# R2, MN ST, Open Source

## 1NC

### 1

**Drones invert the moral presumptiveness in favor of supporting the troops—the status quo generates a presumption against war—the 1AC is lacking a coherent explanation for: why drones**

Kiel Brennan-Marquez is a Visiting Human Rights Fellow at Yale Law School. “A progressive defense of drones,” Salon, 5/24/13. http://www.salon.com/2013/05/24/a\_progressive\_defense\_of\_drones/

But there is another moral dimension to drone warfare, running in the opposite direction, which I fear has been lost in the haze of (rightful) outcry. **For the same reason** that **drone warfare stands to make violence easier to deploy** — none of our lives are on the line — **it** also **makes violence harder to rationalize**. **The pain and death of drone strikes**, unlike the pain and death of traditional missions, **can draw no comfort from narratives of heroism**. **Destruction wrought by machines is neither noble nor grand. It’s asinine, and unfailingly repugnant**. **This means** that **drone strikes must be justified on their own terms, without recourse to war’s long-standing mystification**. **In a world where we apotheosize soldiers**, and rope off their actions from everyday opprobrium, **it’s important to consider whether the banal violence of machines might be preferable to the lionized violence of men**.¶ A year ago, Tom Engelhardt published a memorable essay in the Nation on the vileness of drone warfare. Taking a healthily incredulous view of the Obama administration’s assurance that it would use its lurid toy for exclusively virtuous ends, Engelhardt concluded with a flourish of outrage: “What [our leaders] can’t see in the haze of exceptional self-congratulation is this: they are transforming the promise of America into a promise of death. And death, visited from the skies, isn’t precise. It isn’t glorious. It isn’t judicious. It certainly isn’t a shining vision. It’s hell.” Magnificently put: The only trouble is that these same critiques would apply just as forcefully, if not more so, to traditional warfare. War isn’t precise. It isn’t glorious. It isn’t judicious. It isn’t a shining vision. It’s hell.¶ **The difference between traditional warfare and drone strikes is that the latter can be clearly identified as hellacious**. Not just by poets and philosophers – but by everyone, everywhere, in the immediacy of its horror. **When innocent people end up dead as the result of a drone strike, we easily recognize that outcome as morally lamentable**. **Undaunted by the symbolic distortion of the battlefield, we confront drones with the skepticism** — and, as the case may be, the outrage — **that accompanies moral clarity.** **The burden of proof inverts**. **Unlike traditional warfare, when the loss of life on the other side is presumptively acceptable,** and it only becomes unacceptable if circumstances render it so, **in the case of drone strikes, the loss of lives on the other side is presumptively unacceptable**, **and** **it only becomes acceptable if a persuasive rationale can be offered**. **Such rationale**s are not impossible to formulate, but it **faces a steep upward grade. It’s an argument of last resort, defensive rather than triumphant.**¶ Before exploring what practical light this observation can shed on drone strikes, it’s worth pausing to ask why moral judgment comes under strain during wartime. The answer is simple: we prize our own lives over enemy lives. This state of affairs is not necessarily justifiable on moral grounds. In fact, it seems plainly unjustified on moral grounds. But it’s also a social fact. A helpful analogy can be drawn to familial relations. Moral philosophers have encountered notorious difficulty in trying to rationalize the treatment of family members differently than the treatment of strangers. In both settings — family and war — the basic problem is the same. Justice makes no claim on love. Membership in a particular polity, no less than membership in a particular family, is a feature of the world to which we are attached – a condition inherited rather than chosen, which, despite its randomness, cannot be overcome by wordplay or will. Confronted with a question like, “Why should their soldiers die before ours?” an objective vantage point — the abstract stance of morality — is simply unavailable.¶ The dynamic of attachment at play in traditional warfare has persisted since time immemorial, and it is unlikely to relent soon. Nor am I trying to criticize it. Moral judgment is harsh, taut and withering; with good reason do we shield things we love from its gaze. At the same time, the difficulty involved in making sense of violence wrought by our troops also illuminates something important about the interpretation of wartime acts: The task of justifying an act of violence before the fact is distinct from the task of interpreting an act of violence after the fact. For example, in the face of a mission that made strategic sense but ended up yielding massive casualties, it would strike us as perfectly reasonable for an observer to say: “I was in favor of this mission, but now that I see the results, I am horrified.” The first thought — “I was in favor of this mission” — goes to whether, ex ante, the predicates of legitimate force existed. The second thought — “but now that I see the results, I am horrified” — goes to whether, ex post, the externalities can be rationalized.¶ And even more familiar is the inverse style of claim, in response to a mission that seemed heinous or imprudent but, for reasons outside of the observer’s control, was pursued: “Much as I opposed the mission to begin with, once our troops were on the ground, I believe they did what they had to do.” This commonplace formulation speaks to the way the battlefield consternates moral judgment. It’s one thing to advocate against the deployment of troops – but once the troops are deployed, a switch flips. **Because soldiers make the ultimate sacrifice, their actions are not subject to typical moral analysis**. What goes on “over there” stands beyond the comprehension — and beyond the everyday reproach — of civilians. This is not to say that soldiers act with moral impunity. Of course they do not. But **the moral constraints of the battlefield are of an attenuated kind, very far off, and shrouded in mystique.**¶In this respect, **drones represent a welcome shift of paradigm**: **they** stand to **clarify the moral stakes of state-sponsored violence by eliminating the dynamic of attachment that has traditionally accompanied it.** By itself, of course, this proposition does not entail that drone strikes are preferable to traditional troop deployments. What it does entail, however, is that **the benefits of moral clarity should be weighed**, in practice, **against the drawbacks of less circumspect decision-making**. As much as drones are liable to desensitize leaders, making violence easier to employ, **the outrage** **they produce is** also **likely to have a chilling effect in the other direction**. Which way will this calculus ultimately run? We exercise an important threshold of control over this question. Whether the anesthetic effect of machine-induced violence will outstrip the sense of outrage that violence-by-machines provoke, or vice versa, is not a static political fact to which we must be resigned – it’s a hard issue for us to deliberate with care. One thing, however, is certain. Moral clarity in the face of drone strikes, as compared to troop deployments, is only politically worthwhile — indeed, only possible — insofar as members of the public are kept informed about when drone strikes are happening, and what damage they cause. Transparency is a precondition of outrage – and of accountability.

