

# The Dialectic of Enlightenment, by M. Horkheimer & T. Adorno

a. People / Organizations: [https://monoskop.org/images/2/27/Horkheimer\\_Max\\_Adorno\\_Theodor\\_W\\_Dialectic\\_of\\_Enlightenment\\_Philosophical\\_Fragments.pdf](https://monoskop.org/images/2/27/Horkheimer_Max_Adorno_Theodor_W_Dialectic_of_Enlightenment_Philosophical_Fragments.pdf)

b. Quotes:

- "...the major discoveries are paid for with an increasing decline of theoretical education" - Authors (pg. xiv)
- "dialectic discloses each image as script. It teaches us to read from its features the admission of falseness which cancels its power and hands it over to truth" - Authors (pg. 18)
- **"enlightenment is totalitarian as only a system can be.** Its untruth does not lie in the analytical method, the reduction to elements, the decomposition through reflection, as its Romantic enemies had maintained from the first, but in its assumption that the trial is prejudged" - Authors (pg. 18)
  - "Thought is reified as an autonomous, automatic process, aping the machine it has itself produced, so that it can finally be replaced by the machine. **Enlightenment pushed aside the classical demand to "think thinking"**—Fichte's philosophy is its radical fulfillment—because it distracted philosophers from the command to control praxis, which Fichte himself had wanted to enforce. Mathematical procedure became a kind of ritual of thought. Despite its axiomatic self-limitation, it installed itself as necessary and objective: mathematics made thought into a thing—a tool, to use its own term" - Authors (pg. 19)
    - **"Now that self-preservation has been finally automated, reason is dismissed** by those who, as controllers of production, have taken over its inheritance and fear it in the disinherited. **The essence of enlightenment is the choice between alternatives, and the inescapability of this choice is that of power. Human beings have always had to choose between their subjugation to nature and its subjugation to the self.** With the spread of the bourgeois commodity economy the dark horizon of myth is illuminated by the sun of calculating reason, beneath whose icy rays the seeds of the new barbarism are germinating. Under the compulsion of power, human labor has always led away from myth and, under power, has always fallen back under its spell." - Authors (pg. 24-25)
- "Spinoza's proposition: **"the endeavor of preserving oneself is the first and only basis of virtue,"** contains the true maxim of all Western civilization, in which the religious and philosophical differences of the bourgeoisie are laid to rest" - Authors (pg. 22)
- **"Poverty as the antithesis between power and impotence is growing beyond measure, together with the capacity permanently to abolish poverty.** From the commanding heights of the economy to the latest professional rackets, the tangled mass of cliques and institutions which ensures the indefinite continuation of the status quo is impenetrable to each individual" - Authors (pg. 30)
  - **"Each advance of civilization has renewed not only mastery but also the prospect of its alleviation"** - Authors (pg. 32)
- "Stoicism - which is the bourgeois philosophy - makes it easier for the privileged to look what threatens them in the eye by dwelling on the suffering of others. It affirms the general by elevating private existence, as protection from it, to the status of a principle. The private sphere of the bourgeois is an upper-class cultural asset which has come down in the world" - Authors (pg. 76) \*cf. pg. 80 for 'stoic indifference'
  - \*cf. March 22, 2023 entry - G. W. F. Hegel, in his *Philosophy of History*, while accepting the fact that "the philosophy of the time stood related to religion" (pg. 420), says "Stoicism, Epicureanism, and Skepticism - although within their common sphere opposed to each other, had the same general purport, viz. rendering the soul absolutely indifferent to everything which the real world had to offer. **These philosophies...produced in man a self-reliant immobility**" (pg. 407). Hegel continues saying, "Stoicism taught only that the Negative is not - that pain must not be recognized as a veritable existence" (pg. 413).
  - \*cf. January 1, 2023 entry - Stoicism should be neither a place where one starts or finishes their discovery; like all variants of philosophy, it has its defining attributes along with principles too narrowly sought and, at times, indeterminant. It is primarily cosmological - mainly, that there is some natural unifying force in the universe for which everything (object and event) is determined by. But, in this way, too, it treads on idealism; ignoring reasons for pain and suffering, all it says is, "if you dwell on such, you'll only cause yourself more heartache". If you begin there, it'll undoubtedly obscure your sense of, and propensity for, reason as it often abstains from demanding such. If, however, you were to end there, you'd hardly be able to believe any of its principles as they would seem, compared to most other philosophy, too radically rudimentary.
    - 1. *A History of Philosophy*, by F. Thilly
      - "in their metaphysics, the Stoics teach determinism; in their ethics, free will [or voluntarism]" (pg. 113)
      - "man is free in so far as he has logical thought" (pg. 111)
      - "things are not in our power; but how we shall act with respect to them is in our power" (pg. 112)
      - "everything is absolutely determined, even the human will" (pg. 110)
      - "the universe is unity...[and] all its parts are in harmony" (pg. 109)
      - "the Stoics sometimes denied the existence of evil" (pg. 110)
    - 2. *A History of Political Theories, Vol. 1*, by W. A. Dunning
      - "Stoicism, in short, brought into prominence the fateful doctrines of natural law and cosmopolitanism" (pg. 104)
      - "cosmopolitanism, in fact, expanded into humanitarianism" (pg. 105)
      - "in the lowly classes at the base of the social structure in the Roman Empire developed a principle of equality and brotherhood analogous in its bearings to that which Stoicism was propagating among the intellectual classes" (pg. 154)
      - "as Christianity spread upward among the people, its way was made easier by the prevalence of Stoic concepts" (pg. 154)
    - 3. *The Stoic Philosophy*, by Gilbert Murray (1915)  
<https://ia800304.us.archive.org/13/items/theisticphilosop00murruf/theisticphilosop00murruf.pdf>
      - "Stoicism may be called either a philosophy or a religion. It was a religion in its exalted passion; it was a philosophy inasmuch as it made no pretence to magical powers or supernatural knowledge." (pg. 14)
      - "Stoicism, like Christianity, was primarily a religion for the oppressed, a religion of defence and defiance" (pg. 16-17)
  - \*cf. January 27, 2023 entry - T. O'Keefe, in his article *Ancient Theories of Freedom and Determinism*, says "the Stoics think that every event is both causally determined and fated" (pg. 12, 33), believing, too, that "it is what comes about through us that is up to us" (pg. 35).  
<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/freedom-ancient/>
    - \*This is evidence enough of how Stoicism is a quite contradictory doctrine. As contradictory, we see exactly how 'meant for the masses' it's character truly is - that it will say nearly anything to appease and still the many in efforts of maintaining firm grasp of its privileged stature over such.

c. General Notes:

- Preface (pg. xiv)
  - "What we had set out to do was nothing less than to explain why humanity, instead of entering a truly human state, is sinking into a new kind of barbarism" (pg. xiv)
  - "We believe that in these fragments we have contributed to such understanding by showing that the cause of enlightenment's relapse into mythology

