Q:
fantasy as utopia / as (comm)union with the extralinguistic world/the beyond
what happens when fantasy becomes reality? what happens when idealization
becomes a standardized norm
When you immanentize the eschaton:
what is the dark side of fantasy = phantasmagoria / masking of ideology / power
passes as truth
Is hyperreality necessarily a bad thing? Can it be a source of liberating potential?
Ala Heid/techne

Baudrillard

(1) models are no longer supplements to the Real
        (1.i) models are their own reality
                (1.i.a) models are the only reality
                (1.i.b) [Abstraction today] "is the generation by models of a real without
origin or reality: a hyperreal."
                        (1.i.b.I) the map that precedes/engenders the territory
                                (1.i.b.I.A) it is "reality" itself that is becoming tattered/frayed
        (1.ii) There is no distance between model and reality —> the model is reality
                (1.ii.a) cf Trump
                (1.ii.b) Models no longer [have] to be rational, since [they are] no longer
measured against some ideal or negative instance. **It is nothing more than
operational.**
        (1.iii) all that is left is empty signifiers devoid of (truth-bearing) signifieds
                (1.iii.a) (empty) symbolic system —> system of equivalence (fungibility)
                        (1.iii.a.I) "substituting signs of the real for the real itself"
                (1.iii.b) **"A hyperreal henceforth sheltered from the imaginary..."** =
Hyperreality is no longer about meaning (e.g., of life), or discerning truth from
illusion, it is just the empty recurrence of difference
(e.g., pseudo individuation in pop music, proliferation of media choices that are all
basically the same, rival political platforms that are identical, in other words a
false choice — take it...or take it.)

(2) Psychosomatics
        (2.i) to simulate illness is itself illness
                (2.i.a) can even cause physical symptoms
                (2.i.b) destabilizes truth principle
        (2.ii) does this hold in purely psychological illnesses?
                (2.ii.a) can you cause psychological symptoms by simulating
psychological symptoms?

(2.ii.b) HH: e.g. Max Klinger/Section 8?
            (2.ii.b) psychoanalyst says no: there is a precise order to the symptoms,
experts are not fooled
            (2.ii.b.I) but what if they're wrong?
(3) Religion
        (3.i) no depiction of Allah, etc.
        (3.ii) what happens when deity is reproduced in icons?
            (3.ii.a) are images just visible theology? does divinity remain all-
powerful
            (3.ii.b) does it dilute divinity across multiple simulated instantiations?
                (3.ii.b.I) i.e., loss of aura?
            (3.ii.c) do images become more powerful than the "reality" they stand in
for?
                (3.ii.c.I) do they erase God from the minds of men?
                    (3.ii.a.I.A) cf. Plato: Phaedrus
                (3.ii.c.II) does this suggest to men that in fact there never was any
God to begin with?
                (3.ii.c.III) just empty simulation?

Images are not just imitations of a perfect reality — they construct their own
reality

God is dead and we have murdered him

how —> reject metaphysical truth (Hume) —> images are all we've got —>
images murdered God —> they seem real/verifiable but are just a particular frame
on the world —> in fact, they are the world (shades of Berkeley, but with out the
mind-independent truth status of logic)

Prison —> carceral society
Disneyland —> American lack of history/depth/reality —> masks America's
hyperreality —> entrenched fear of death
        Left censorship/attempts to erase/rewrite history is predicated on a belief in
America's rootlessness (that you can be whatever you say you are, rewrite your
own history however you like) and it follows this logic - instead of coming to terms
with the tension in those aspects/personages of our history that are both
humanizing and dehumanizing, there is often an attempt to pretend like it never
happened. Ignoring the problematic aspects of our history is one side of the coin /
Censorship is just the other side. Both seek to brush aside, rather than confront
the true complexity of the problem. Both seek to create a flimsy, shallow history
that can be worked into slogans, bumper stickers, t-shirts, CNN/NYT reports, or
whatever.

NYT: "the slow ouster of democratic principles by the very different principles of human rights."
Rights = curtailing of activity (negative freedom) / freedom from / individuality
Democratic = discourse / finding common ground / community
      but egalitarianism is based on the myth of meritocracy
             is meritocracy, in principle, impossible (logically impossible)? or is it just imperfect in its realization (logically possible)?

"Apparently one no longer debates the things written in magazines. One questions the "legitimacy" of the magazines themselves."

"cancel culture, which is to say the extermination of culture"

"Anyway, I daresay some of us are old enough to have echoes in our heads of Goebbels when he said, 'When I hear the word "culture" I reach for my revolver.'"

Watergate/Trump —> a symptom of a larger problem (neoliberalism, post-truth, etc.)
      Trump makes it easy to forget about the truly immoral aspects of our society — we focus on his (comparatively benign) trespasses, while looking the other way when the Left bombs civilians and impoverishes the majority of us.

2ndary sources:

"The individual, Baudrillard argued, had become submerged in content, symbols, and ads — and we can now add misinformation and clickbait to that list."

"The constant battle for our attention means that we can experience whatever version of reality we prefer, whenever we prefer. Even worse, because media platforms are competing to win audiences, the incentives will always push them in the direction of catering to our worst impulses. After a while, we're just awash in self-curated content."

Truth v power:
"Postmodernism's crucial insight is that power (in all its dark forms) is what often determines what passes for truth in our culture;
ignoring that makes you vulnerable to manipulation,"

But the error "is to infer from this that truth itself was determined by those in power. That **collapses what passes for truth** with **truth itself**, which is just a mistake, both politically and logically."

"We've combined the puerility of televisual culture with the self-centeredness of

digital culture. The result is the total triumph of the mediated self, where everyone can create, perform, and affirm their identity and their truth and the marketplace will oblige them at every step."

SEP:
Baudrillard adds to Marx's **use-value / exchange value**, + **sign-value** — the expression and mark of style, prestige, luxury, power, etc. — an increasingly important part of the commodity and consumption || "conspicuous consumption"

Baudrillard: **NO SUBJECT** has no theory of the subject **as an active agent of social change** whatsoever, thus following the **structuralist** and **poststructuralist** critique of the philosophical and practical subject categorized by Descartes, Kant, and Sartre which was long dominant in French thought. Structuralists and poststructuralists argued that s**ubjectivity was produced by language, social institutions, and cultural forms** and was **not independent of its construction in these institutions and practices.**

"For Lukàcs, the Frankfurt School, and Baudrillard, *reification* — the process whereby human beings become dominated by things and become more thinglike themselves — comes to govern social life."

For marx human nature/autheticity is bound up in use value —> but for Baudrillard/Nietzsche/Kant human freedom is an excess beyond utility

premodern societies: symbolic exchange,
modern societies: production,
postmodern societies: "simulation"
        labor is no longer a force of production but is itself a *"one sign* amongst many"
        Wages too bear no rational relation to one's work and what one produces but to one's place within the system

If modern societies, for classical social theory, were characterized by differentiation, for Baudrillard, postmodern societies are characterized by dedifferentiation, the "collapse" of (the power of) distinctions, or *implosion*.