#### OOO is incapable of understanding the social organization of commodities under productive forces – it is the enactment of labor that makes the commodity exist

Wolfe, 2012 Ross, University of Chicago, On Commodities and the False Liberation of the Object, June 19th, 2012, http://rosswolfe.wordpress.com/2011/06/19/on-commodities-and-the-false-liberation-of-the-object/

In other words, if I may draw some conceptual distinctions of my own, Object-Oriented Ontology does emphatically deny that the existence of objects is dependent on their relation to human cognition, to their mental representation by a subject.  However, it would be preposterous to assert that objects exist independently of the objective forces of the social relations of production.  An object that has been subsumed beneath the commodity-form could not appear in such a form were it not for these shadowy relations of production that take place “behind the backs” of these objects, to paraphrase Hegel.  Even in precapitalist modes of production, when the preponderance of the commodity-form was not as yet total, the appearance of objects that were the products of human labor would clearly be the result of relations of production specific to that social formation.  The mark of their artifice would be inscribed in their objectivity.  And so again, the existence of certain objects could not appear external to the productive relations that gave them their shape and constitution. This point does not seem to be controversial, and I believe that most Object-Oriented Ontologists would gladly concede it.  However, I should like to make the further claim commodities do not exist independently of their relation to cognition, either.  In fact, it is only through their social recognition as commodities that they can function as such, as essentially fungible and equivalent to one another. This recognition alone provides the key to how commodities can function as fetishes, how they are able to reify the conditions of the present into the seemingly timeless conditions that obtain in all societies, past and present.  For it is only through their transfiguration into objects of ideology that qualitatively multiform objects, each unique in the aspect of their utility, can be reduced to quantitatively uniform equivalencies.  The overarching thought-forms of society, the ruling ideologies, allow (among other things) objects to be represented to the social subject as commodities available in their quantifiable immediacy.  Of course, it is through the general social acceptance of this representation as empirically valid that allows capitalist society to sustain itself, not as some sort of illusory veil pulled over the eyes of the masses, but as an historically specific reality.  In his dialectical unmasking of this ideological fetishization, Marx notes that [t]he categories of bourgeois economics consist precisely of forms of this [relative] kind.  They are forms of thought which are socially valid, and therefore objective, for the relations of production belonging to this historically determined mode of social production, i.e., commodity production.  The whole mystery of commodities, all the magic and necromancy that surrounds the products of labour on the basis of commodity production, vanishes therefore as soon as we come to other forms of production. And it is precisely this “representationalist” aspect of commodity fetishism that so constantly eludes the grasp of Object-Oriented Ontology.  Vigorously denying the legitimacy of “correlationist” philosophies, which hold that the objects of experience arrive to the subject only in the form of “representation,” Object-Oriented Ontology is unable to make sense of how the phenomenon of reification or commodity fetishism takes place. Their realism is such that it simply tries to bypass the eidetic apprehension of reality.  This allows for their unfettered speculation into the constitution of the real, without having to bother with troublesome socio-epistemological questions of how subjects perceive and misperceive the world.  In fact, it is unclear whether or not the contemplative subject of post-Cartesian philosophy vanishes entirely.  This point is brought up in a brilliant comment by the poster Utisz, who highlights not only the methodological quandaries involved when Object-Oriented Ontology is forced to deal a counter-intuitive concept like commodity fetishism, but also the superficial way in which Marxist theory has been appropriated by members of the OOO movement.  His comment, which seems otherwise to have been ignored, runs as follows: I think this would hold water if any of those who actually put forward OOO were that interested in Marx and showed any desire to acquaint themselves with debates within Marxism 1850-2011 or were by any stretch of the imagination political activists. They seem more interested in fighting ‘anthropocentrism’ and riffing on a strange combination of Leibniz, Whitehead and Arne Naess. I’d recommend reading a figure like Naess – this is the sort of thing we’re really dealing with here. Of course there’s an ‘orientation’ to things in Marx (critically not speculatively so, there’s the rub) as there was to objects in Hegel (critically and speculatively). But no analysis of things in today’s world can with any responsibility ignore or downplay their relation to labour or to the subject respectively. A better approach would be: no object-orientation without equal subject-orientation (the subject, yes, scandalously different from rocks and flowers and bacteria), no speculation without critical self-reflection, awareness of contradiction, paralogism, etc. Object-orientation is forever caught in a dualism flailing around trying to battle a supposed privelege of subject over object by merely plumping enthusiastically for the other. Abstrakte Negation. No Glasnost for me, I’m afraid.

#### There is no such thing as a neutral investigation of the ontological substance of the object – bracketing Object Oriented speculations as absent their ideological correlates ignores the history of OOO’s appropriation by capitalist interests

Galloway, Alexander (20**12**) associate professor of media, culture, and communication at New York University. “The Poverty of Philosophy: Realism and Post-Fordism.” Critical Inquiry, Vol. 39, No. 2 (Winter 2013), pp. 347-366.

The point is not that math is unable to discourse about reality. Obviously it can. Rather the point is that one cannot be neutral on the question of math’s ability to discourse about reality, precisely because in the era of computerized capitalism math itself, as algorithm, has become a historical actor. I cite again Meillassoux’s dilemma: “This is the enigma which we must confront: mathematics’ ability to discourse about the great outdoors; to discourse about a past where both humanity and life are absent.” Yet after cybernetics, after the mathematization of the genome, after Google’s page rank algorithm, after the industrialization of the social graph, after the growing chasm of the digital divide, any talk of math’s unmediated discourse with reality comes off as disingenuous or in poor taste. Philosophy and computer science are not unconnected. In fact they share an intimate connection and have for some time. For example, set theory, topology, graph theory, cybernetics, and general systems theory are part of the intellectual lineage of both object-oriented computer languages, which inherit the principles of these scientific fields with great fidelity, and for recent continental philosophy including figures like Deleuze, Badiou, Niklas Luhmann, or Latour. Where does Deleuze’s control society come from if not from Norbert Wiener’s definition of cybernetics? 23 Where do Latour’s actants come from if not from systems theory? Where does Levi Bryant’s “difference that makes a difference” come from if not from Gregory Bateson’s theory of information? Given such a correlation, I may now reiterate the two points of contention posed at the outset. First, the problem of ideology critique: if the new realism mirrors contemporary capitalism, is it not merely a repackaging of contemporary ideology and therefore suspect by virtue of being antiscientific? Second, the problem of the political: bracketing ideology entirely, should one not also be skeptical purely on political grounds, owing to the fact that any project ventriloquizing the current capitalist arrangement is, for this very reason, politically retrograde? “What would an object-oriented democracy look like?” Such is Latour’s realist provocation, a question posed in the mammoth catalog for the exhibition “Making Things Public” staged in 2005 at the Zentrum fu¨r Kunst und Medientechnologie (ZKM) in Karlsruhe.24 But these democracies already exist. Their ugly sheen covers our beaches and deltas. Their object-oriented infrastructure skims off unpaid surplus-value from living networks. They provide the communications channels in and out of the maquiladoras. Their democracy has little relation to the rule of the people, only the rule of the market. Their so-called realism has no relation to real material history, only the unfeeling logic of exclusion and competition. As Nina Power put it so well in her dismissal of philosophical realism: “what use is it if it simply becomes a race to the bottom to prove that every entity is as meaningless as every other (besides, the Atomists did it better).”25