- is to be sought not so much in the nationalist, pagan, or other modern mythologies concocted specifically to cause such a relapse as in the fear of truth which petrifies enlightenment itself. Both these terms, enlightenment and truth, are to be understood as pertaining not merely to intellectual history but also to current reality. Just as enlightenment expresses the real movement of bourgeois society as a whole from the perspective of the idea embodied in its personalities and institutions, truth refers not merely to rational consciousness but equally to the form it takes in reality" (pg. xvi)
- **"False clarity is only another name for myth. Myth was always obscure and luminous at once. It has always been distinguished by its familiarity and its exemption from the work of concepts"** (pg. xvii)
  - **"The enslavement to nature of people today cannot be separated from social progress. The increase in economic productivity which creates the conditions for a more just world also affords the technical apparatus and the social groups controlling it a disproportionate advantage over the rest of the population. The individual is entirely nullified in face of the economic powers.** These powers are taking society's domination over nature to unimagined heights. While individuals as such are vanishing before the apparatus they serve, they are provided for by that apparatus and better than ever before. In the unjust state of society the powerlessness and pliability of the masses increase with the quantity of goods allocated to them. The materially considerable and socially paltry rise in the standard of living of the lower classes is reflected in the hypocritical propagation of intellect. Intellect's true concern is a negation of reification. It must perish when it is solidified into a cultural asset and handed out for consumption purposes. The flood of precise information and brand-new amusements make people smarter and more stupid at once." (pg. xvii)
  - **"The first essay, the theoretical basis of those which follow, seeks to gain greater understanding of the intertwinement of rationality and social reality, as well as of the intertwinement, inseparable from the former, of nature and the mastery of nature. The critique of enlightenment given in this section is intended to prepare a positive concept of enlightenment which liberates it from its entanglement in blind domination"** (ph. xviii)
    - "The critical part of the first essay can be broadly summed up in two theses: Myth is already enlightenment, and enlightenment reverts to mythology" (pg. xviii)
  - "The section "The Culture Industry" shows the regression of enlightenment to ideology which is graphically expressed in film and radio. Here, enlightenment consists primarily in the calculation of effects and in the technology of production and dissemination; the specific content of the ideology is exhausted in the idolization of the existing order and of the power by which the technology is controlled" (pg. xviii-xix)
  - Chapter 1 - The Concept of Enlightenment (pg. 1)
    - **"Enlightenment, understood in the widest sense as the advance of thought, has always aimed at liberating human beings from fear and installing them as masters"** (pg. 1)
      - "Although not a mathematician, Bacon well understood the scientific temper which was to come after him. The "happy match" between human understanding and the nature of things that he envisaged is a patriarchal one: the mind, conquering superstition, is to rule over disenchanting nature. Knowledge, which is power, knows no limits, either in its enslavement of creation or in its deference to worldly masters" (pg. 2)
        - "Technology is the essence of this knowledge. It aims to produce neither concepts nor images, nor the joy of understanding, but method, exploitation of the labor of others, capital" (pg. 2)
      - **"What human beings seek to learn from nature is how to use it to dominate wholly both it and human beings. Nothing else counts.** Ruthless toward itself, the Enlightenment has eradicated the last remnant of its own self-awareness. Only thought which does violence to itself is hard enough to shatter myths" (pg. 2)
        - **"From now on matter was finally to be controlled without the illusion of immanent powers or hidden properties. For enlightenment, anything which does not conform to the standard of calculability and utility must be viewed with suspicion.** Once the movement is able to develop unhampered by external oppression, there is no holding it back. Its own ideas of human rights then fare no better than the older universals. Any intellectual resistance it encounters merely increases its strength. The reason is that **enlightenment also recognizes itself in the old myths**" (pg. 3)
          - **"Enlightenment is totalitarian"** (pg. 4)
            - ◆ "For the Enlightenment, only what can be encompassed by unity has the status of an existent or an event; its ideal is the system from which everything and anything follows. Its rationalist and empiricist versions do not differ on that point" (pg. 4)
              - ◇ **"Formal logic was the high school of unification.** It offered Enlightenment thinkers a schema for making the world calculable" (pg. 4)
              - ◆ "Unity remains the watchword from Parmenides to Russell. All gods and qualities must be destroyed" (pg. 5)
            - "Bourgeois society is ruled by equivalence. It makes dissimilar things comparable by reducing them to abstract quantities. For the Enlightenment, anything which cannot be resolved into numbers, and ultimately into one, is illusion..." (pg. 4)
          - **"Myth becomes enlightenment and nature mere objectivity.** Human beings purchase the increase in their power with estrangement from that over which it is exerted. **Enlightenment stands in the same relationship to things as the dictator to human beings. He knows them to the extent that he can manipulate them.** The man of science knows things to the extent that he can make them. Their "in-itself" becomes "for him." In their transformation the essence of things is revealed as always the same, a substrate of domination. This identity constitutes the unity of nature" (pg. 6)
            - **"Mythology itself set in motion the endless process of enlightenment** by which, with ineluctable necessity, every definite theoretical view is subjected to the annihilating criticism that it is only a belief, until even the concepts of mind, truth, and, indeed, enlightenment itself have been reduced to animistic magic" (pg. 7)
              - **"Just as myths already entail enlightenment, with every step enlightenment entangles itself more deeply in mythology.** Receiving all its subject matter from myths, in order to destroy them, it falls as judge under the spell of myth. It seeks to escape the trial of fate and retribution by itself exacting retribution on that trial. In myths, everything that happens must atone for the fact of having happened. It is no different in enlightenment: no sooner has a fact been established than it is rendered insignificant. The doctrine that action equals reaction continued to maintain the power of repetition over existence long after humankind had shed the illusion that, by repetition, it could identify itself with repeated existence and so escape its power. **But the more the illusion of magic vanishes, the more implacably repetition, in the guise of regularity, imprisons human beings in the cycle now objectified in the laws of nature, to which they believe they owe their security as free subjects.** The principle of immanence, the explanation of every event as repetition, which enlightenment upholds against mythical imagination, is that of myth itself. The arid wisdom which acknowledges nothing new under the sun, because all the pieces in the meaningless game have been played out, all the great thoughts have been thought, all possible discoveries can be construed in advance, and human beings are defined by self-preservation through adaptation—this barren wisdom merely reproduces the fantastic doctrine it rejects: the sanction of fate which, through retribution, incessantly reinstates what always was. Whatever might be different is made the same. That is the verdict which critically sets the boundaries to possible experience. **The identity of everything with everything is bought at the cost that nothing can at the same time be identical to itself. Enlightenment dissolves away the injustice of the old inequality of unmediated mastery, but at the same time perpetuates it in universal mediation, by relating every existing thing to every other"** (pg. 8)
                - ◆ **"Each human being has been endowed with a self of his or her own, different from all others,** so that it could all the more surely be made the same. But because that self never quite fitted the mold, enlightenment throughout the liberalistic period has always sympathized with social coercion. The unity of the manipulated collective consists in the negation of each individual and in the scorn

- poured on the type of society which could make people into individuals." (pg. 9)
- "The distance of subject from object, the presupposition of abstraction, is founded on the distance from things which the ruler attains by means of the ruled" (pg. 9)
    - **"The doubling of nature into appearance and essence, effect and force, made possible by myth no less than by science, springs from human fear,** the expression of which becomes its explanation. This does not mean that the soul is transposed into nature, as psychologism would have us believe; *mana*, the moving spirit, is not a projection but the echo of the real preponderance of nature in the weak psyches of primitive people. The split between animate and inanimate, the assigning of demons and deities to certain specific places, arises from this preanimism. Even the division of subject and object is prefigured in it" (pg. 10-11)
  - **"The concept, usually defined as the unity of the features of what it subsumes, was rather, from the first, a product of dialectical thinking, in which each thing is what it is only by becoming what it is not.** This was the primal form of the objectifying definition, in which concept and thing became separate, the same definition which was already far advanced in the Homeric epic and trips over its own excesses in modern positive science" (pg. 11)
    - "Humans believe themselves free of fear when there is no longer anything unknown. This has determined the path of demythologization, of enlightenment, which equates the living with the nonliving as myth had equated the nonliving with the living. Enlightenment is mythical fear radicalized. The pure immanence of positivism, its ultimate product, is nothing other than a form of universal taboo. Nothing is allowed to remain outside, since the mere idea of the "outside" is the real source of fear" (pg. 11)
  - "Philosophy has perceived the chasm opened by this separation as the relationship between intuition and concept and repeatedly but vainly has attempted to close it; indeed, philosophy is defined by that attempt" (pg. 13)
    - "The separation of sign and image is inescapable" (pg. 13)
  - "The lowest insight, like the highest, contains the knowledge of its distance from the truth, which makes the apologist a liar. The paradox of faith degenerates finally into fraud, the myth of the twentieth century and faith's irrationality into rational organization in the hands of the utterly enlightened as they steer society toward barbarism" (pg. 15)
  - "this social character of intellectual forms is not, as Durkheim argues, an expression of social solidarity but evidence of the impenetrable unity of society and power. **Power confers increased cohesion and strength on the social whole in which it is established. The division of labor, through which power manifests itself socially, serves the self-preservation of the dominated whole. But this necessarily turns the whole, as a whole, and the operation of its immanent reason, into a means of enforcing the particular interest.** Power confronts the individual as the universal, as the reason which informs reality. The power of all the members of society, to whom as individuals no other way is open, is constantly summated, through the division of labor imposed on them, in the realization of the whole, whose rationality is thereby multiplied over again. **What is done to all by the few always takes the form of the subduing of individuals by the many: the oppression of society always bears the features of oppression by a collective.** It is this unity of collectivity and power, and not the immediate social universal, solidarity, which is precipitated in intellectual forms" (pg. 16)
    - "Enlightenment finally devoured not only symbols but also their successors, universal concepts, and left nothing of metaphysics behind except the abstract fear of the collective from which it had sprung. Concepts in face of enlightenment are like those living on unearned income in face of industrial trusts: none can feel secure. If logical positivism still allowed some latitude for probability, ethnological positivism already equates probability with essence" (pg. 17)
  - "Explanations of the world as nothingness or as the entire cosmos are mythologies, and the guaranteed paths to redemption sublimated magical practices. The self-satisfaction of knowing in advance, and the transfiguration of negativity as redemption, are untrue forms of the resistance to deception" (pg. 18)
    - "Positivism—fortunately for it—does not need to be atheistic, since objectified thought cannot even pose the question of the existence of God. The positivist sensor turns a blind eye to official worship, as a special, knowledge-free zone of social activity, just as willingly as to art—but never to denial, even when it has a claim to be knowledge. For the scientific temper, any deviation of thought from the business of manipulating the actual, any stepping outside the jurisdiction of existence, is no less senseless and self-destructive than it would be for the magician to step outside the magic circle drawn for his incantation; and in both cases violation of the taboo carries a heavy price for the offender. The mastery of nature draws the circle in which the critique of pure reason holds thought spellbound." (pg. 19)
  - **"Kant combined the doctrine of thought's restlessly toilsome progress toward infinity with insistence on its insufficiency and eternal limitation.** The wisdom he imparted is oracular: There is no being in the world that knowledge cannot penetrate, but what can be penetrated by knowledge is not being. Philosophical judgment, according to Kant, aims at the new yet recognizes nothing new, since it always merely repeats what reason has placed into objects beforehand" (pg. 19-20)
    - "world domination over nature turns against the thinking subject itself; nothing is left of it except that ever-unchanging "I think," which must accompany all my conceptions. Both subject and object are nullified. The abstract self, which alone confers the legal right to record and systematize, is confronted by nothing but abstract material, which has no other property than to be the substrate of that right. The equation of mind and world is finally resolved, but only in the sense that both sides cancel out. **The reduction of thought to a mathematical apparatus condemns the world to be its own measure. What appears as the triumph of subjectivity, the subjection of all existing things to logical formalism, is bought with the obedient subordination of reason to what is immediately at hand.** To grasp existing things as such, not merely to note their abstract spatial-temporal relationships, by which they can then be seized, but, on the contrary, to think of them as surface, as mediated conceptual moments which are only fulfilled by revealing their social, historical, and human meaning—this whole aspiration of knowledge is abandoned. **Knowledge does not consist in mere perception, classification, and calculation but precisely in the determining negation of whatever is directly at hand.** Instead of such negation, mathematical formalism, whose medium, number, is the most abstract form of the immediate, arrests thought at mere immediacy. The actual is validated, knowledge confines itself to repeating it, thought makes itself mere tautology. The more completely the machinery of thought subjugates existence, the more blindly it is satisfied with reproducing it. Enlightenment thereby regresses to the mythology it has never been able to escape. For mythology had reflected in its forms the essence of the existing order—cyclical motion, fate, domination of the world as truth—and had renounced hope. In the terseness of the mythical image, as in the clarity of the scientific formula, the eternity of the actual is confirmed and mere existence is pronounced as the meaning it obstructs" (pg. 20)
      - "Not only is domination paid for with the estrangement of human beings from the dominated objects, but the relationships of human beings, including the relationship of individuals to themselves, have themselves been bewitched by the objectification of mind. Individuals shrink to the nodal points of conventional reactions and the modes of operation objectively expected of them" (pg. 21)
  - "Animism had endowed things with souls; **industrialism makes souls into things.** On its own account, even in advance of total planning, the economic apparatus endows commodities with the values which decide the behavior of people. Since, with the ending of free exchange, commodities have forfeited all economic qualities except their fetish character, this character has spread like a cataract across the life of society in all its aspects. The countless agencies of mass production and its culture impress standardized behavior on the individual as the only natural, decent, and rational one. Individuals define themselves now only as things, statistical elements, successes or failures. **Their criterion is self-preservation,** successful or unsuccessful adaptation to the objectivity of their function and the schemata assigned to it. Everything which is different, from the idea to criminality, is exposed to the force of the collective, which keeps watch from the classroom to the trade union. Yet even the threatening collective is merely a part

