

# One-Dimensional Man, by H. Marcuse

## a. People / Organizations:

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## b. Quotes:

- "...business and fun are still the politics of domination" - Author (pg. 104)
- "...nobody really thinks who does not abstract from that which is given, who does not relate the facts to the factors which have made them, who does not - in his mind - undo the facts..." - Author (pg. 134)
- "Thought is always more and other than individual thinking..." - Author (pg. 138)

## c. General Notes:

- Introduction to the Second Edition, by D. Kellner (pg. xi)
  - "Holding onto the vision of liberation articulated in his earlier book *Eros and Civilization*, Marcuse, in his critique of existing forms of domination and oppression, urges that what is be constantly compared with what could be: a freer and happier mode of human existence." (pg. xi)
    - "The book contains a theory of 'advanced industrial society' that describes how changes in production, consumption, culture, and thought have produced an advanced state of conformity in which the production of needs and aspirations by the prevailing societal apparatus integrates individuals into the established societies. Marcuse describes what has become known as the 'technological society,' in which technology restructures labor and leisure, influencing life from the organization of labor to modes of thought. He also describes the mechanisms through which consumer capitalism integrates individuals into its world of thought and behavior. Rather than seeing these developments as beneficial to the individual, Marcuse sees them as a threat to human freedom and individuality in a totally administered society." (pg. xii)
  - "Thus, *One-Dimensional Man* is also Marcuse's major philosophical work, articulating his Hegelian-Marxian concept of philosophy and critique of dominant philosophical and intellectual currents: positivism, analytic philosophy, technological rationality, and a variety of modes of conformist thinking. In this text, he both explicates his conception of dialectical philosophy and produces analyses of society and culture which exemplify his dialectical categories and method. Consequently, *One-Dimensional Man* presents a model both of Marcuse's critical social theory and of his critical philosophy inspired by his philosophical studies and his work with the Frankfurt School." (pg. xii-xiii)
    - "Marcuse develops a conception of a technological world, similar in some respects to that developed by Heidegger, and, like Husserl and Heidegger, sees technological rationality colonizing everyday life, robbing individuals of freedom and individuality by imposing technological imperatives, rules, and structures upon their thought and behavior." (pg. xiv)
  - "**Marcuse thought that dialectical philosophy could promote critical thinking.** One-Dimensional Man is perhaps Marcuse's most sustained attempt to present and develop the categories of the dialectical philosophy developed by Hegel and Marx. **For Marcuse, dialectical thinking involved the ability to abstract one's perception and thought from existing forms in order to form more general concepts.** This conception helps explain the difficulty of One-Dimensional Man and the demands that it imposes upon its reader. For Marcuse abstracts from the complexity and multiplicity of the existing society its fundamental tendencies and constituents, as well as those categories which constitute for him the forms of critical thinking. This demands that the reader also abstract from existing ways of looking at society and modes of thinking and attempt to perceive and think in a new way." (pg. xiv)
    - "**Uncritical thinking derives its beliefs, norms, and values from existing thought and social practices, while critical thought seeks alternative modes of thought and behavior from which it creates a standpoint of critique. Such a critical standpoint requires developing what Marcuse calls 'negative thinking', which 'negates' existing forms of thought and reality from the perspective of higher possibilities.** This practice presupposes the ability to make a distinction between existence and essence, fact and potentiality, and appearance and reality. Mere existence would be negated in favor of realizing higher potentialities while norms discovered by reason would be used to criticize and overcome lower forms of thought and social organization. Thus grasping potentialities for freedom and happiness would make possible the negation of conditions that inhibited individuals full development and realization. In other words, perceiving the possibility of self-determination and constructing one's own needs and values could enable individuals to break with the existing world of thought and behavior. Philosophy was thus to supply the norms for social criticism and the ideal of liberation which would guide social change and individual self-transformation." (pg. xiv-xv)
    - "**Critical and dialectical thinking, by contrast, postulates norms of criticism, based on rational potentials for human happiness and freedom, which are used to negate existing states of affairs that oppress individuals and restrict human freedom and well-being. Dialectical thought thus posits the existence of another realm of ideas, images, and imagination that serves as a potential guide for a social transformation that would realize the unrealized potentialities for a better life.** Marcuse believes that great philosophy and art are the locus of these potentialities and critical norms, and he decodes the best products of Western culture in this light." (pg. xvi-xvii)