**Modern militarism must be situated in terms of its place within industrial capitalism – military expansion is inseparable from the capitalist political zeitgeist**

Harry Magdoff, editor, and Fred Magdoff, Professor, Plant and Soil Science, University of Vermont, “Approaching Socialism,” MONTHLY REVIEW v. 57 n. 3, July-August 20**05**. Available from the World Wide Web at: www.monthlyreview.org/0705magdoffs1.htm, accessed 4/12/06.

Another part of the human condition over the past two and a half centuries of industrial capitalism has been the almost continuous warfare with hundreds of millions of people killed. Occupation, slavery, genocide, wars, and exploitation are part of the continuing history of capitalism. Wars have resulted from capitalist countries fighting among themselves for dominance and access to global markets, from attempts to subjugate colonies or neocolonies, and ethnic or religious differences among people—many of which have been exacerbated by colonial occupation and/or imperial interference. The basic driving force of capitalism, to accumulate capital, compels capitalist countries to penetrate foreign markets and expand their market share. However, it is impossible to separate the leading imperialist countries’ economic drive to invest and sell abroad from their political and military policies—all interests are intertwined in a very dangerous combination. Warfare is continuing in the post-Cold War era—with the United States eager to display its military power—and there is potential for even more misery. The estimate that 100,000 Iraqis have died as a result of the U.S. invasion gives some idea of the magnitude of the disaster that has fallen on that nation.

#### The material determinism of capital is responsible for the instrumentalization of all life—makes all oppression inevitable.

Dyer-Witherford (professor of Library and Info. Sciences @ the Univ. of Western Ontarion) **‘**99 [Nick. Cyber Marx: Cycles and Circuits of Struggle in High Technology Capitalism.]

**For capitalism, the use of machines as organs of “will over nature” is an imperative**. The great insight of the Frankfurt School—an insight subsequently improved and amplified by feminists and ecologists—was that capital’s dual project of dominating both humanity and nature was intimately tied to the cultivation of “instrumental reason” that systematically objectifies, reduces, quantifies and fragments the world for the purposes of technological control. Business’s systemic need to cheapen labor, cut the costs of raw materials, and expand consumer markets gives it an inherent bias toward the piling-up of technological power. This priority—enshrined in phrases such as “progress,” “efficiency,” “productivity,” “modernization,” and “growth”—assumes an automatism that is used to override any objection or alternative, regardless of the environmental and social consequences. Today, we witness global vistas of toxification, deforestation, desertification, dying oceans, disappearing ozone layers, and disintegrating immune systems, all interacting in ways that perhaps threaten the very existence of humanity and are undeniably inflicting social collapse, disease, and immiseration across the planet. The degree to which this project of mastery has backfired is all too obvious.

#### Vote Negative to validate and adopt the method of structural/historical criticism that is the 1NC.

#### one must understand the existing social totality before one can act on it—grounding the sites of political contestation or knowledge outside of labor and surplus value merely serve to humynize capital and prevent a transition to a society beyond oppression

**Tumino** (Prof. English @ Pitt) **01**

[Stephen, “What is Orthodox Marxism and Why it Matters Now More than Ever”, Red Critiqu]

Any effective political theory will have to do at least two things: it will have to offer an integrated understanding of social practices and, based on such an interrelated knowledge, offer a guideline for praxis. My main argument here is that among all contesting social theories now, only Orthodox Marxism has been able to produce an integrated knowledge of the existing social totality and provide lines of praxis that will lead to building a society free from necessity. But first I must clarify what I mean by Orthodox Marxism. Like all other modes and forms of political theory, the very theoretical identity of Orthodox Marxism is itself contested—not just from non-and anti-Marxists who question the very "real" (by which they mean the "practical" as under free-market criteria) existence of any kind of Marxism now but, perhaps more tellingly, from within the Marxist tradition itself. I will, therefore, first say what I regard to be the distinguishing marks of Orthodox Marxism and then outline a short polemical map of contestation over Orthodox Marxism within the Marxist theories now. I will end by arguing for its effectivity in bringing about a new society based not on human rights but on freedom from necessity. I will argue that to know contemporary society—and to be able to act on such knowledge—one has to first of all know what makes the existing social totality. I will argue that the dominant social totality is based on inequality—not just inequality of power but inequality of economic access (which then determines access to health care, education, housing, diet, transportation, . . . ). This systematic inequality cannot be explained by gender, race, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, or nationality. These are all secondary contradictions and are all determined by the fundamental contradiction of capitalism which is inscribed in the relation of capital and labor. All modes of Marxism now explain social inequalities primarily on the basis of these secondary contradictions and in doing so—and this is my main argument—legitimate capitalism. Why? Because such arguments authorize capitalism without gender, race, discrimination and thus accept economic inequality as an integral part of human societies. They accept a sunny capitalism—a capitalism beyond capitalism. Such a society, based on cultural equality but economic inequality, has always been the not-so-hidden agenda of the bourgeois left—whether it has been called "new left," "postmarxism," or "radical democracy." This is, by the way, the main reason for its popularity in the culture industry—from the academy (Jameson, Harvey, Haraway, Butler,. . . ) to daily politics (Michael Harrington, Ralph Nader, Jesse Jackson,. . . ) to. . . . For all, capitalism is here to stay and the best that can be done is to make its cruelties more tolerable, more humane. This humanization (not eradication) of capitalism is the sole goal of ALL contemporary lefts (marxism, feminism, anti-racism, queeries, . . . ). Such an understanding of social inequality is based on the fundamental understanding that the source of wealth is human knowledge and not human labor. That is, wealth is produced by the human mind and is thus free from the actual objective conditions that shape the historical relations of labor and capital. Only Orthodox Marxism recognizes the historicity of labor and its primacy as the source of all human wealth. In this paper I argue that any emancipatory theory has to be founded on recognition of the priority of Marx's labor theory of value and not repeat the technological determinism of corporate theory ("knowledge work") that masquerades as social theory.