- of the deceptive surface, beneath which are concealed the powers which manipulate the collective as an agent of violence. Its brutality, which keeps the individual up to the mark, no more represents the true quality of people than value represents that of commodities. The demonically distorted form which things and human beings have taken on in the clear light of unprejudiced knowledge points back to domination, to the principle which already imparted the qualities of mana to spirits and deities and trapped the human gaze in the fakery of sorcerers and medicine men." (pg. 21-22)
- "The noonday panic fear in which nature suddenly appeared to humans as an all-encompassing power has found its counterpart in the panic which is ready to break out at any moment today: human beings expect the world, which is without issue, to be set ablaze by a universal power which they themselves are and over which they are powerless" (pg. 22)
  - "Enlightenment's mythic terror springs from a horror of myth. It detects myth not only in semantically unclarified concepts and words, as linguistic criticism imagines, but in any human utterance which has no place in the functional context of self-preservation" (pg. 22)
    - "The self which, after the methodical extirpation of all natural traces as mythological, was no longer supposed to be either a body or blood or a soul or even a natural ego but was sublimated into a transcendental or logical subject, formed the reference point of reason, the legislating authority of action" (pg. 22)
      - "those who entrust themselves directly to life, without any rational reference to self-preservation, revert to the realm of prehistory. Impulse as such, according to this view, is as mythical as superstition, and worship of any God not postulated by the self, as aberrant as drunkenness. For both—worship and self-immersion in immediate natural existence—progress holds the same fate in store. It has anathematized the self-forgetfulness both of thought and of pleasure" (pg. 22-23)
  - "In the bourgeois economy the social work of each individual is mediated by the principle of the self; for some this labor is supposed to yield increased capital, for others the strength for extra work. But **the more heavily the process of self-preservation is based on the bourgeois division of labor, the more it enforces the self-alienation of individuals**, who must mold themselves to the technical apparatus body and soul" (pg. 23)
    - "Reason serves as a universal tool for the fabrication of all other tools, rigidly purpose-directed and as calamitous as the precisely calculated operations of material production, the results of which for human beings escape all calculation. Reason's old ambition to be purely an instrument of purposes has finally been fulfilled. **The exclusivity of logical laws stems from this obdurate adherence to function and ultimately from the compulsive character of self-preservation**. The latter is constantly magnified into the choice between survival and doom, a choice which is reflected even in the principle that, of two contradictory propositions, only one can be true and the other false. The formalism of this principle and the entire logic established around it stem from the opacity and entanglement of interests in a society in which the maintenance of forms and the preservation of individuals only fortuitously coincide. The expulsion of thought from logic ratifies in the lecture hall the reification of human beings in factory and office. In this way the **taboo encroaches on the power imposing it, enlightenment on mind, which it itself is**. But nature as true self-preservation is thereby unleashed, in the individual as in the collective fate of crisis and war, by the process which promised to extirpate it" (pg. 23)
      - "The self, entirely encompassed by civilization, is dissolved in an element composed of the very inhumanity which civilization has sought from the first to escape. The oldest fear, that of losing one's own name, is being fulfilled. For civilization, purely natural existence, both animal and vegetative, was the absolute danger" (pg. 24)
    - "**By subordinating life in its entirety to the requirements of its preservation, the controlling minority guarantees, with its own security, the continuation of the whole.**" (pg. 24)
      - "whenever new peoples and classes have more heavily repressed myth, from the beginnings of the Olympian religion to the Renaissance, the Reformation, and bourgeois atheism, the fear of unsubdued, threatening nature—a fear resulting from nature's very materialization and objectification—has been belittled as animist superstition, and the control of internal and external nature has been made the absolute purpose of life" (pg. 24)
  - "Now that self-preservation has been finally automated, reason is dismissed by those who, as controllers of production, have taken over its inheritance and fear it in the disinherited. **The essence of enlightenment is the choice between alternatives, and the inescapability of this choice is that of power. Human beings have always had to choose between their subjugation to nature and its subjugation to the self**" (pg. 24-25)
    - "Measures like those taken on Odysseus's ship in face of the Sirens are a prescient allegory of the dialectic of enlightenment. Just as the capacity to be represented is the measure of power, the mightiest person being the one who can be represented in the most functions, so it is also the vehicle of both progress and regression" (pg. 27)
      - ◆ *\*cf. pages 25-27*
      - "No system of domination has so far been able to escape this price, and the circularity of history in its progress is explained in part by this debilitation, which is the concomitant of power. **Humanity, whose skills and knowledge become differentiated with the division of labor, is thereby forced back to more primitive anthropological stages, since, with the technical facilitation of existence, the continuance of domination demands the fixation of instincts by greater repression**" (pg. 27-28)
        - ◆ "The calamity is not that individuals have fallen behind society or its material production. Where the development of the machine has become that of the machinery of control, so that technical and social tendencies, always intertwined, converge in the total encompassing of human beings, those who have lagged behind represent not only untruth. **Adaptation to the power of progress furthers the progress of power, constantly renewing the degenerations which prove successful progress, not failed progress, to be its own antithesis. The curse of irresistible progress is irresistible regression**" (pg. 28)
  - "This regression is not confined to the experience of the sensuous world, an experience tied to physical proximity, but also affects the autocratic intellect, which detaches itself from sensuous experience in order to subjugate it. The standardization of the intellectual function through which the mastery of the senses is accomplished, the acquiescence of thought to the production of unanimity, implies an impoverishment of thought no less than of experience; the separation of the two realms leaves both damaged. **A consequence of the restriction of thought to organization and administration...is the stupidity which afflicts the great as soon as they have to perform tasks other than the manipulation of the small. Mind becomes in reality the instrument of power and self-mastery for which bourgeois philosophy has always mistaken it**" (pg. 28)
    - "**The over-ripeness of society lives on the immaturity of the ruled**. The more complex and sensitive the social, economic, and scientific mechanism, to the operation of which the system of production has long since attuned the body, the more impoverished are the experiences of which the body is capable. The elimination of qualities, their conversion into functions, is transferred by rationalized modes of work to the human capacity for experience, which tends to revert to that of amphibians. The regression of the masses today lies in their inability to hear with their own ears what has not already been heard, to touch with their hands what has not previously been grasped; **it is the new form of blindness which supersedes that of vanquished myth**. Through the mediation of the total society, which encompasses all relationships and impulses, **human beings are being turned back into precisely what the developmental law of society, the principle of the self, had opposed: mere examples of the species, identical to one another through isolation within the compulsively controlled collectivity**" (pg. 28-29)
      - "It is the concrete conditions of work in society which enforce conformism—not the conscious influences which additionally render the oppressed stupid and deflect them from the truth. The powerlessness of the workers is not merely a ruse of the rulers but the logical consequence of industrial society, into which the efforts to escape it have finally transformed the ancient concept of fate" (pg. 29)
        - ◆ "This logical necessity, however, is not conclusive. It remains tied to domination, as both its reflection and its tool. Its truth,

therefore, is no less questionable than its evidence is inescapable. Thought, however, has always been equal to the task of concretely demonstrating its own equivocal nature. It is the servant which the master cannot control at will. **Domination, in becoming reified as law and organization**, first when humans formed settlements and later in the commodity economy, has had to limit itself. The instrument is becoming autonomous: independently of the will of the rulers, the mediating agency of mind moderates the immediacy of economic injustice. The instruments of power—language, weapons, and finally machines—which are intended to hold everyone in their grasp, must in their turn be grasped by everyone. In this way, **the moment of rationality in domination** also asserts itself as something different from it. The thing-like quality of the means, which makes the means universally available, its "objective validity" for everyone, itself implies a criticism of the domination from which thought has arisen as its means. On the way from mythology to logistics, **thought has lost the element of reflection on itself**, and machinery mutilates people today, even if it also feeds them. In the form of machines, however, alienated reason is moving toward a society which reconciles thought, in its solidification as an apparatus both material and intellectual, with a liberated living element, and relates it to society itself as its true subject. The particularist origin and the universal perspective of thought have always been inseparable. Today, with the transformation of the world into industry, the perspective of the universal, the social realization of thought, is so fully open to view that thought is repudiated by the rulers themselves as mere ideology" (pg. 29-30)