  - "In a 1941 article, 'Some Social Implications of Modern Technology,' Marcuse sketches the historical decline of individualism from the time of the bourgeois revolutions to the rise of modern technological society. Individual rationality, he claims, was won in the struggle against regnant superstitions, irrationality, and domination, and posed the individual in a critical stance against society. Critical reason was thus a creative principle which was the source of both the individual's liberation and society's advancement. The development of modern industry and technological rationality, however, undermined the basis of individual rationality. As capitalism and technology developed, advanced industrial society demanded increasing accommodation to the economic and social apparatus and submission to increasing domination and administration. Hence, a 'mechanics of conformity' spread throughout the society. The efficiency and power of administration overwhelmed the individual, who gradually lost the earlier traits of critical rationality (i.e., autonomy, dissent, the power of negation), thus producing a 'one-dimensional society' and 'one-dimensional man'" (pg. xix-xx)
  - "In the one-dimensional society, the subject is assimilated into the object and follows the dictates of external, objective norms and structures, thus losing the ability to discover more liberating possibilities and to engage in transformative practice to realize them. Marcuse's theory presupposes the existence of a human subject with freedom, creativity, and self-determination who stands in opposition to an object-world, perceived as substance, which contains possibilities to be realized and secondary qualities like values, aesthetic traits, and aspirations, which can be cultivated to enhance human life. **In Marcuse's analysis, 'one-dimensional man' has lost, or is losing, individuality, freedom, and the ability to dissent and to control one's own destiny. The private space, the dimension of negation and individuality, in which one may become and remain a self, is being whittled away by a society which shapes aspirations, hopes, fears, and values, and even manipulates vital needs. In Marcuse's view, the price that one-dimensional man pays for satisfaction is to surrender freedom and individuality.** One-dimensional man does not know its true needs because its needs are not its own-they are administered, superimposed, and heteronomous; it is not able to resist domination, nor to act autonomously, for it identifies with public behavior and imitates and submits to the powers that be. Lacking the power of authentic self-activity, one-dimensional man submits to increasingly total domination." (pg. xxvii-xxviii)
    - "**Marcuse is thus a radical individualist who is deeply disturbed by the decline of the traits of authentic individuality that he so highly values.** One-dimensional society and one-dimensional man are the results of a long historical erosion of individuality which Marcuse criticized over

- several decades. One-Dimensional Man can thus be interpreted as an extended protest against the decline of individuality in advanced industrial society. The cognitive costs include the loss of an ability to perceive another dimension of possibilities that transcend the one-dimensional thought and society. Rooting his conception in Hegel's dialectical philosophy, Marcuse insists on the importance of distinguishing between existence and essence, fact and potential, and appearance and reality. One-dimensional thought is not able to make these distinctions and thus submits to the power of the existing society, deriving its view of the world and mode of behavior from existing practices and modes of thought. Marcuse is again reworking here the Hegelian-Marxian theme of reification and alienation, where the individual loses the power of comprehending and transforming subjectivity as it becomes dominated by alien powers and objects. **For Marcuse, the distinguishing features of a human being are free and creative subjectivity.** If in one's economic and social life one is administered by a technical labor apparatus and conforms to dominant social norms, one is losing one's potentialities of self-determination and individuality. Alienated from the powers of being-a-self, one-dimensional man thus becomes an object of administration and conformity." (pg. xviii-xxix)
- **"What is striking about the book is Marcuse's posture of total critique and resolute opposition to contemporary advanced industrial societies, capitalist and communist, in their totality."** (pg. xxix-xxx)
    - **"Marcuse perceives destructive tendencies in advanced capitalism's most celebrated achievements and sees irrationality in its self-proclaimed rationality. He maintains that the society's prosperity and growth are based on waste and destruction, its progress fueled by exploitation and repression, while its freedom and democracy are based on manipulation.** Marcuse slices through the ideological celebrations of capitalism and sharply criticizes the dehumanization and alienation in its opulence and affluence, the slavery in its labor system, the ideology and indoctrination in its culture, the fetishism in its consumerism, and the danger and insanity in its military-industrial complex. He concludes that despite its achievements, **"this society is irrational as a whole.** Its productivity is destructive of the free development of human needs and faculties... its growth dependent on the repression of the real possibilities for pacifying the struggle for existence-individual, national and international" (One-Dimensional Man, pp. ix-x)" (pg. xxx)