### Case

#### 1. The status quo solves or the aff doesn’t—Law is necessary to achieve change

Human Rights Watch, 10/21/13 UN: Hold International Talks on ‘Killer Robots’, <http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/10/21/un-hold-international-talks-killer-robots>

Most governments are in the process of determining their policy position on fully autonomous weapons and have not spoken publicly. One exception is the United States. The Defense Department issued a directive on November 21, 2012, that, for now, requires a human being to be “in-the-loop” when decisions are made about using lethal force, unless department officials waive the policy at a high level. The US policy directive, while positive, is not a comprehensive or permanent solution to the potential problems posed by fully autonomous systems, Human Rights Watch said. The policy of self-restraint it embraces may also be hard to sustain if other nations begin to deploy fully autonomous weapons systems. Human Rights Watch is the initial coordinator of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, announced in April by an international coalition of civil society groups. The campaign is working pre-emptively to ban weapons that would be able to select and attack targets without any human intervention. The coalition says that this prohibition should be achieved through an international treaty, as well as through national laws and other measures, to enshrine the principle that decisions to use lethal force against a human being should always be made by a human being.

**2. Drones not key—you don’t have a solvency advocate for why including drones within the WPR “delineates the fissures in anthropocentric methods which reduces armed forces to solely human bodies” – assumes that armed forces are just human bodies**

#### But the WPR regulates the armed forces—includes nuclear forces

US Code 10 subsection 111 'Military Force Structure Review Act of 1996'. \*\*\* Current through PL 113-31, approved 8/9/13 \*\*\* TITLE 10. ARMED FORCES SUBTITLE A. GENERAL MILITARY LAW PART I. ORGANIZATION AND GENERAL MILITARY POWERS CHAPTER 2. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE Go to the United States Code Service Archive Directory 10 USCS § 111 Lexis

"(1) **The term ' above the line' force structure of the Armed Forces' means the force structure (including numbers, strengths, and composition and major items of equipment**) for the Armed Forces at the following unit levels: **"(A) In the** case of **the Army, the division. "(B) In the** case of the **Navy, the battle group. "(C) In the** case of the **Air Force, the wing. "(D) In the** case of the **Marine Corps, the expeditionary force. "(E) In the** case of **special operations forces** of the Army, Navy, or Air Force, **the major operating unit. "(F) In the** case of the **strategic forces, the ballistic missile submarine fleet, the heavy bomber force, and the intercontinental ballistic missile force.** "(2) The term 'Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces' means the Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces established by subtitle E of title IX of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1994 (Public Law 103-160; 107 Stat. 1738; 10 U.S.C. 111 note).

#### 3.Changing doesn’t mean we will treat these new subjects with respect

Hettinger, Professor of Philosophy and coordinator of the minor in environmental studies, 02

(Ned, Ethics & the Environment 7.1 (2002) 109-123)

What cannot be found in Nature as Subject is a vision of a positive role for humanity in the natural world. My worry is that Katz's views about the value of nature and our obligations to it leave no room for such an account. I fear that Katz's conceptualization of how humans have wronged nature may entail that all human activity toward nature wrongs nature. This would undermine the possibility of envisioning an environmentally just future in which humans live in the natural world in a morally appropriate way. This is a serious problem, because environmental philosophy needs an ethic for the use of nature, as well as for its nonuse. We need a vision of a constructive human relationship with nature, in addition to a characterization of our past failures of relationship. The question I pose is whether Katz's ideas allow for an account of how humans can be flourishing members who contribute to natural community.

#### 4. It’s impossible to ignore the inevitability of individual choice – which makes an understanding of vibrant materiality difficult. Even for the aff, it is humans that will choose whether to view nature as actants, which limits the connectivity of vibrant materialism

Armstrong 12 Rachel, interdisciplinary practitioner with a background in medicine. Her work uses all manners of media to engage audiences and bring them into contact with the latest advances in science and their real potential through the inventive applications of technology, *Next Nature*, 4-12, <http://www.nextnature.net/2012/04/the-ecological-human>

Although ‘vibrant materiality’ may initially appear to have unlimited connectivity, it is actually constrained and edited by individual choices. People may alter the composition of their bodies by changing the ‘actants’ that constitute their unique human ecology by, for example, choosing to eat different foodstuffs that make them smarter, or happier. They may even nurture unique ecologies that confer an evolutionary advantage such as incorporating telecommunications devices into their living spaces that increase behavioural effectiveness. People may even decide just how far (through the agency of their associated ‘actants’) they can directly influence the ecology of the entire planet by recycling material, using renewable energy or growing food.

#### 5. Sacrifices real world problems—object-oriented ontology doesn’t reveal how to recognize and represent the possibility of all objects

**Berry 12** (David, Senior Lecturer, stunlaw: a critical review of politics, arts and technology, “The Uses of Object-Oriented Ontology,” May 5, 2012, http://stunlaw.blogspot.com/2012/05/uses-of-object-oriented-ontology.html)

In this ‘liberation’ therefore, we are saved from the ‘crushing’ problem of repetitive accounts of marginal inequality and suffering. This is achieved by a new ‘humanism’ that rejects the human as having any special case, such that the marginal problems of women, LGBT, immigrants, asylum seekers, and the poor are replaced with the problem of a litany of objects such as “quarks, Elizabeth Bennet, single-malt scotch, Ford Mustang fastbacks, lychee fruit, love affairs, dereferenced pointers, Care Bears, sirocco winds, the Tri-City Mall, tort law, the Airbus A330, the five-hundred drachma note” (Bogost 2012a: 133). He notes, “If we take seriously the idea that all objects recede interminably into themselves, then human perception becomes just one among many ways that objects might relate. To put things at the centre of a new metaphysics also requires us to admit that they do not exist just for us” (Bogost 2012a: 9). Leaving aside the question as to why we would want to apply that idea in the first place when it stands as hypothesis rather than expressing any form of evidence or proof, one might wonder how one is to judge between the different forms of perception in order to (re)present the litanies, let alone recognize them. This is a constant and unexamined problem within the domain of object-oriented ontology and is hardly dealt with by Harman’s notion of ‘metaphor’ or ‘alluding’ to things (Harman 2009b).