- "it is no longer the objective laws of the market which govern the actions of industrialists and drive humanity toward catastrophe. Rather, the conscious decisions of the company chairmen execute capitalism's old law of value, and thus its fate, as resultants no less compulsive than the blindest price mechanisms. The rulers themselves do not believe in objective necessity, even if they sometimes call their machinations by that name. They posture as engineers of world history. Only their subjects accept the existing development, which renders them a degree more powerless with each prescribed increase in their standard of living, as inviolably necessary" (pg. 30)
  - "the overwhelming mass of the population, are trained as additional guards of the system, so that they can be used today and tomorrow as material for its grand designs. They are kept alive as an army of unemployed. Their reduction to mere objects of administration, which preforms every department of modern life right down to language and perception, conjures up an illusion of objective necessity before which they believe themselves powerless" (pg. 30)
- "The absurdity of a state of affairs in which the power of the system over human beings increases with every step they take away from the power of nature denounces the reason of the reasonable society as obsolete. That reason's necessity is illusion, no less than the freedom of the industrialists, which reveals its ultimately compulsive nature in their inescapable struggles and pacts. This illusion, in which utterly enlightened humanity is losing itself, cannot be dispelled by a thinking which, as an instrument of power, has to choose between command and obedience. Although unable to escape the entanglement in which it was trapped in prehistory, that thinking is nevertheless capable of recognizing the logic of either/or, of consequence and antinomy, by means of which it emancipated itself radically from nature, as that same nature, unreconciled and self-estranged. Precisely by virtue of its irresistible logic, thought, in whose compulsive mechanism nature is reflected and perpetuated, also reflects itself as a nature oblivious of itself, as a mechanism of compulsion. Of course, mental representation is only an instrument. **In thought, human beings distance themselves from nature in order to arrange it in such a way that it can be mastered.** Like the material tool which, as a thing, is held fast as that thing in different situations and thereby separates the world, as something chaotic, multiple, and disparate, from that which is known, single, and identical, so **the concept is the idea-tool which fits into things at the very point from which one can take hold of them. Thought thus becomes illusory whenever it seeks to deny its function of separating, distancing, and objectifying"** (pg. 30-31)
  - "the split between subject and object, which it will not allow to be bridged, becomes the index of the untruth both of itself and of truth" (pg. 31)
    - "The proscribing of superstition has always signified not only the progress of domination but its exposure. Enlightenment is more than enlightenment, it is nature made audible in its estrangement. In mind's self-recognition as nature divided from itself, nature, as in prehistory, is calling to itself, but no longer directly by its supposed name, which, in the guise of mana, means omnipotence, but as something blind and mutilated. **In the mastery of nature, without which mind does not exist, enslavement to nature persists.** By modestly confessing itself to be power and thus being taken back into nature, mind rids itself of the very claim to mastery which had enslaved it to nature. Although humanity may be unable to interrupt its flight away from necessity and into progress and civilization without forfeiting knowledge itself, at least it no longer mistakes the ramparts it has constructed against necessity, the institutions and practices of domination which have always rebounded against society from the subjugation of nature, for guarantors of the coming freedom" (pg. 31-32)
  - "For not only does the concept, as science, distance human beings from nature, but, as the self-reflection of thought—which, in the form of science, remains fettered to the blind economic tendency—it enables the distance which perpetuates injustice to be measured. Through this remembrance of nature within the subject, a remembrance which contains the unrecognized truth of all culture, enlightenment is opposed in principle to power..." (pg. 32)
    - **"By sacrificing thought, which in its reified form as mathematics, machinery, organization, avenges itself on a humanity forgetful of it, enlightenment forfeited its own realization.** By subjecting everything particular to its discipline, it left the uncomprehended whole free to rebound as mastery over things against the life and consciousness of human beings. But a true praxis capable of overturning the status quo depends on theory's refusal to yield to the oblivion in which society allows thought to ossify. It is not the material preconditions of fulfillment, unfettered technology as such, which make fulfillment uncertain. That is the argument of sociologists who are trying to devise yet another antidote, even a collectivist one, in order control that antidote. **The fault lies in a social context which induces blindness"** (pg. 33)
      - "The mythical scientific respect of peoples for the given reality, which they themselves constantly create, finally becomes itself a positive fact, a fortress before which even the revolutionary imagination feels shamed as utopianism, and degenerates to a compliant trust in the objective tendency of history. As the instrument of this adaptation, as a mere assemblage of means, enlightenment is as destructive as its Romantic enemies claim. It will only fulfill itself if it forswears its last complicity with them and dares to abolish the false absolute, the principle of blind power" (pg. 33)
    - "In multiplying violence through the mediation of the market, the bourgeois economy has also multiplied its things and its forces to the point where not merely kings or even the bourgeoisie are sufficient to administer them: all human beings are needed. From the power of things they finally learn to forgo power. Enlightenment consummates and abolishes itself when the closest practical objectives reveal themselves to be the most distant goal already attained, and the lands of which "their spials and intelligencers can give no news"—that is, nature misunderstood by masterful science—are remembered as those of origin" (pg. 33)
      - **"...enlightenment, in the service of the present, is turning itself into an outright deception of the masses"** (pg. 34)
  - Chapter 2 - Excursus I: Odysseus or Myth and Enlightenment (pg. 35)
    - "...the *Odyssey* as a whole bears witness to the dialectic of enlightenment" (pg. 35)
      - "Understanding of the element of bourgeois enlightenment in Homer has been advanced by the German late-Romantic interpretation of antiquity based on the early writings of Nietzsche. Like few others since Hegel, Nietzsche recognized the dialectic of enlightenment. He formulated the ambivalent relationship of enlightenment to power" (pg. 36)
        - **"Enlightenment must be 'drummed into the people, so that the priests all turn into priests with a bad conscience—and likewise with the**