  - "...Marcuse continues to point to these forces and possibilities, and to recognize the liberating potential hidden in the oppressive social system, especially in technology, which could be used to eliminate alienated labor and to produce a better life for all. Marcuse always stresses liberation, and his thought is animated by a Utopian vision that life could be as it is in art and dreams if only a revolution would take place that would eliminate its repressive features." (pg. xxxiv)
  - Introduction to the First Edition, by H. Marcuse (pg. xli)
    - "The defense structure makes life easier for a greater number of people and extends man's mastery of nature. Under these circumstances, our mass media have little difficulty in selling particular interests as those of all sensible men. The political needs of society become individual needs and aspirations, their satisfaction promotes business and the commonweal, and the whole appears to be the very embodiment of Reason. And yet **this society is irrational as a whole. Its productivity is destructive of the free development of human needs and faculties, its peace maintained by the constant threat of war, its growth dependent on the repression of the real possibilities for pacifying the struggle for existence-individual, national, and international.** This repression, so different from that which characterized the preceding, less developed stages of our society, operates today not from a position of natural and technical immaturity but rather from a position of strength. The capabilities (intellectual and material) of contemporary society are immeasurably greater than ever before—which means that the scope of society's domination over the individual is immeasurably greater than ever before." (pg. xli-xlii)
    - "From the beginning, any critical theory of society is thus confronted with the problem of historical objectivity, a problem which arises at the two points where the analysis implies value judgments: (1) the judgment that human life is worth living, or rather can be and ought to be made worth living. This judgment underlies all intellectual effort; it is the a priori of social theory, and its rejection (which is perfectly logical) rejects theory itself; (2) the judgment that, in a given society, specific possibilities exist for the amelioration of human life and specific ways and means of realizing these possibilities. Critical analysis has to demonstrate the objective validity of these judgments, and the demonstration has to proceed on empirical grounds." (pg. xlii-xliii)
      - **"Such abstraction which refuses to accept the given universe of facts as the final context of validation, such "transcending" analysis of the facts in the light of their arrested and denied possibilities, pertains to the very structure of social theory.** It is opposed to all metaphysics by virtue of the rigorously historical character of the transcendence. The "possibilities" must be within the reach of the respective society; they must be definable goals of practice. By the same token, the abstraction from the established institutions must be expressive of an actual tendency—that is, their transformation must be the real need of the underlying population. **Social theory is concerned with the historical alternatives which haunt the established society as subversive tendencies and forces.** The values attached to the alternatives do become facts when they are translated into reality by historical practice. The theoretical concepts terminate with social change." (pg. xliii-xliv)
    - "Technical progress, extended to a whole system of domination and coordination, creates forms of life (and of power) which appear to reconcile the forces opposing the system and to defeat or refute all protest in the name of the historical prospects of freedom from toil and domination. Contemporary society seems to be capable of containing social change - qualitative change which would establish essentially different institutions, a new direction of the productive process, new modes of human existence. This containment of social change is perhaps the most singular achievement of advanced industrial society..." (pg. xlv)
    - **"The fact that the vast majority of the population accepts, and is made to accept, this society does not render it less irrational and less reprehensible.** The distinction between true and false consciousness, real and immediate interest still is meaningful. But this distinction itself must be validated. Men must come to see it and to find their way from false to true consciousness, from their immediate to their real interest. They can do so only if they live in need of changing their way of life, of denying the positive, of refusing. It is precisely this need which the established society manages to repress to the degree to which it is capable of "delivering the goods" on an increasingly large scale, and using the scientific conquest of nature for the scientific conquest of man." (pg. xlv-xlvi)