#### 6. Doesn’t solve—OOO ascribes sameness to objects with no connection—doesn’t create understanding of the world—and, it links to cap

Berry 12(David, Senior Lecturer, stunlaw: a critical review of politics, arts and technology, “The Uses of Object-Oriented Ontology,” May 5, 2012, http://stunlaw.blogspot.com/2012/05/uses-of-object-oriented-ontology.html)

To draw back to the original question: what are the uses of object-oriented ontology? It seems to me that object-oriented ontology and speculative realism together reflect a worrying spirit of conservatism within philosophy. They discount the work of human activity and place it alongside a soporific litany of naturalised objects – a method that points less at the interconnected nature of things, and gestures more towards the infinity of sameness, the gigantic of objects, the relentless distanceless of a total confusion of beings (see Harman 2009a for a discussion of things and objects). In short, experience as passive, disoriented and overwhelming, what Heidegger described as the “terror” of pure unmitigated flatness. And with that, philosophy becomes ‘cold’ philosophy, instead of understanding, we have lists and litanies of objects. Not so much philosophy as philosography, where rather than understanding the world, there is an attempt to describe it, and a worrying tendency towards the administration of things through a cataloguing operation. These litanies – cascades and tumbling threads of polythetic classification – are linked merely by sequence, in which each item has no need to bear any resemblance to the ones before or after. They posit no relationships, and offers no narrative connections, and are therefore “essentially uncontrollable: at the limit so indeterminable that anything can be connected with anything” (Anderson 2012). But of course there is a connection, a link, a thread, performed by the philosographer who chooses consciously or unconsciously the elements that make up the chain, and which are inscribed in books and articles. The use of object-oriented ontology, then, is bound up in its apparent conservatism which rallies at the temerity of human-beings to believe in themselves, their politics, and their specialness. Instead of World, object-oriented ontology posits universe, its founding principle is the Gigantic. As Heidegger explained: 1. The gigantism of the slowing down of history (from the staying away of essential decisions all the way to lack of history) in the semblance of speed and steer ability of "historical" [historisch] development and its anticipation. 2. The gigantism of the publicness as summation of everything homogeneous in favour of concealing the destruction and undermining of any passion for essential gathering. 3. The gigantism of the claim to naturalness in the semblance of what is self-evident and "logical"; the question-worthiness of being is placed totally outside questioning. 4. The gigantism of the diminution of beings in the whole in favour of the semblance of boundless extending of the same by virtue of unconditioned controllability. The single thing that is impossible is the word and representation of "impossible" (Heidegger 1999: 311). To see what "shows up" to the philosographer one is unsurprised to see lists that are often contaminated by the products of neoliberal capitalism, objects which could not just appear of themselves, but required actual concrete labour of human beings to mediate their existence. For some reason, object-oriented ontology is attracted to the ephemerality of certain objects, as if by listing them they doubly affirm their commitment to realism, or that the longer the list the more ‘real’ it is. There is also the tendency to attempt to shock the reader by the juxtaposition of objects that would normally be thought to be categorically different – see Bogost (2009) for a discussion of whether including Harry Potter, blinis, and humans in a list was a striking enough example. These rhetorical strategies are interesting in thermselves, but I do not see them as replacements for philosophy. This demonstrates that the speculative realists have not escaped the so-called ‘correlationist circle’ (Harman 2009b), nor provided a model for thinking about the anti-correlationist paradox which remains present in their own work. We should therefore ask object-oriented ontologist to move beyond merely staring at the objects they see around them and catch sight of what is being listed in their descriptive litanies. That is, examining the lists they produce, we can see what kind of objects they see as near, and which they see as far, and therefore question their claims to see objects all the way down (see Bogost 2012: 83-84). Yet as we examine these lists there appears to be a profound forgetting of Being, as it were, as they write both for and as subjects of Late Capitalism – a fact which remains hidden from them – and a seemingly major aporia in their work.

#### 7. And, all our arguments apply—it’s their burden to prove the distinctions between different types of OOO

**Wolfendale 12** (Peter, PhD candidate at University of Warwick, The Noumenon’s New Clothes, Speculations III, <http://speculations.squarespace.com/storage/Noumenons%20New%20Clothes_Pt1_Wolfendale.pdf>

I will plead forgiveness for my bombast, but there is a certain grandeur to the pronouncements regarding the emergence of OOO as a philosophical movement that demands parody, and I hope this can be taken in good spirit, as a sort of gesture to clear the air. I have every intention of taking these pronouncements as seriously as possible, and perhaps even more seriously than they are intended. Graham Harman, the erstwhile leader of this most vocal faction of what was once, fleetingly, called Speculative Realism (SR), has often expressed a preference for what he calls hyperbolic readings of philosophies.2 The idea here is to imagine the relevant philosophy in a position of nigh-unassailable strength, so as to tease out what would be missing from a world in which it had become dominant. To imagine a given philosophical tendency actually winning the discursive battles in which it is engaged is to treat it with the utmost seriousness. It is to treat it as a genuine contender for truth, whose claims to truth are sincere enough to be taken at face value. This is the kind of respect that any serious philosophical position should be treated with, and this goes double for nascent philosophical movements that claim to have both wide ranging implications and applications. The aim of this paper is to take OOO seriously, and to treat it with at least this level of respect (my initial parody aside).

#### 8. All of your authors are correlationists – vote NEG on presumption

Quentin Meillassoux (invented the damn OOO movement), Université de Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne. *After Finitude*. 2006, p. 63-64.

The second decision of strong correlationism will occupy us a little longer. For strong correlationism must ward off a second kind of absolute; one that is more redoubtable than the preceding variety because it seems to be more consistent. This second metaphysical strategy, which we evoked very briefly in Chapter 1, consists in absolutizing the correlation itself. Its basic line of argument may be summarized as follows: it was claimed that the Kantian notion of the thing-in-itself was not only unknowable, but also unthinkable. But if so, then it seems that the wisest course is simply to abolish any such notion of the in-itself. Accordingly, it will be maintained that the notion of the in-itself is devoid of truth because it is unthinkable, and that it should be abolished so that only the relation between subject and object remains, or some other correlation deemed to be more fundamental. A metaphysics of this type may select from among various forms of subjectivity, but it is invariably characterized by the fact that it hypostatizes some mental, sentient, or vital term: representation in the Leibnizian monad; Schelling's Nature, or the objective subject-object; Hegelian Mind; Schopenhauer's Will; the Will (or Wills) to Power in Nietzsche; perception loaded with memory in Bergson; Deleuze's Life, etc. Even in those cases where the vitalist hypostatization of the correlation (as in Nietzsche or Deleuze) is explicitly identified with a critique of 'the subject' or of 'metaphysics', it shares with speculative idealism the same twofold decision which ensures its irreducibility to naive realism or some variant of transcendental idealism: 1. Nothing can be unless it is some form of relation-to-the world (consequently, the Epicurean atom, which has neither intelligence, nor will, nor life, is impossible). 2. The previous proposition must be understood in an absolute sense, rather than as merely relative to our knowledge.