- state. That is the task of enlightenment: to show up the pompous behavior of princes and statesmen as a deliberate lie'. However, enlightenment had always been a means employed by the 'great artists of government (Confucius in China, the Roman Empire, Napoleon, the Papacy, when it was concerned with power and not just with the world) ... The self-deception of the masses in this respect-for instance, in all democracies-is highly advantageous: making people small and governable is hailed as 'progress'!" (pg. 36)
- ◆ *\*this is the twofold character of enlightenment\**
    - "This ideology became a blind eulogy of blind life, which imposes a praxis by which everything living is suppressed. This is seen in the cultural fascists' attitude to Homer" (pg. 36)
  - "The faculty by which the self survives adventures, throwing itself away in order to preserve itself, is cunning" (pg. 39)
    - "For as long as individuals are sacrificed, for as long as the sacrifice contains the antithesis between collective and individual, deception is objectively implicit in it" (pg. 40-41)
    - "the self is precisely the human being to whom the magic power of representation is no longer attributed. The formation of the self severs the fluctuating connection with nature which the sacrifice of the self is supposed to establish" (pg. 41)
    - **"the institution of sacrifice is itself the mark of an historical catastrophe**, an act of violence done equally to human beings and to nature. Cunning is nothing other than the subjective continuation of the objective untruth of sacrifice, which it supersedes" (pg. 41)
      - "The magic, collective interpretation of sacrifice, which entirely denies the rationality of sacrifice, is its rationalization; but the straightforward assumption of enlightened thinking that what today is ideology may once have been truth is too uncritical: **the newest ideologies are a mere reprise of the oldest**, which long antedate those hitherto known, in the same way as the development of the class society refutes the previously sanctioned ideologies" (pg. 42)
        - ◆ "If the principle of sacrifice was proved transient by its irrationality, at the same time it survives through its rationality. This rationality has transformed itself, not disappeared. The self wrests itself from dissolution in blind nature, whose claims are constantly reasserted by sacrifice. But it still remains trapped in the context of the natural, one living thing seeking to overcome another. Bargaining one's way out of sacrifice by means of self-preserving rationality is a form of exchange no less than was sacrifice itself. The identical, enduring self which springs from the conquest of sacrifice is itself the product of a hard, petrified sacrificial ritual in which the human being, by opposing its consciousness to its natural context, celebrates itself" (pg. 42)
    - "Cunning, however, consists in exploiting the difference. One clings to the word in order to change the thing. In this way consciousness arises out of intention..." (pg. 47)
      - "The cunning by which the clever man assumes the form of stupidity reverts to stupidity as soon as he discards that form. That is the dialectic of eloquence" (pg. 53)
  - "In class society, the self's hostility to sacrifice included a sacrifice of the self, since it was paid for by a denial of nature in the human being for the sake of mastery over extrahuman nature and over other human beings. This very denial, the core of all civilizing rationality, is the germ cell of proliferating mythical irrationality: with the denial of nature in human beings, not only the telos of the external mastery of nature but also the telos of one's own life becomes confused and opaque. **At the moment when human beings cut themselves off from the consciousness of themselves as nature, all the purposes for which they keep themselves alive - social progress, the heightening of material and intellectual forces, indeed, consciousness itself - become void, and the enthronement of the means as the end, which in late capitalism is taking on the character of overt madness, is already detectable in the earliest history of subjectivity. The human being's mastery of itself, on which the self is founded, practically always involves the annihilation of the subject** in whose service that mastery is maintained, because the substance which is mastered, suppressed, and disintegrated by self-preservation is nothing other than the living entity, of which the achievements of self-preservation can only be defined as functions - in other words, **self-preservation destroys the very thing which is to be preserved"** (pg. 42-43)
    - **"The antireason of totalitarian capitalism, whose technique of satisfying needs, in their objectified form determined by domination, makes the satisfaction of needs impossible and tends toward the extermination of humanity** - this antireason appears prototypically in the hero who escapes the sacrifice by sacrificing himself. **The history of civilization is the history of the introversion of sacrifice** - in other words, the history of renunciation. **All who renounce give away more of their life than is given back to them, more than the life they preserve. This process unfolds within the framework of wrong society.** In that society everyone is one too many, and is cheated. But society's predicament is that the person who escaped the universal, unequal, and unjust exchange, who did not renounce but immediately seized the undiminished whole, would thereby lose everything, even the meager residue of oneself granted by self-preservation. **All the superfluous sacrifices are needed: against sacrifice"** (pg. 43)
      - "The transformation of the sacrificial victim into subjectivity is done under the aegis of the same cunning which always had its share in sacrifice. In the untruth of guile the deception inherent in sacrifice becomes an element of character..." (pg. 43)
  - **"Self-preserving reason** cannot permit such an idyll - reminiscent of the bliss-induced by narcotics, by which subordinate classes have been made capable of enduring the unendurable in ossified social orders-among its own people. And indeed, it is **only an illusion of bliss**, a dull aimless vegetating, as impoverished as the life of animals. At best, it would be an absence of the awareness of unhappiness. But happiness contains truth within itself. It is in essence a result. It unfolds from suffering removed" (pg. 49)
  - Chapter 3 - Excursus II: Juliette or Enlightenment and Morality (pg. 63)
    - **"Thinking, as understood by the Enlightenment, is the process of establishing a unified, scientific order and of deriving factual knowledge from principles, whether these principles are interpreted as arbitrarily posited axioms, innate ideas, or the highest abstractions. The laws of logic establish the most universal relationships within the order and define them. Unity lies in self-consistency.** The principle of contradiction is the system in nuce. Knowledge consists in subsumption under principles. It is one with judgment, by which perceptions are incorporated into the system. **Any thinking not guided by the system is directionless or authoritarian. Reason contributes nothing but the idea of systematic unity, the formal elements of fixed conceptual relationships.** Any substantial objective which might be put forward as a rational insight is, according to the Enlightenment in its strict sense, delusion, falsehood, "rationalization," no matter what pains individual philosophers may take to steer us away from this conclusion and toward a reliance on philanthropic feeling. Reason is "a faculty of deducing the particular from the universal." According to Kant, the homogeneity of the general and the particular is guaranteed by the "schematism of pure understanding," by which he means the unconscious activity of the intellectual mechanism which structures perception in accordance with the understanding. The intelligibility which subjective judgment discovers in any matter is imprinted on that matter by the intellect as an objective quality before it enters the ego. Without such a schematism - in short, without the intellectual element in perception - no impression would conform to the corresponding concept, no category to the particular example; thought, not to speak of the system toward which everything is directed, would be devoid of unity" (pg. 63-64)
      - "A thinking which fails to maintain agreement between system and perception does not merely violate isolated visual impressions; it conflicts with real praxis" (pg. 64)
    - **"The system which enlightenment aims for is the form of knowledge which most ably deals with the facts, most effectively assists the subject in mastering nature. The system's principles are those of self-preservation.** Immaturity amounts to the inability to survive. The bourgeois in the successive forms of the slave-owner, the free entrepreneur, and the administrator is the logical subject of enlightenment" (pg. 65)
    - "Kant's concepts are ambiguous. Reason as the transcendental, supra-individual self contains the idea of a free coexistence in which human beings

- organize themselves to form the universal subject and resolve the conflict between pure and empirical reason in the conscious solidarity of the whole. The whole represents the idea of true universality, utopia. At the same time, however, reason is the agency of calculating thought, which arranges the world for the purposes of self-preservation and recognizes no function other than that of working on the object as mere sense material in order to make it the material of subjugation. The true nature of the schematism which externally coordinates the universal and the particular, the concept and the individual, case, finally turns out, in current science, to be the interest of industrial society. Being is apprehended in terms of manipulation and administration. Everything - including the individual human being, not to mention the animal - becomes a repeatable, replaceable process, a mere example of the conceptual models of the system. Conflict between administrative, reifying science, between the public mind and the experience of the individual, is precluded by the prevailing circumstances. The senses are determined by the conceptual apparatus in advance of perception; the citizen sees the world as made a priori of the stuff from which he himself constructs it" (pg. 65)
- "reason, operating under the pressure of purposes merely as systematic science, not only levels out the differences but standardizes the identical interest. It acknowledges no determination other than the classifications of the social operation. No one is different to the purpose for which he has been produced: a useful, successful, or failed member of professional and national groups. He is a single, random representative of his geographical, psychological, and sociological type. Logic is democratic: in this respect the great have no advantage over the most menial. The former are counted as prominent citizens while the latter are prospective objects of welfare relief. Science stands in the same relationship to nature and human beings in general as insurance theory stands to life and death in particular. Who dies is unimportant; what matters is the ratio of incidences of death to the liabilities of the company. It is the law of large numbers, not the particular case, which recurs in the formula" (pg. 66)
    - "Science itself has no awareness of itself; it is merely a tool. Enlightenment, however, is the philosophy which equates truth with the scientific system. Kant's attempt to justify this identity, which was still made with a philosophical intention, gave rise to concepts which have no meaning for science, since they are not simply instructions for performing manipulations according to certain rules. The notion of the self-understanding of science conflicts with the concept of science itself" (pg. 66)
  - "[Kant's] attempt to derive the duty of mutual respect from a law of reason, although more cautious than any other such undertaking in Western philosophy, has no support within the *Critique*. It is the usual endeavor of bourgeois thought to ground the respect without which civilization cannot exist on something other than material interest..." (pg. 67)
    - "The root of Kantian optimism, according to which moral actions are reasonable even when base ones are likely to prosper, is a horror of relapsing into barbarism" (pg. 67)
      - "according to Kant, from the standpoint of scientific reason moral forces are neutral drives and forms of behavior, no less than immoral ones, which they immediately become when no longer directed at that hidden possibility but at reconciliation with power. **Enlightenment expels difference from theory.** It considers "human actions and desires exactly as if I were dealing with lines, planes, and bodies." The totalitarian order has put this into effect in utter seriousness" (pg. 67)
        - ◆ "Contrary to the categorical imperative, and all the more deeply in accord with pure reason, **it treats human beings as things, centers of modes of behavior**" (pg. 67)
          - ◇ "the totalitarian order has granted unlimited rights to calculating thought and puts its trust in science as such. Its canon is its own brutal efficiency" (pg. 67-68)
    - "**Self-preservation is the constitutive principle of science,** the soul of the table of categories, even if, as in Kant, it has to be deduced idealistically. Even the ego, the synthetic unity of apperception, the agency which Kant calls the highest point, from which the whole of logic must be suspended, is really both the product and the condition of material existence. Individuals, in having to fend for themselves, develop the ego as the agency of reflective foresight and overview; over successive generations it expands and contracts with the individual's prospects of economic autonomy and productive ownership. Finally it passes from the expropriated citizens to the totalitarian trust-masters, whose science has become the quintessence of the methods by which the subjugated mass society reproduces itself" (pg. 68)
      - "Reason is the organ of calculation, of planning; it is neutral with regard to ends; its element is coordination" (pg. 69)
        - "The totalitarian state manipulates nations" (pg. 70)
    - "The principle according to which reason is simply opposed to everything unreasonable underlies the true opposition between enlightenment and mythology. The latter recognizes spirit only as something immersed in nature, a natural power" (pg. 70)
      - "Enlightenment, by contrast, relocates context, meaning, and life entirely within a subjectivity which is actually constituted only by this relocation. For enlightenment, reason is the chemical agent which absorbs the real substance of things and volatilizes it into the mere autonomy of reason. **In order to escape the superstitious fear of nature, enlightenment has presented effective objective entities and forms without exception as mere veils of chaotic matter and condemned matter's influence on the human agent as enslavement, until the subject, according to its own concept, had been turned into a single, unrestricted, empty authority.** The whole force of nature became a mere undifferentiated resistance to the abstract power of the subject" (pg. 70)
        - "To liberate human beings from such beliefs was the objective of bourgeois philosophy. However, the liberation went further than its humane originators had intended. The market economy it unleashed was at once the prevailing form of reason and the power which ruined reason." (pg. 70)
          - ◆ "The Enlightenment had pinned its colors to liberalism. If all affects are of equal value, then self-preservation, which dominates the form of the system in any case, seems to offer the most plausible maxims for action. It was to be given free rein in the free economy" (pg. 71)
            - ◇ "The somber writers of the early bourgeois period, such as Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Mandeville, who spoke up for the egoism of the self, thereby recognized society as the destructive principle and denounced harmony before it was elevated to the official doctrine by the bearers of light, the classicists. The former writers exposed the totality of the bourgeois order as the horrifying entity which finally engulfed both, the general and the particular, society and the self. With the development of the economic system in which the control of the economic apparatus by private groups creates a division between human beings, self-preservation, although treated by reason as identical, had become the reified drive of each individual citizen and proved to be a destructive natural force no longer distinguishable from self-destruction. The two principles combined in a murky fusion. Pure reason became unreason, a procedure as immune to errors as it was devoid of content" (pg. 71)
        - "However, with the revolutionary avant-garde, the utopia which proclaimed the reconciliation between nature and the self emerged from its hiding place in German philosophy as something at once irrational and reasonable, as the idea of the community of free individuals - and brought down on itself the full fury of reason. **In society as it is, despite feeble moralistic attempts to propagate humanity as the most rational means, self-preservation remains unencumbered by a utopia denounced as myth. For those at the top, shrewd self-preservation means the fascist struggle for power, and for individuals it means adaptation to injustice at any price. Enlightened reason no more possesses the means of measuring one drive within itself against others than of ordering the universe into spheres.** It rightly exposes the notion of hierarchy in nature as a reflection of medieval society, and later attempts to demonstrate a new order of values bear the unmistakable taint of mendacity. The irrationalism which is evident in such futile reconstructions is far from opposing industrial reason" (pg. 71)