    - **"One-Dimensional Man** will vacillate throughout between two contradictory hypotheses: (1) that advanced industrial society is capable of containing qualitative change for the foreseeable future; (2) that forces and tendencies exist which may break this containment and explode the society." (pg. xlvii)
      - "...unless the recognition of what is being done and what is being prevented subverts the consciousness and the behavior of man, not even a catastrophe will bring about the change." (pg. xlvii)
    - "In this society, the productive apparatus tends to become totalitarian to the extent to which it determines not only the socially needed occupations, skills, and attitudes, but also individual needs and aspirations. It thus obliterates the opposition between the private and public existence, between individual and social needs. Technology serves to institute new, more effective, and more pleasant forms of social control and social cohesion." (pg. xlvii)
      - **"Technology as such cannot be isolated from the use to which it is put;** the technological society is a system of domination which operates already in the concept and construction of techniques." (pg. xlviii)
  - Chapter 1 - The New Forms of Control (pg. 1)
    - **"A comfortable, smooth, reasonable, democratic unfreedom prevails in advanced industrial civilization, a token of technical progress.** Indeed, what could be more rational than the suppression of individuality in the mechanization of socially necessary but painful performances; the concentration of

individual enterprises in more effective, more productive corporations; the regulation of free competition among unequally equipped economic subjects; the curtailment of prerogatives and national sovereignties which impede the international organization of resources. That this technological order also involves a political and intellectual coordination may be a regrettable and yet promising development. The rights and liberties which were such vital factors in the origins and earlier stages of industrial society yield to a higher stage of this society: they are losing their traditional rationale and content. Freedom of thought, speech, and conscience were - just as free enterprise, which they served to promote and protect - essentially critical ideas, designed to replace an obsolescent material and intellectual culture by a more productive and rational one. Once institutionalized, these rights and liberties shared the fate of the society of which they had become an integral part. The achievement cancels the premises." (pg. 1)

- **"By virtue of the way it has organized its technological base, contemporary industrial society tends to be totalitarian.** For "totalitarian" is not only a terroristic political coordination of society, but also a non-terroristic economic-technical coordination which operates through the manipulation of needs by vested interests. It thus precludes the emergence of an effective opposition against the whole. Not only a specific form of government or party rule makes for totalitarianism, but also a specific system of production and distribution which may well be compatible with a "pluralism" of parties, newspapers, "countervailing powers," etc." (pg. 3)
- "Contemporary industrial civilization demonstrates that it has reached the stage at which "the free society" can no longer be adequately defined in the traditional terms of economic, political, and intellectual liberties, not because these liberties have become insignificant, but because they are too significant to be confined within the traditional forms. New modes of realization are needed, corresponding to the new capabilities of society." (pg. 3-4)
  - "Such new modes can be indicated only in negative terms because they would amount to the negation of the prevailing modes. **Thus economic freedom would mean freedom from the economy - from being controlled by economic forces and relationships; freedom from the daily struggle for existence, from earning a living. Political freedom would mean liberation of the individuals from politics over which they have no effective control. Similarly, intellectual freedom would mean the restoration of individual thought now absorbed by mass communication and indoctrination, abolition of "public opinion" together with its makers.** The unrealistic sound of these propositions is indicative, not of their utopian character, but of the strength of the forces which prevent their realization. The most effective and enduring form of warfare against liberation is the implanting of material and intellectual needs that perpetuate obsolete forms of the struggle for existence." (pg. 4)
    - "Whether or not the possibility of doing or leaving, enjoying or destroying, possessing or rejecting something is seized as **a need depends on whether or not it can be seen as desirable and necessary for the prevailing societal institutions and interests.** In this sense, human needs are historical needs and, to the extent to which the society demands the repressive development of the individual, his needs themselves and their claim for satisfaction are subject to overriding critical standards." (pg. 4)
      - ◆ "We may distinguish both true and false needs. **'False' are those which are superimposed upon the individual** by particular social interests in his repression: the needs which perpetuate toil, aggressiveness, misery, and injustice." (pg. 4-5)