## 2NC

### 1

#### The aff is a momentary gesture—voting “that things could be different” doesn’t make that difference more of a possibility.

Dalby 4 Simon, Professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Carleton University. ANTHROPOCENE ETHICS: RETHINKING 'THE POLITICAL' AFTER ENVIRONMENT, Paper for the International Studies Association annual

**The reimagining of humanity** as a new biophysical forcing agent **requires a politics that is sensitive to context and to consequences of actions; in short responsibilities are part of a politics**. **The assumption of consequenceless consumption is untenable as the basis of any serious discussion of politics that considers contemporary contexts.**

### 2

#### It’s a semantic distinction – even if the WPR says armed forces, Congress ALREADY considers the WEAPONS THEY USE to be restrictable via WPR – throwing drones in the same category as nuclear weapons does nothing

Lobel 2012 JULES LOBEL Professor of Law, University of Pittsburgh Law School Conflicts Between the Commander in Chief and Congress: Concurrent Power over the Conduct of War. \*OHIO STATE LAW JOURNAL [Vol. 69:391

Given the fatal flaws in all of the approaches discussed above, perhaps the suppositions that underlie those theories should be reexamined before formulating a new theory. The alternative approach to be explored in the remainder of this Article starts by challenging the commonly accepted understanding that the President has exclusive authority over battlefield operations and that Congress cannot participate in the conduct of campaigns. As a matter of constitutional logic and history, that usually agreed on proposition is untenable. 60 As Part II of this Article demonstrates, **throughout our history—from the QuasiWar with France to the Civil War to the Vietnam conflict—on numerous occasions Congress has enacted legislation that interfered with the President’s socalled exclusive authority over battlefield operations and campaigns**. Moreover, the constitutional grant of authority to the President to be Commander in Chief was not designed by the Framers to preclude congressional authority over the conduct of warfare. Rather, the Framers’ grant to Congress of the powers to raise and support armies, to declare war, to issue letters of marque and reprisal, and to provide rules for the armed forces and rules governing captures was designed to provide important checks on the President’s Commander in Chief power. **There is no basis in the text of the Constitution or logic to limit Congress’s substantive power over the conduct of warfare powers and make them subservient to the President’s Commander in Chief power**. For example, Congress’s power to raise an army means that it can raise an army with certain weapons, not others, and a certain number of troops and no more**. As Professor Stephen Carter points out: Nothing in the language or structure of the Constitution suggests a distinction between rules limiting the number of tanks and limiting the theatres of operation.** **One might**, I suppose, **try to argue that restrictions on the number of soldiers or amount of equipment are limits on what the armed forces shall be; stipulations on where or how these forces can fight are limits on what the armed forces may do. But that difference—if it is a difference—is merely semantical**. 61 **Congress can therefore say the army shall not be one with nuclear weapons or that it shall have nuclear weapons but only use them in response to a nuclear attack—both of which would be important restrictions on the President’s ability to use tactical nuclear weapons in a battlefield situation.** Or the Congress could (and has) said that it will be an army that does not use ground troops in a particular conflict, or does not torture prisoners. **All these restrictions, which Carter views as definitional and nearly always constitutional,** **effectively say, “We have created this army, not that one**.” 62 So too, the congressional power to declare or authorize war has been long held to permit Congress to authorize and wage a limited war—“limited in place, in objects, and in time.” 63 **When Congress places such restrictions on the President’s authority to wage war, it limits the President’s discretion to conduct battlefield operations**. For example, Congress authorized President George H. W. Bush to attack Iraq in response to Iraq’s 1990 invasion of Kuwait, but it confined the President’s authority to the use of U.S. armed forces pursuant to U.N. Security Council resolutions directed to force Iraqi troops to leave Kuwait. That restriction would not have permitted the President to march into Baghdad after the Iraqi army had been decisively ejected from Kuwait, a limitation recognized by President Bush himself. 64 **Yet that restriction seems to be the very kind of limitation on a President’s tactical battlefield command that the commonly accepted premise would not permit. But if Congress can thus limit the purpose of the war against an enemy, why could it not impose other similar restrictions— limiting for example the theater of war, or even the places the military can attack?** If the 1991 Persian Gulf Resolution was constitutional—and nobody claimed it was not—Congress could have authorized war against Germany for the purpose of protecting Britain and liberating Western Europe, while not permitting combat operations into Germany or other theaters of action such as the Middle East or North Africa. Congress would never have done so, but the 1991 Persian Gulf authorization suggests that it could have. The 1991 Persian Gulf authorization is not an anomaly; **Congress has limited the objects, purposes, and tactics Presidents could use in conducting war throughout our history.**

### 3

#### And even OOO authors admit that seeing the world as actants is no guarantee of change

Bennett 11 Jane, Professor Political Theory - Johns Hopkins University, *Eurozine*, 10-19, http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2011-10-19-loenhart-en.html

I agree, of course, that **there is a darker side yet to vibrant materialism. Several forces could recoil upon us in a way that eliminates the conditions for human life. There are no cosmic guarantees to be provided by vital materialism.**

#### Denouncing the category of humans – without any transformative potential – is a SELF-DEFEATING GESTURE - denouncing conceptions of “human” doesn’t mean that we’ll ever get past them

Calarco 4, Assistant Professor Philosophy @ Fullerton,

(Matthew, Animal Philosophy: Essential Readings in Continental Thought)

We now have stronger reasons than ever before for rejecting a certain conception of what it is to be human, but **we seem to be hardly any** closer to a post-metaphysical thinking regarding the animal. You might say that Continental philosophy **has had an easier time denouncing** what **Descartes or Kant** said about the human than it has criticizing what they said about the animal, an observation that naturally leads one to question whether the humanism it rejects is really quite so defunct after all. The "end of humanism," the "ends of man," the "end of philosophy," the "death of the author," the "death of God," the "death of man" — these apocalyptic shibboleths are becoming **self-defeating utterances** amid a discourse that has said hardly anything about animals in comparison. We can only speculate why Continental philosophers have generally not had more to say about the traditional other of man — animals. One might perhaps attempt to account for the grossness of the discrepancy between man-talk and animal-talk by evoking the seemingly insurmountable difficulties of escaping metaphysical discourse itself. It is an established part of Heideggerian lore that the philosopher who seeks to go beyond metaphysics is destined to find herself all the more firmly rooted within it. Does not the discourse on the animal as such presuppose a distinction be made between animals and humans, thereby reaffirming the hegemony of humanism according to the familiar logic of negation? Would it not be better to eschew speaking of an opposition between the human and the animal altogether?