- identify film directly with reality. The withering of imagination and spontaneity in the consumer of culture today need not be traced back to psychological mechanisms. The products themselves, especially the most characteristic, the sound film, cripple those faculties through their objective makeup. They are so constructed that their adequate comprehension requires a quick, observant, knowledgeable cast of mind but positively debars the spectator from thinking, if he is not to miss the fleeting facts. This kind of alertness is so ingrained that it does not even need to be activated in particular cases, while still repressing the powers of imagination"** (pg. 99-100)
- "The power of industrial society is imprinted on people once and for all. The products of the culture industry are such that they can be alertly consumed even in a state of distraction" (pg. 100)
    - ◆ "Each single manifestation of the culture industry inescapably reproduces human beings as what the whole has made them. And all its agents, from the producer to the women's organizations, are on the alert **to ensure that the simple reproduction of mind does not lead on to the expansion of mind"** (pg. 100)
  - "Like its adversary, avantgarde art, the culture industry defines its own language positively, by means of prohibitions applied to its syntax and vocabulary. The permanent compulsion to produce new effects which yet remain bound to the old schema, becoming additional rules, merely increases the power of the tradition which the individual effect seeks to escape. Every phenomenon is by now so thoroughly imprinted by the schema that nothing can occur that does not bear in advance the trace of the jargon, that is not seen at first glance to be approved. But the true masters, as both producers and reproducers, are those who speak the jargon with the same free-and-easy relish as if it were the language it has long since silenced. Such is the industry's ideal of naturalness. It asserts itself more imperiously the more the perfected technology reduces the tension between the culture product and everyday existence. The paradox of routine travestied as nature is detectable in every utterance of the culture industry, and in many is quite blatant" (pg. 101)
    - "The moment in the work of art by which it transcends reality cannot, indeed, be severed from style; that moment, however, does not consist in achieved harmony, in the questionable unity of form and content, inner and outer, individual and society, but in those traits in which the discrepancy emerges, in the necessary failure of the passionate striving for identity. Instead of exposing itself to this failure, in which the style of the great work of art has always negated itself, the inferior work has relied on its similarity to others, the surrogate of identity. The culture industry has finally posited this imitation as absolute. Being nothing other than style, it divulges style's secret: obedience to the social hierarchy. Aesthetic barbarism today is accomplishing what has threatened intellectual formations since they were brought together as culture and neutralized" (pg. 103-104)
      - "**Only what has been industrialized, rigorously subsumed, is fully adequate to this concept of culture.** Only by subordinating all branches of intellectual production equally to the single purpose of imposing on the senses of human beings, from the time they leave the factory in the evening to the time they clock on in the morning, the imprint of the work routine which they must sustain throughout the day, does this culture mockingly fulfill the notion of a unified culture which the philosophers of the individual personality held out against mass culture." (pg. 104)
  - "The culture industry, the most inflexible style of all, thus proves to be the goal of the very liberalism which is criticized for its lack of style. Not only did its categories and contents originate in the liberal sphere, in domesticated naturalism no less than in the operetta and the revue, but the modern culture combines are the economic area in which a piece of the circulation sphere otherwise in the process of disintegration, together with the corresponding entrepreneurial types, still tenuously survives" (pg. 104)
    - "Anyone who resists can survive only by being incorporated. Once registered as diverging from the culture industry, they belong to it as the land reformer does to capitalism. Realistic indignation is the trademark of those with a new idea to sell. Public authority in the present society allows only those complaints to be heard in which the attentive ear can discern the prominent figure under whose protection the rebel is suing for peace. The more immeasurable the gulf between chorus and leaders, the more certainly is there a place among the latter for anyone who demonstrates superiority by well-organized dissidence. In this way liberalism's tendency to give free rein to its ablest members survives in the culture industry. To open that industry to clever people is the function of the otherwise largely regulated market, in which, even in its heyday, freedom was the freedom of the stupid to starve, in art as elsewhere" (pg. 104)
      - "**Anyone who does not conform is condemned to an economic impotence which is prolonged in the intellectual powerlessness of the eccentric loner. Disconnected from the mainstream, he is easily convicted of inadequacy"** (pg. 106)
  - "Whereas the mechanism of supply and demand is today disintegrating in material production, in the superstructure it acts as a control on behalf of the rulers. The consumers are the workers and salaried employees, the farmers and petty bourgeois. Capitalist production hems them in so tightly, in body and soul, that they unresistingly succumb to whatever is proffered to them. However, just as the ruled have always taken the morality dispensed to them by the rulers more seriously than the rulers themselves, **the defrauded masses today cling to the myth of success still more ardently than the successful.** They, too, have their aspirations. **They insist unwaveringly on the ideology by which they are enslaved"** (pg. 106)
    - "Under the ideological truce between them, the conformism of the consumers, like the shamelessness of the producers they sustain, can have a good conscience. Both content themselves with the reproduction of sameness" (pg. 106)
      - "Unending sameness also governs the relationship to the past. What is new in the phase of mass culture compared to that of late liberalism is the exclusion of the new" (pg. 106)
        - ◆ "**The more all-embracing the culture industry has become, the more pitilessly it has forced the outsider into either bankruptcy or a syndicate"** (pg. 107)
      - "What is new, however, is that the irreconcilable elements of culture, art, and amusement have been subjected equally to the concept of purpose and thus brought under a single false denominator: the totality of the culture industry. Its element is repetition" (pg. 108)
        - ◆ "With good reason the interest of countless consumers is focused on the technology, not on the rigidly repeated, threadbare and half-abandoned content" (pg. 108)
  - "Nevertheless, **the culture industry remains the entertainment business. Its control of consumers is mediated by entertainment,** and its hold will not be broken by outright dictate but by the hostility inherent in the principle of entertainment to anything which is more than itself. Since the tendencies of the culture industry are turned into the flesh and blood of the public by the social process as a whole, those tendencies are reinforced by the survival of the market in the industry. **Demand has not yet been replaced by simple obedience"** (pg. 108)
    - "**Entertainment is the prolongation of work under late capitalism. It is sought by those who want to escape the mechanized labor process so that they can cope with it again.** At the same time, however, mechanization has such power over leisure and its happiness, determines so thoroughly the fabrication of entertainment commodities, that the off-duty worker can experience nothing but after-images of the work process itself. The ostensible content is merely a faded foreground; what is imprinted is the automated sequence of standardized tasks. The only escape from the work process in factory and office is through adaptation to it in leisure time. This is the incurable sickness of all entertainment. Amusement congeals into boredom, since, to be amusement, it must cost no effort and therefore moves strictly along the well-worn grooves of association. The spectator must need no thoughts of his own: the product prescribes each reaction, not through any actual coherence - which collapses once exposed to thought - but through signals" (pg. 109)
  - "**The culture industry endlessly cheats its consumers out of what it endlessly promises.** The promissory note of pleasure issued by plot and packaging is indefinitely prolonged: the promise, which actually comprises the entire show, disdainfully intimates that there is nothing more to come, that the