        - ◇ "Most of the prevailing needs to relax, to have fun, to behave and consume in accordance with the advertisements, to love and hate what others love and hate, belong to this category of false needs. Such needs have a societal content and function which are determined by external powers over which the individual has no control; the development and satisfaction of these needs is heteronomous. No matter how much such needs may have become the individual's own, reproduced and fortified by the conditions of his existence; no matter how much he identifies himself with them and finds himself in their satisfaction, they continue to be what they were from the beginning - products of a society whose dominant interest demands repression." (pg. 5)
      - ◆ "For any consciousness and conscience, for any experience which does not accept the prevailing societal interest as the supreme law of thought and behavior, the established universe of needs and satisfactions is a fact to be questioned - questioned in terms of truth and falsehood." (pg. 5-6)
        - ◇ "As long as they are kept incapable of being autonomous, as long as they are indoctrinated and manipulated (down to their very instincts), their answer to this question cannot be taken as their own." (pg. 6)
      - ◆ "All liberation depends on the consciousness of servitude, and the emergence of this consciousness is always hampered by the predominance of needs and satisfactions which, to a great extent, have become the individual's own. The process always replaces one system of preconditioning by another; **the optimal goal is the replacement of false needs by true ones, the abandonment of repressive satisfaction.**" (pg. 7)
    - "The distinguishing feature of advanced industrial society is its effective suffocation of those needs which demand liberation - liberation also from that which is tolerable and rewarding and comfortable - while it sustains and absolves the destructive power and repressive function of the affluent society. Here, **the social controls exact the overwhelming need for the production and consumption of waste; the need for stupefying work where it is no longer a real necessity; the need for modes of relaxation which soothe and prolong this stupefaction; the need for maintaining such deceptive liberties as free competition at administered prices, a free press which censors itself, free choice between brands and gadgets. Under the rule of a repressive whole, liberty can be made into a powerful instrument of domination.** The range of choice open to the individual is not the decisive factor in determining the degree of human freedom, but what can be chosen and what is chosen by the individual. The criterion for free choice can never be an absolute one, but neither is it entirely relative. **Free election of masters does not abolish the masters or the slaves.** Free choice among a wide variety of goods and services does not signify freedom if these goods and services sustain social controls over a life of toil and fear - that is, if they sustain alienation. And the spontaneous reproduction of superimposed needs by the individual does not establish autonomy; it only testifies to the efficacy of the controls." (pg. 7-8)
      - "We are again confronted with one of the most vexing aspects of advanced industrial civilization: the rational character of its irrationality. Its productivity and efficiency, its capacity to increase and spread comforts, to turn waste into need, and destruction into construction, the extent to which this civilization transforms the object world into an extension of man's mind and body makes the very notion of alienation questionable. **The people recognize themselves in their commodities;** they find their soul in their auto-mobile, hi-fi set, split-level home, kitchen equipment. The very mechanism which ties the individual to his society has changed, and social control is anchored in the new needs which it has produced" (pg. 9)
    - "The prevailing forms of social control are technological in a new sense. To be sure, the technical structure and efficacy of the productive and destructive apparatus has been a major instrumentality for subjecting the population to the established social division of labor throughout the modern period." (pg. 9)
      - "But in the contemporary period, the technological controls appear to be the very embodiment of Reason for the benefit of all social groups and interests - to such an extent that all contradiction seems irrational and all counteraction impossible. No wonder then that, in the most advanced areas of this civilization, the social controls have been introjected to the point where even individual protest is affected at its roots. The intellectual and emotional refusal "to go along" appears neurotic and impotent. This is the socio-psychological aspect of the political event that marks the contemporary period" (pg. 9-10)
        - ◆ **"Introjection suggests a variety of relatively spontaneous processes by which a Self (Ego) transposes the "outer" into the "inner."** Thus introjection implies the existence of an inner dimension distinguished from and even antagonistic to the external exigencies -

an individual consciousness and an individual unconscious apart from public opinion and behavior. The idea of "inner freedom" here has its reality: it designates the private space in which man may become and remain "himself."" (pg. 10)