### 4

#### Why do we underestimate the non-human? Because of philosophy that assumes humans are the measure of all things, because we think objects are passive and because of an ACTION BIAS BUILD INTO HUMAN PERCEPTION (Gendered language not advocated)

Bennett and Livingston 12 Jane Bennett, Chair of Political Science Department at Johns Hopkins University and Alexander Livingston SCAPEGOAT, Semi-ology of a Disaster or, Toward a Non-Moralizing Materialism, Issue 2

**Why do we then overlook the creative contributions of nonhumans and underestimate their calls? One source of the tendency is a philoso phical canon based on the presumption that man is the measure of all things; another is a default grammar that diligently assigns activity to subjects and passivity to objects; another is** what Henri Bergson identifi ed as **the action-bias built right into human perceptio**n**—sensory attention is continually directed pragmatically toward the potential utility of external bodies, rather than toward their non-instrumentalizable aspects or thing-powers**.7

### 5

#### That means the aff collapses into nihilism—humans can’t be denied a specialness in relation to objects and then speak for those object, thereby affirming our specialness—it’s a contradiction that must be rejected

**Berry 12** (David, Senior Lecturer, stunlaw: a critical review of politics, arts and technology, “The Uses of Object-Oriented Ontology,” May 5, 2012, http://stunlaw.blogspot.com/2012/05/uses-of-object-oriented-ontology.html)

Putting to one side the somewhat doubtful claim that the former litany is given more credence by anyone except, perhaps, humanities scholars, here we see a claim to a collective ‘we’ that Bogost wishes to speak for and to. Further, he adds, “Let me be clear: we need not discount human beings to adopt an object-oriented position – after all, we ourselves are of the world as much as musket buckshot and gypsum and space shuttles. But we can no longer claim that our existence is special as existence” (Bogost 2012a: 8). Indeed, if we were to take this claim seriously then one would be driven to wonder why Bogost is writing his book at all, but of course, “musket buckshot and gypsum and space shuttles” cannot be the addressees of this text as patently they do not read. So object-oriented ontology (OOO) is trying to do two things here, on the one hand deny the specialness of humans’ existence in relation to other objects, whilst simultaneously having to write for them and to make arguments supporting their claims – thereby acknowledging the very special existence that humans possess, namely qualities of understanding, taking a stand on their own being, etc. This is a classic performative contradiction. Whilst it would be perfectly legitimate to outline a formalist theory or methodological position that, for the sake of the approach, limits the requirement to treat human actors as particular or special in relation to others (this is the methodological innovation within Actor-Network Theory), it is quite another to then extend this claim into a philosophical system which is part of a special order of discourse particular to human beings, that is, philosophy. This so-called philosophical non-human turn, is interesting for its nihilistic and conservative implications, something we now turn to in detail.

#### We shouldn’t need a high threshold for a link—if the thesis of the 1ac is wrong (and rocks aren’t people) then don’t consider it worthy of your consideration

Wolfendale 12(Peter, PhD candidate at University of Warwick, The Noumenon’s New Clothes, Speculations III, <http://speculations.squarespace.com/storage/Noumenons%20New%20Clothes_Pt1_Wolfendale.pdf>

What all this reveals is that Harman’s reading cannot be an interpretation of the substance of Heidegger’s ideas, even one that Heidegger himself would disagree with. It is possible to read thinkers against themselves, but this requires that there is some essential element present in their work that the work itself fails to live up to.33 The element that Harman tries to unearth in Heidegger’s tool-analysis simply isn’t there.34 The only reason he can propose to extend the intentional relation between Dasein and its tools to cover all interactions between entities is that he has stripped this relation of everything that makes it recognisably Heideggerian. He has excised the structure of projective understanding wholesale, and thereby completely abandoned the semantic and epistemological framework within which the encounter with the tool is described. This becomes clear once we ask the question: just what would it be for a screen door to encounter a knife as a knife?35 To say that this is for it to be affected by it in a way that is common to all knives is to say nothing that warrants using the word “encounter” in an intentional sense. The screen door has nothing that could qualify it as having anything like an awareness of generality. There is no hermeneutic “as” circumscribing its engagements with things. This leaves us saying that what it is for a screen door to interact with a knife qua knife is for it to be affected in the way that knives affect screen doors. This is an empty tautology unworthy of metaphysical scrutiny.36

### 6

#### Doesn’t solve

Benzon 12(William L., “Literary Criticism 21: Academic Literary Study in a Pluralist World,” 2012, Social Science Research Network)

But this post isn’t about what I think literary criticism should be doing, it’s about what Harman suggests on behalf of object-oriented ontology. Here’s his suggestion (pp.201-202): In short, we cannot identify the literary work with the exact current form it happens to have. And while many of the literary methods recommended by object-oriented criticism might already exist, here I would like to propose one that has probably never been tried on as vast a scale as I would recommend. Namely, the critic might try to show how each text resists internal holism by attempting various modifications of these texts and seeing what happens. Instead of just writing about Moby-Dick, why not try shortening it to various I degrees in order to discover the point at which it ceases to sound like Moby-Dick? Why not imagine it lengthened even further, or told by a third-person narrator rather than by Ishmael, or involving a cruise in the opposite direction around the globe? Why not consider a scenario under which Pride and Prejudice were set in upscale Parisian neighborhoods rather than rural England—could such a text plausibly still be Pride and Prejudice? Why not imagine that a letter by Shelley was actually written by Nietzsche, and consider the resulting consequences and lack of consequences? Just how does Harman think this will go as an actual boots-on-the-ground rubber-meets-the-road critical practice? Someone is going to have to produce these modified texts and someone is going to have to consider the effects. Who? The person who makes the modifications would, presumably, do so with deliberate intention. Would we therefore entrust that person with the job of figuring out whether or not that intention was achieved? Would we be surprised if he or she concluded that the modified texts produced the intended result? I think not. So what do we do with the modified text?  
We could give it to ordinary readers and let them have at it. Then we have to figure out how that text affected them and whether or not that is any different from the effects of the original. That just amplifies the difficulties we already face in figuring out how texts affect real readers, a problem which some pretty sophisticated psychologies have been running at for awhile. Alternatively, and far beyond simply describing the difference s between the altered text and the original text how will they discuss whether or not the abridged or otherwise modified version of, say, Moby Dick is like the original? What is it that they might learn? Frankly, it’s not at all obvious to me that Harman’s proposal is more than a recipe for thought experiments for it’s not obvious that we’ve got any critical methods that would turn up anything new if we tried this out for real. Still, if you want to think about it, it’s not as though something very like this hasn’t been going on for some time, and rather extensively at that.

