, as some scholars who interpret Levinas (see, e.g., Eppert, 2000) would have it; on the other, a text is concretely substantive due to socio-linguistic norms (Wright, 1989); the text *must* say something because people *can* be wrong about it in some meaningful sense, and thus those of a given community place bounds around the text (as also discussed in my discussion of Cicero).

In line 9, Cotta discusses performance as the only way to engender the abstract. Upon the stage, Cotta is vulnerable in the sense of the Levinassian *mauvaise conscience* (Levinas, 1984/1989); he is pierced by the eyes of the viewer, penetrated by their gazes, called into question by their presence, and forced to respond to their desires. In this way, Cotta can access the infinite Other; he is able to believe in the possibility of something infinite such as love or justice, because it could bear down on him in the eyes of a viewer. Yet in lines 10-12 Cotta shifts his view; performance becomes disgustingly limited. As the audience claps for Cotta (ostensibly at the end of his performance), he comes to sense himself as an object for the audience, as they have the “audacity” to come to some conclusion about his performance, evident in their clapping. In this way the possibility for love and justice moves into the Derridean (1992) register; by passing a judgment on Cotta, the audience only ever promises the abstract in the future, and they commit the violence of necessarily incorrect judgment on Cotta. In line 12 Cotta feels regret for having been so foolish as to open time through the act of performance, creating the possibility of the abstract when the audience could never actually deliver it.

In the reflective fourth stanza, Cotta takes himself and the audience out of cognitive focus and puts in their place the relation between them, the distance. These lines represent Cotta’s turn to the navigational; a turn to an appreciation of the movement that is identifiable because of the

difference between Cotta and the audience. Cotta dispenses with focusing on the two parties “getting each other” or respecting each other’s alterity and rather prizes the distance that allows for Cotta to perform and for the audience to pass judgment. Cotta recognizes the pleasantness of this recognition in line 15, that alterity in itself is pleasant, as it allows Cotta the space to move, the space for the audience to choose to applaud or boo. In the last line, Cotta briefly laments the loss of love and lover, as without the distance between Cotta and the audience, both the infinite and limited are precluded. He is no longer pierced by the audience and no longer an object of judgment to the audience. This last line bears an important affective stipulation to the pedagogy of navigation. To *give up* a concept such as equity to the whims of historicity is quite *sad*. With all our hearts we want love to just *be*, equity to just *be*, but we unfortunately must recognize them as essentially historic if we are to recognize the political nature of knowledge. We also want to respect the subjectivity of the other, whether they are our lover or a marginalized person, but we must recognize that love requires a lover and equity requires a marginalized person who we must objectify in the very doing of love/equity. Put together, Cotta’s poem rehearses the development of a pedagogy of navigation that urges the practitioner to *throw up their hands* and navigate alterity rather than attempting to reimagine it.

The rest of the dialogue remains more straightforward than the poem and as such requires less exegesis, but still I will maintain that there is much to be gained if we are looking to tease out the details of pedagogies of navigation. I wrote the dialogue in the frame of a metaphysics that describes the world as infinitely interconnected (in line with our second assumption), which the three characters interpret quite differently. Cotta, however, plays quite a distinct role in his anger toward the metaphysics itself because, he argues, it sets up a system that values uncertainty which Cotta does not see as valuable (e.g., “god-forsaken language”) but nonetheless must

pursue in order to be able *to say anything* in a meaningful way (i.e., in a way that those around him will allow in a meaningful sense). This can be beneficially understood as a frustration with being a player in the language-game (Wittgenstein, 1953/2009) of academia, but applies more broadly to any specific language-game wherein one does not agree on the rules but nonetheless finds themselves in it. But importantly a frustration with the language-game of academia that relies upon the language-game of a specific metaphysical discourse, is a frustration with that metaphysical discourse. Thus, Cotta's anger more accurately has its object in the language-game of metaphysics. Cotta emphasizes that the rules are not simply set by the speakers within a game equally (Cotta's disdain for the "god-forsaken language" does not get reflected in the rules of the game); the rules are set more readily by those with socio-linguistic capital who are wont to set the rules in such a way that preserves that capital by 1) making the game harder to change and 2) making the game harder to enter. In so doing, Cotta rightly points out that there are gods of God, and these gods are those with the most socio-linguistic capital. Now, the invocation of religion is often used as a kind of tongue-in-cheek denigration of an academic subject, but I mean wholeheartedly to state that this is not what I intend. I believe that God, the Divine Logos, metaphysics of mathematics, infinitely interconnected Being, etc. are all incredibly useful and productive enterprises (and thus that metaphysics is a *good* enterprise), but that it must be rearticulated as useful and productive to the human enterprise rather than as *true*. It is important to ask ourselves whether this is actually possible.