- ◇ **"Today this private space has been invaded and whittled down by technological reality.** Mass production and mass distribution claim the entire individual, and industrial psychology has long since ceased to be confined to the factory. The manifold processes of introjection seem to be ossified in almost mechanical reactions. The result is, not adjustment but mimesis: an immediate identification of the individual with his society and, through it, with the society as a whole. This immediate, automatic identification (which may have been characteristic of primitive forms of association) reappears in high industrial civilization; its new "immediacy," however, is the product of a sophisticated, scientific management and organization. In this process, **the "inner" dimension of the mind in which opposition to the status quo can take root is whittled down. The loss of this dimension, in which the power of negative thinking - the critical power of Reason - is at home, is the ideological counterpart to the very material process in which advanced industrial society silences and reconciles the opposition.** The impact of progress turns Reason into submission to the facts of life, and to the dynamic capability of producing more and bigger facts of the same sort of life. The efficiency of the system blunts the individuals' recognition that it contains no facts which do not communicate the repressive power of the whole. If the individuals find themselves in the things which shape their life, they do so, not by giving, but by accepting the law of things—not the law of physics but the law of their society. I have just suggested that the concept of alienation seems to become questionable when the individuals identify themselves with the existence which is imposed upon them and have in it their own development and satisfaction. This identification is not illusion but reality. However, the reality constitutes a more progressive stage of alienation. The latter has become entirely objective; the subject which is alienated is swallowed up by its alienated existence. **There is only one dimension, and it is everywhere and in all forms.** The achievements of progress defy ideological indictment as well as justification; before their tribunal, the "false consciousness" of their rationality becomes the true consciousness." (pg. 10-11)
  - ▶ "...in a specific sense **advanced industrial culture is more ideological than its predecessor**, inasmuch as today the ideology is in the process of production itself." (pg. 10)
    - **"The products indoctrinate and manipulate;** they promote a false consciousness which is immune against its falsehood." (pg. 12)
  - "Thus emerges a pattern of one-dimensional thought and behavior in which ideas, aspirations, and objectives that, by their content, transcend the established universe of discourse and action are either repelled or reduced to terms of this universe. They are redefined by the rationality of the given system and of its quantitative extension." (pg. 12)
    - "One-dimensional thought is systematically promoted by the makers of politics and their purveyors of mass information. Their universe of discourse is populated by self-validating hypotheses which, incessantly and monopolistically repeated, become hypnotic definitions or dictations." (pg. 14)
  - "'Progress' is not a neutral term; it moves toward specific ends, and these ends are defined by the possibilities of ameliorating the human condition. Advanced industrial society is approaching the stage where continued progress would demand the radical subversion of the prevailing direction and organization of progress. This stage would be reached when material production (including the necessary services) becomes automated to the extent that all vital needs can be satisfied while necessary labor time is reduced to marginal time. From this point on, technical progress would transcend the realm of necessity, where it served as the instrument of domination and exploitation which thereby limited its rationality; technology would become subject to the free play of faculties in the struggle for the pacification of nature and of society." (pg. 16)
  - "Underneath its obvious dynamics, **this society is a thoroughly static system of life:** self-propelling in its oppressive productivity and in its beneficial coordination." (pg. 17)
    - **"...the more technology appears capable of creating the conditions for pacification, the more are the minds and bodies of man organized against this alternative."** (pg. 17)
  - "The most advanced areas of industrial society exhibit throughout these two features: a trend toward consummation of technological rationality, and intensive efforts to contain this trend within the established institutions. Here is the internal contradiction of this civilization: the irrational element in its rationality. It is the token of its achievements. The industrial society which makes technology and science its own is organized for the ever-more-effective domination of man and nature, for the ever-more-effective utilization of its resources. It becomes irrational when the success of these efforts opens new dimensions of human realization. Organization for peace is different from organization for war; the institutions which served the struggle for existence cannot serve the pacification of existence. Life as an end is qualitatively different from life as a means." (pg. 17)