### 7

#### And, the mere claim to “not our Aff” is itself the link—the constant shifting is itself the building block of OOO

Harman 11(Graham, Professor of Philosophy and Associate Provost for Research Administration at the American University in Cairo, New Literary History, “The Well-Wrought Broken Hammer: Object-Oriented Literary Criticism,” 2011)

This brings us to the question of object-oriented method. What is most characteristic of intellectual methods is that they are always two-faced, opening up new approaches while also reversing into petrified dogma. This is why the work of theorization must always be on the move. We always want to identify “the next big thing” not for the sake of earning social capital and a with-it image, but because any theoretical content eventually reaches a point where it is no longer liberating. The Marxist idea that there is economics and all the rest is ideology was once a fresh approach to the human sciences, but eventually became petulant, robotic, and blind. Freud’s model of dreams as wish fulfillments gave closure to an otherwise impenetrable subject, and thereby shed light on the entire field of culture, while also tending to veer towards petrified dogma. All of these methods provide key flashes of insight at crucial moments in intellectual history and individual biography, yet over time they have become empty clichés that spare us the necessity of thinking. From time to time something new is needed to awaken us from various dogmatic slumbers. Properly pursued, the search for “the next big thing” is not a form of hip posturing or capitalist commodification, but of hope.

### 8

#### Bryant is a Deleuzian who adopted a bunch of Harman’s work

Bryant, Levi. (wrote all of their solvency evidence), professor of philosophy at Collin College. “Democracy of Objects,” 2011. http://openhumanitiespress.org/Bryant\_2011\_The%20Democracy%20of%20Objects.pdf

Then there was my encounter with Graham Harman nearly three years ago. I first approached Harman to be a third editor for The Speculative Turn as a consequence of the diligent help he provided in pulling the collection together and putting Nick Srnicek and me in contact with various presses. At the time I knew very little about Harman’s ontology, having read scant little of his work (he did earn his Ph.D., after all, from a rival school!), and finding him generally rather suspect; no doubt as a result of projective identification. Over the next couple of weeks, a very friendly yet intense email discussion erupted between the two of us, with me arguing from a Deleuzian relational-monist perspective and Harman arguing from the standpoint of his object-oriented philosophy, defending both the existence of substances and their autonomy from relations. I came out of the tail end of that debate transformed, finding that I needed to rework the entirety of my thought within a framework that made room for substances independent of relations. Every page of the book that follows is inspired by Harman’s work, such that it is impossible to cite all the ways in which he has influenced my thinking.

## 1NR

### K

#### That means any risk of a link guts AFF solvency – the nature of the drone DOES NOT EXIST in its speculative form – the only thing that an AFF ballot will reveal is a more brutal exploitation of labor

Wolfe, 2012 Ross, University of Chicago, On Commodities and the False Liberation of the Object, June 19th, 2012, http://rosswolfe.wordpress.com/2011/06/19/on-commodities-and-the-false-liberation-of-the-object/

Utisz hits the nail on the head when he mentions Object-Oriented Ontology’s obsessive mania to avoid anything that even remotely resembles “anthropocentrism.”  For the movement’s adherents, human beings are just one kind of object leading an unprivileged existence within a more inclusive “democracy of objects,” to use Bryant’s terminology (though I’m not quite sure how inhuman objects can constitute a demos).  So while Object-Oriented Ontology is quick to attribute the category of “agency,” a faculty usually reserved solely for human subjects, to non-human objects (Latour’s “actants”), it is slower to admit the qualitative difference of human agents from the rest of nature.  A microcosm of this tendency appears in Levi Bryant’s post concerning his rather opaque concept of “wilderness ontology,” in which he collapses the distinction between human and non-human architectural enterprises. ”[T]here is, in a wilderness ontology, no categorical distinction between the natural and the cultural, the human and the natural,” asserts Bryant.  ”There is just a flat field where, occasionally, human creations happen to populate this field in much the same way that we occasionally come across the marvelous architectural feats of termites on the African and Australian plains.”  The astounding difference between anthills or termite mounds, which are the blind product of natural social instinct, and a modern skyscraper, a profoundly unnatural, geometricized conglomeration of synthetic materials like ferro-concrete and glass, designed by an architect or team of architects — all traces of this qualitative difference disappear within a shapeless mass of equivocation. And this is what returns us, circuitously, to the problem of commodity fetishism in the first place.  For one of the most pernicious features of the commodity is its tendency to naturalize its own existence within the collective consciousness of society. The existing social relations it engenders are reified into a bizarre sort of “second nature,” with its own set of seemingly immutable laws and forces.  Or, as Lukács explained it: [M]en are constantly smashing, replacing, and leaving behind the “natural,” irrational, and actually existing bonds, while, on the other hand, they erect around themselves in the reality that they have created and “made,” a kind of second nature which evolves with exactly the same inexorable necessity as was the case earlier with irrational forces of nature (more exactly: the social relations which appear in this form). And this is what separates the speculative realist approach of Object-Oriented Ontology from the critical realist approach of Marxism. There is nothing in the positive constitution of the commodity would suggest that there is anything peculiar about it; in enumerating its objective qualities, the social matrix that engendered it is nowhere to be found. The analysis thus undertaken rises no higher than the level of the empirical, extracting only the metaphysical properties from the datum of immediate experience.  By contrast, the ruthlessly critical essence of Marxism presumes a radically anti-empirical approach to the study of reality.  Nothing is as it immediately seems.  For only through a rigorous dialectical investigation is one able to discover the quasi-theological roots of the commodity’s existence. Through this method the underlying category of socially congealed labor-time is exposed, which allows for the possibility of exchange and a potential equivalence between otherwise fundamentally different objects of use. The physical immediacy of the commodified object conceals its dark origins in the web of social relations, contained within its value-dimension.  In the case of commodity fetishism, a social relation between people becomes objectified as a permanent state of affairs that exists independent of their own activity, as “just the way things are.”  Or, as Lukács put it, “a relation between people takes on the character of a thing and thus acquires a ‘phantom objectivity,’ an autonomy that seems so strictly rational and all-embracing as to conceal every trace of its fundamental nature: the relation between people.”  Bryant thus rightly quotes a passage from Adorno that confirms this totalizing logic of homogeneity within capital and in the commodity fetish in particular: The barter principle, the reduction of human labor to the abstract universal concept of average working hours, is fundamentally akin to the principle of identification. Barter is the social model of the principle, and without the principle there would be no barter; it is through barter that non-identical individuals and performances become commensurable and identical. The spread of the principle imposes on the whole world an obligation to become identical, to become total.