- diner must be satisfied with reading the menu. The desire inflamed by the glossy names and images is served up finally with a celebration of the daily round it sought to escape" (pg. 111)
- "Of course, genuine works of art were not sexual exhibitions either. But by presenting denial as negative, they reversed, as it were, the debasement of the drive and rescued by mediation what had been denied. That is the secret of aesthetic sublimation: to present fulfillment in its brokenness. **The culture industry does not sublimate: it suppresses.** By constantly exhibiting the object of desire, the breasts beneath the sweater, the naked torso of the sporting hero, it merely goads the unsublimated anticipation of pleasure, which through the habit of denial has long since been mutilated as masochism" (pg. 111)
    - "Works of art are ascetic and shameless; the culture industry is pornographic and prudish. It reduces love to romance. And, once reduced, much is permitted..." (pg. 111)
      - ◆ "The culture industry replaces pain, which is present in ecstasy no less than in asceticism, with jovial denial. Its supreme law is that its consumers shall at no price be given what they desire..." (pg. 112-113)
  - "The flight from the everyday world, promised by the culture industry in all its branches, is much like the abduction of the daughter in the American cartoon: the father is holding the ladder in the dark. The culture industry presents that same everyday world as paradise. Escape, like elopement, is destined from the first to lead back to its starting point. **Entertainment fosters the resignation which seeks to forget itself in entertainment.**" (pg. 113)
    - "The deception is not that the culture industry serves up amusement but that it spoils the fun by its business-minded attachment to the ideological clichés of the culture which is liquidating itself. Ethics and taste suppress unbridled amusement as "naive" - naivety being rated no more highly than intellectualism - and even restrict its technical possibilities. **The culture industry is corrupt,** not as a sink of iniquity but as the cathedral of higher gratification" (pg. 114)
      - ◆ "the hiding places of mindless artistry, which represents what is human against the social mechanism, are being relentlessly ferreted out by organizational reason, which forces everything to justify itself in terms of meaning and effect. It is causing meaninglessness to disappear at the lowest level of art just as radically as meaning is disappearing at the highest" (pg. 114)
  - "The fusion of culture and entertainment is brought about today not only by the debasement of culture but equally by the compulsory intellectualization of amusement." (pg. 114)
    - "Amusement itself becomes an ideal, taking the place of the higher values it eradicates from the masses by repeating them in an even more stereotyped form than the advertising slogans paid for by private interests. Inwardness, the subjectively restricted form of truth, was always more beholden to the outward rulers than it imagined. The culture industry is perverting it into a barefaced lie. It appears now only as the high-minded prattle tolerated by consumers of religious bestsellers, psychological films, and women's serials as an embarrassingly agreeable ingredient, so that they can more reliably control their own human emotions. In this sense entertainment is purging the affects in the manner once attributed by Aristotle to tragedy and now by Mortimer Adler to film. The culture industry reveals the truth not only about style but also about catharsis." (pg. 115)
  - "**The more strongly the culture industry entrenches itself, the more it can do as it chooses with the needs of consumers** - producing, controlling, disciplining them; even withdrawing amusement altogether: here, no limits are set to cultural progress. But the tendency is immanent in the principle of entertainment itself, as a principle of bourgeois enlightenment" (pg. 115)
    - "But the original affinity between business and entertainment reveals itself in the meaning of entertainment itself: as society's apologia. **To be entertained means to be in agreement.** Entertainment makes itself possible only by insulating itself from the totality of the social process, making itself stupid and perversely renouncing from the first the inescapable claim of any work, even the most trivial: in its restrictedness to reflect the whole. **Amusement always means putting things out of mind,** forgetting suffering, even when it is on display. **At its root is powerlessness.** It is indeed escape, but not, as it claims, escape from bad reality but from the last thought of resisting that reality. **The liberation which amusement promises is from thinking as negation**" (pg. 115-116)
      - "Nevertheless, it has become increasingly difficult to keep the public in submission. The advance of stupidity must not lag behind the simultaneous advance of intelligence. In the age of statistics the masses are too astute to identify with the millionaire on the screen and too obtuse to deviate even minutely from the law of large numbers. Ideology hides itself in probability calculation" (pg. 116)
        - ◆ "Where the culture industry still invites naive identification, it immediately denies it. It is no longer possible to lose oneself in others" (pg. 116)
          - ◇ "Films emphasize chance" (pg. 117)
      - "**Industry is interested in human beings only as its customers and employees and has in fact reduced humanity as a whole,** like each of its elements, to this exhaustive formula. Depending on which aspect happens to be paramount at the time, ideology stresses plan or chance, technology or life, civilization or nature. As employees people are reminded of the rational organization and must fit into it as common sense requires. As customers they are regaled, whether on the screen or in the press, with human interest stories demonstrating freedom of choice and the charm of not belonging to the system. **In both cases they remain objects.**" (pg. 118)
        - "Words which are not a means seem meaningless, the others seem to be fiction, untruth. Value judgments are perceived either as advertisements or as mere chatter. The noncommittal vagueness of the resulting ideology does not make it more transparent, or weaker. Its very vagueness, the quasiscientific reluctance to be pinned down to anything which cannot be verified, functions as an instrument of control. Ideology becomes the emphatic and systematic proclamation of what is. Through its inherent tendency to adopt the tone of the factual report, the culture industry makes itself the irrefutable prophet of the existing order" (pg. 118)
          - ◇ *\*as vague, it strips from the agent means for decision-making. Vagueness is a 'hiding in plain sight'. As hiding from onlookers (e.g., those who might judge), it takes away substance by which to make judgements. It's in this opaqueness that it asserts itself over the onlooker, submitting them to its own circumstance.*
          - ◆ "With consummate skill it maneuvers between the crags of demonstrable misinformation and obvious truth by faithfully duplicating appearances, the density of which blocks insight. Thus the omnipresent and impenetrable world of appearances is set up as the ideal. Ideology is split between the photographing of brute existence and the blatant lie about its meaning, a lie which is not articulated directly but drummed in by suggestion" (pg. 118)
      - "The culture industry sweeps aside objections to itself along with those to the world it neutrally duplicates. One has only the choice of conforming or being consigned to the backwoods..." (pg. 118-119)
        - "The new ideology has the world as such as its subject. It exploits the cult of fact by describing bad existence with utmost exactitude in order to elevate it into the realm of facts. Through such elevation existence itself becomes a surrogate of meaning and justice" (pg. 119)
    - "...**everyone knows that they are helpless within the system, and ideology must take account of this.** Far from merely concealing the suffering under the cloak of improvised comradeship, the culture industry stakes its company pride on looking it manfully in the eye and acknowledging it with unflinching composure" (pg. 122)
      - "Tragic cinema is becoming truly a house of moral correction. The masses, demoralized by existence under the pressure of the system and manifesting civilization only as compulsively rehearsed behavior in which rage and rebelliousness everywhere show through, are to be kept in