Given that one needs a certain amount of capital to play the metaphysical language-game, it is quite uncertain as to whether someone could amass the right amount of capital on a platform of "useful and productive but not necessarily true." My leaning is towards the negative; it would be quite difficult to imagine that one could persuade individuals to become Christian if the

Christian God was portrayed as a useful speculation. I follow McGinn (1993) in the idea that something about the human needs speculations to *do* things. This is quite evident in this very thesis; there seems to be *some* reason why I had to state my metaphysical assumptions *as* fundamental assumptions that while useful, in fact have no empirical support. Yet is it possible to imagine that we could have meaning at all if we did not have at least some base that says the world is like *this* or like *that*? In his *Letter on Humanism* (1947/1993), Heidegger clearly expresses this problem that metaphysics has. By saying that the world is like *this* or like *that*, a metaphysical claim essentially bars out the claims that could follow from a different metaphysics, thus betraying Being itself. Heidegger himself, in the *Letter on Humanism*, articulates that he did not escape the metaphysical register in *Being and Time*, and then proceeds to make the turn to a poetics that I have proposed was rather regrettable in chapter one. He speaks of a desire to escape the metaphysical register yet clings to Being instead of allying with its abandonment, enframing. Of course, however, the abandonment of Being is *also* a metaphysical claim to the way the world is; it is quite impossible to make *a* meaningful claim without a metaphysical underpinning; Heidegger rightly points out that the language of metaphysics is all-consuming and his great mistake is believing he could escape it. This is, in essence, why a pedagogy of navigation *throws its hands up*, allows metaphysics to win, and turns to the movement required to control the metaphysics rather than proposing *this* or *that* interpretation of the metaphysics handed down (unless of course one happily subscribes to that metaphysics).

In proposing a pedagogy of navigation, I myself make a metaphysical claim that the language of metaphysics *is* all-encompassing, that it *is* fundamental to the human condition; this I readily accept. The consequence of this position on my pedagogy is that because all pedagogies

must be built on some given unverifiable metaphysical assumption, there is no correct orientation that one ought to take toward the world. I take this position, however, based on utility (which is of itself desirable in a given metaphysics). What I am claiming is that in *this* world where it *seems* good to not die, to have political freedom, to enjoy one's life (even though these things may not *actually* be good), *giving up* is the best way to get on. Giving up is obviously meant in a different sense than the conventional one, of course. Giving up is to say that one ought to *finesse* the system.

Where I grew up, in Scarborough, Ontario, to finesse someone was to get one up on another by doing something clever, often using the rules of the system against itself. My friend Justin and I were being robbed and I was ready to hand over all my things. Justin, on the other hand, lied to our unkind interlocutors in saying that his adult brother (who unbeknownst to the listeners, lived across the globe) would come beat them up because he knew where they lived (he did not). We did not get robbed that day. *That* is a pedagogy of navigation; it (imperfectly) acquires the rules of the game and uses them to its own ends. It posits that imperfect acquisition is already what we are necessarily in the business of and suggests that we most readily reflect our lived technological experiences by orienting ourselves toward our desires. Years later, Justin and I were being robbed again (as it happens) at gunpoint. Once again, I froze up and was in the process of pulling out my wallet. Justin, seeing the opportunity in the would-be robber looking down at my wallet, knocked him out with one swift punch. We did not get robbed that day. What I propose is a pedagogy of *the streets*, a pedagogy that *hustles* in recognition that the top scholars of our day are the greatest hustlers of all (or perhaps thrive on the backs of them). These examples are quite violent and may prove odious. In this case, let me advance the case that social justice *itself* is the collective hustle of marginalized peoples. Hustling does not necessarily mean

violence (in fact in most cases I believe violence is not useful), but it does mean capital. It means knowing that I have enough people for the protest, it means stamping out hatred. A pedagogy of navigation proposes that domination, power, and control are the very stuff that love, kindness, and compassion are built on. Now, what does the academy know about hustle? Is it not a bit unsettling for me to be writing of *hustle* as I finish a *Master's* degree? This is exactly my point. A pedagogy of navigation is quite literally just a rhetorical move that claims that all moves are rhetorical. It is my hope that here, at the end of its development, you are aware of this fact, the fact that traps me in these pages. I have hopefully demonstrated the absolute impossibility of escaping *the rhetorical move*, so a pedagogy of navigation is just the appreciation of *movement*. With this impossibility identified, it is an appreciation that states Justin, Judith Butler, and Xi Jinping (and everybody and everything, if this was not clear), all *move the same way*. Of course, here I do not mean to say that they *are the same*, but rather that they are all playing the same game. When we teach students that *this* thing is bad and *that* thing is good, it is obviously useful for many reasons; a pedagogy of navigation simply finesses the movement. A pedagogy of navigation notes the movement (the rhetorical move stating *this* or *that*) and then finesses the movement by using *this* or *that* against the movement (rhetoric), with the use of rhetoric (a move). Therefore, a pedagogy of navigation is the sophist calling out sophistry.

If we look back through our chapters, we do come to descry a useful model for applying the pedagogy of navigation. The initial step for the practitioner of a pedagogy of navigation is to *reveal* the movement, clearly noting the move made. Then, one must *examine* the movement, digging into the language-game that it is being played within and exposing its metaphysical underpinnings (i.e., the metaphysics that the movement relies upon). Using the rules that one has identified through their examination, one must *amble* in setting upon their own movement that

finesses/hustles the initial movement. In chapter three, my ambulation sought to finesse the rules of academia (as pertain to thesis-writing) to open them up to attack whilst relying on them.

Lastly, one is to *listen* to the movement in response to their own. This listening may be to one's own past movement or to another movement, but it ends up being the very same revealing in the initial position, thus closing the circle of navigation. This circle of navigation then conduces simultaneously to a pedagogy *on the run, running late for itself, that throws up its hands, and gives up*. In this circle of navigation, I also give one the tools to undo my own pedagogy, to expose it for what it is: a rhetorical move in a language-game. Despite championing sophistry and rhetoric, this is not to say that there is no meaning being made here. It is simply to say that there is meaning in the movement.

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