- order by the spectacle of implacable life and the exemplary conduct of those it crushes. **Culture has always contributed to the subduing of revolutionary as well as of barbaric instincts.** Industrial culture does something more. It inculcates the conditions on which implacable life is allowed to be lived at all. Individuals must use their general satiety as a motive for abandoning themselves to the collective power of which they are sated" (pg. 123)
- **"Society is made up of the desperate and thus falls prey to rackets"** (pg. 123)
    - ◆ "Existence in late capitalism is a permanent rite of initiation. Everyone must show that they identify wholeheartedly with the power which beats them" (pg. 124)
      - ◇ "Everyone can be like the omnipotent society, everyone can be happy if only they hand themselves over to it body and soul and relinquish their claim to happiness. In their weakness society recognizes its own strength and passes some of it back to them. Their lack of resistance certifies them as reliable customers" (pg. 124)
        - ▶ "The liquidation of tragedy confirms the abolition of the individual" (pg. 124)
  - "It is not only the standardized mode of production of the culture industry which makes the individual illusory in its products. **Individuals are tolerated only as far as their wholehearted identity with the universal is beyond question**" (pg. 124)
    - "The peculiarity of the self is a socially conditioned monopoly commodity misrepresented as natural" (pg. 125)
      - "Pseudoindividuality is a precondition for apprehending and detoxifying tragedy: only because individuals are none but mere intersections of universal tendencies is it possible to reabsorb them smoothly into the universal. Mass culture thereby reveals the fictitious quality which has characterized the individual throughout the bourgeois era and is wrong only in priding itself on this murky harmony between universal and particular. The principle of individuality was contradictory from the outset. First, no individuation was ever really achieved. The class-determined form of self-preservation maintained everyone at the level of mere species being. Every bourgeois character expressed the same thing, even and especially when deviating from it: the harshness of competitive society. The individual, on whom society was supported, itself bore society's taint; in the individual's apparent freedom he was the product of society's economic and social apparatus. **Power has always invoked the existing power relationships when seeking the approval of those subjected to power.** At the same time, the advance of bourgeois society has promoted the development of the individual. Against the will of those controlling it, technology has changed human beings from children into persons. But all such progress of individuation has been at the expense of the individuality in whose name it took place, leaving behind nothing except individuals' determination to pursue their own purposes alone." (pg. 125)
        - ◆ **"The culture industry can only manipulate individuality so successfully because the fractured nature of society has always been reproduced within it"** (pg. 126)
    - "The heroizing of the average forms part of the cult of cheapness. The highest-paid stars resemble advertisements for unnamed merchandise." (pg. 126)
  - **"Culture is a paradoxical commodity.** It is so completely subject to the law of exchange that it is no longer exchanged; it is so blindly equated with use that it can no longer be used. For this reason it merges with the advertisement. The more meaningless the latter appears under monopoly, the more omnipotent culture becomes" (pg. 131)
    - "Advertising today is a negative principle, a blocking device: anything which does not bear its seal of approval is economically suspect" (pg. 131)
- Chapter 5 - Elements of Anti-Semitism: Limits of Enlightenment (pg. 137)
    - See text.
  - Chapter 6 - Notes and Sketches (pg. 173)
    - "People judge their own selves by their market value and find out who they are from how they fare in the capitalist economy" (pg. 175)
    - **"External pressure has forced human beings to overcome their own inertia, to produce material and intellectual works.** Thinkers from Democritus to Freud are not wrong in believing this. The resistance of external nature, to which the pressure can finally be traced back, propagates itself in society through the classes, acting on all human beings from childhood onward as the callousness of their fellows. **People are gentle when they want something from those who are stronger, and harsh when the weaker want something from them. That has been the key to the nature of the person in society up to now**" (pg. 179-180)
    - "Despite its great accomplishments, only power can commit injustice, for only the executed judgment is unjust, not the lawyer's unexecuted plea. Only when discourse aims at oppression, defending power instead of powerlessness, does it contribute to the general wrong. **But power, one-sided reason now whispers, is represented by human beings. By exposing the former, you make a target of the latter**" (pg. 181)
    - "Classification is a condition of knowledge, not knowledge itself and knowledge in turn dissolves classification" (pg. 182)
    - "The essence of the world coincides with the statistical law by which its surface is classified" (pg. 183)
      - "The fundamental principle of liberal philosophy was that of both/and. Today the principle of either/or seems to apply, but in such a way that the decision has already been taken for the worse" (pg. 183)
    - "Progress keeps people literally apart" (pg. 183)
      - "Communication makes people conform by isolating them" (pg. 184)
        - "the means of communication also isolate people physically" (pg. 183)
    - **"Reason acts as an instrument of adaptation and not as a sedative,** as might appear from the use sometimes made of it by individuals. **Its ruse consists in making humans into beasts with an ever-wider reach, and not in bringing about the identity of subject and object**" (pg. 185)
    - "Unlike its custodians, philosophy refers, among other things, to thinking which refuses to capitulate to the prevailing division of labor and does not accept prescribed tasks. The existing order coerces people not merely by physical force and material interests but by overwhelming suggestion. Philosophy is not a synthesis, a basic science, or an overarching science but an effort to resist suggestion, a determination to protect intellectual and actual freedom" (pg. 202)
      - **"Philosophy detects the lie which domination inescapably brings with it.** Refusing to be hypnotized by the preponderant power, it pursues it into all its hiding-places in the social machinery, which by its nature cannot be taken by storm, or placed under different control, but must be understood in freedom from the spell which it casts" (pg. 202)
      - "It gives voice to the contradiction between belief and reality, paying close attention to phenomena conditioned by the time" (pg. 202)
    - "It is, of course, mistaken to believe that the truth of a theory is the same as its fruitfulness. There are some, however, who appear to assume the opposite. For them, theory has so little need to find application in thought that it should dispense with thinking altogether. They misinterpret every utterance as a final profession of belief, an injunction, or a taboo. They seek to submit to the idea as to a god or attack it as an idol. They lack freedom in relation to it. But it is in the nature of truth that one is involved in it as an active subject. People may hear propositions which in themselves are true; but they experience their truth only by thinking as they hear and by continuing to think" (pg. 203)
    - "Propaganda directed at changing the world-what an absurdity! **Propaganda turns language into an instrument, a lever, a machine. Propaganda fixes the composition which human beings have taken on under social injustice, by stirring them.** It counts on their ability to be counted on. All people know in their innermost awareness that through this medium they are turned into media, as in a factory" (pg. 212)
      - **"Propaganda manipulates human beings;** when it screams freedom it contradicts itself. Mendacity is inseparable from it. It is the community of

lies in which the leader and the led come together, even when its content as such is correct. In it even truth becomes a mere means, to the end of gaining adherents; it falsifies truth simply by taking it into its mouth. That is why true resistance is without propaganda. **Propaganda is antihuman.** It presupposes that the principle that politics should spring from communal insight is no more than a form of words" (pg. 212)

- "Mental life in its earliest stages is infinitely delicate" (pg. 213)
- Editor's Afterword (pg. 217)
  - "The book was written during the Second World War, between 1939 and 1944..." (pg. 217)
  - "It is true that the book scarcely forms a unity in the formal sense. It consists of five highly unconnected chapters, together with a number of shorter notes, the subjects of which at first sight appear somewhat heterogeneous" (pg. 217)
    - "The common element which the authors perceive in these phenomena is the tendency toward the self-destruction of enlightenment's own guiding criteria which had been inherent in enlightenment thought from the beginning" (pg. 218)
      - "**The self-destruction of Western reason is seen to be grounded in an historical and fateful dialectic of the domination of external nature, internal nature, and society.** Enlightenment, which split these spheres apart, is traced back to its mythical roots. Enlightenment and myth are not seen, therefore, as irreconcilable opposites but as dialectically mediated qualities of both real and intellectual life. **'Myth is already enlightenment, and: enlightenment reverts to mythology'. This paradox is the fundamental thesis of the book. Reason appears as inextricably entangled with domination.** Since the beginnings of history, liberation from the compulsions of external nature has been achieved only by introducing a power relationship of second degree. Both the repression of the internal nature of human drives, and social domination, are already at work in myth. Finally, fascism and the modern culture industry are the forms taken by a return of repressed nature. In the service of an advancing rationalization of instrumental thought modeled on the domination of nature and serving its purposes, enlightened reason is progressively hollowed out until it reverts to the new mythology of a resurrected relationship to nature, to violence." (pg. 218)
  - "The proximity of Horkheimer's and Adorno's argumentation to psychoanalytic theory and empirical practice is unmistakable, above all, in the chapters on the culture industry and anti-Semitism. **The culture industry is the regression, operating with enlightenment means in restricted form, from the effort of cultural sublimation**" (pg. 230)
    - "The authors attempt to show how reason, having regressed to instrumental rationality, has combined in the present era with the domination of nature and social control to form a quasi-mythical compulsion. In the modern varieties of totalitarianism, only the always-calamitous intertwinement of reason and power is manifested" (pg. 232)
  - "In a fragment written by Horkheimer about 1942, he describes politics in post-liberalism as an illusion which affects not only the dominated masses but the political agents themselves: 'Politics, the rediscovery of which in the Renaissance was a theoretical advance, has become, in thinking under monopoly, even more an ideological category than the laws of the market under liberalism: wit<sup>h</sup> its aid the surface is hypostatized. The dominated masses attribute world events to politics. They hear the appeal and the decree, they are informed about the lives of the powerful, which consist of facts in no need of theory; the masses experience, the direct consequences of political actions, of negotiations between rackets, they feel the effects of emergency aid, of rising prices, of the new job, of war, and perceive big politics as fate and nature just as they earlier perceived the economic depression. And the protagonists share this belief: They know that they hold key positions; just as the entrepreneur mistook his business ventures, calculations and speculations, that he undertook on the basis of the economic cycle, for freedom, the presidents of unions and governments misconstrue their decisions as the beginnings of causal chains. Government, however, must bow to the same necessities as buying and selling: to the requirements of the reproduction of society within the power relationships as they are. This is not so different in the two periods. The opacity of the market which gave rise to the self-deception about freedom merely expressed the fact that the relationships of entrepreneurs among themselves were not rational but were governed by individual self-assertion. Today the struggles take place within much stronger groups, amid movements of highly concentrated masses of capital. The governments are executive mechanisms which cannot rationally understand the actual state of the forces on which they depend, but merely feel their concrete effects'" (pg. 234-235)
- d. Further Readings:
  - (Article) The Sociology of the Self, by P. Callero [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Peter-Callero/publication/236107058/The\\_Sociology\\_of\\_the\\_Self/links/0f31753849ebb9a7b9000000/The-Sociology-of-the-Self.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Peter-Callero/publication/236107058/The_Sociology_of_the_Self/links/0f31753849ebb9a7b9000000/The-Sociology-of-the-Self.pdf)
  - (Article) The Origin of Politics: An Evolutionary Theory of Political Behavior, by J. Alford & J. Hibbing <https://www.uky.edu/AS/PoliSci/Peffley/pdf/Alford%20%26%20Hibbing%202004%20Perspectives%20The%20Origin%20of%20Politics%20An%20Evolutionary%20Theory%20of%20Political%20Behavior.pdf>
  - Handbook of Social Theory, by G. Ritzer & B. Smart [https://patkarvardecollege.edu.in/studymaterialpdf/14Socio\\_George\\_Ritzer,\\_Barry\\_Smart\\_Handbook\\_of\\_Social\\_Th\(BookFi\)\\_Reference.pdf](https://patkarvardecollege.edu.in/studymaterialpdf/14Socio_George_Ritzer,_Barry_Smart_Handbook_of_Social_Th(BookFi)_Reference.pdf)
  - Social Theory of International Politics, by A. Wendt <http://www.guillaumenicaise.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Wendt-Social-Theory-of-International-Politics.pdf>