    - "Technological rationality reveals its political character as it becomes the great vehicle of better domination, creating a truly totalitarian universe in which society and nature, mind and body are kept in a state of permanent mobilization for the defense of this universe." (pg. 18)
- Chapter 2 - The Closing of the Political Universe (pg. 19)
  - **"This is the pure form of servitude: to exist as an instrument, as a thing.** And this mode of existence is not abrogated if the thing is animated and chooses its material and intellectual food, if it does not feel its being-a-thing, if it is a pretty, clean, mobile thing. Conversely, as reification tends to become totalitarian by virtue of its technological form, the organizers and administrators themselves become increasingly dependent on the machinery which they organize and administer. And this mutual dependence is no longer the dialectical relationship between Master and Servant, which has been broken in the struggle for mutual recognition, but rather a vicious circle which encloses both the Master and the Servant." (pg. 33)
  - **"...the Welfare State is a state of unfreedom** because its total administration is systematic restriction of (a) "technically" available free time; (b) the quantity and quality of goods and services "technically" available for vital individual needs; (c) the intelligence (conscious and unconscious capable of comprehending and realizing the possibilities of self-determination." (pg. 48)
  - **"The reality of pluralism becomes ideological, deceptive.** It seems to extend rather than reduce manipulation and coordination, to promote rather than counteract the fateful integration. Free institutions compete with authoritarian ones in making the Enemy a deadly force within the system. And this deadly force stimulates growth and initiative, not by virtue of the magnitude and economic impact of the defense "sector," but by virtue of the fact that the society as a whole becomes a defense society. For the Enemy is permanent. He is not in the emergency situation but in the normal state of affairs. He threatens in peace as much as in war (and perhaps more than in war); he is thus being built into the system as a cohesive power." (pg. 51)
    - **"Democracy would appear to be the most efficient system of domination"** (pg. 52)
  - "When capitalism meets the challenge of communism, it meets its own capabilities: spectacular development of all productive forces after the subordination of the private interests in profitability which arrest such development. When communism meets the challenge of capitalism, it too meets its own capabilities: spectacular comforts, liberties, and alleviation of the burden of life. Both systems have these capabilities distorted beyond recognition and, in both cases, the reason is in the last analysis the same - the struggle against a form of life which would dissolve the basis for domination." (pg. 55)
- Chapter 3 - The Conquest of the Unhappy Consciousness: Repressive Desublimation (pg. 56)

- "...the process of desublimation...prevails in the advanced regions of contemporary society" (pg. 56)
- "The achievements and the failures of this society invalidate its higher culture. **The celebration of the autonomous personality, of humanism, of tragic and romantic love appears to be the ideal of a backward stage of the development. What is happening now is not the deterioration of higher culture into mass culture but the refutation of this culture by the reality.** The reality surpasses its culture. Man today can do more than the culture heros and half-gods; he has solved many insoluble problems. But he has also betrayed the hope and destroyed the truth which were preserved in the sublimations of higher culture. To be sure, the higher culture was always in contradiction with social reality, and only a privileged minority enjoyed its blessings and represented its ideals. The two antagonistic spheres of society have always coexisted; the higher culture has always been accommodating, while the reality was rarely disturbed by its ideals and its truth." (pg. 56)
- "Just as people know or feel that advertisements and political platforms must not be necessarily true or right, and yet hear and read them and even let themselves be guided by them, so they accept the traditional values and make them part of their mental equipment. If mass communications blend together harmoniously, and often unnoticeably, art, politics, religion, and philosophy with commercials, they bring these realms of culture to their common denominator - the commodity form. The music of the soul is also the music of salesmanship. **Exchange value, not truth value counts. On it centers the rationality of the status quo, and all alien rationality is bent to it.**" (pg. 56)
- "Obviously, **the physical transformation of the world entails the mental transformation of its symbols, images, and ideas.** Obviously, when cities and highways and National Parks replace the villages, valleys, and forests; when motorboats race over the lakes and planes cut through the skies - then these areas lose their character as a qualitatively different reality, as areas of contradiction. And since **contradiction is the work of the Logos - rational confrontation of "that which is not" with "that which is" - it must have a medium of communication.** The struggle for this medium, or rather the struggle against its absorption into the predominant one-dimensionality, shows forth in the avant-garde efforts to create an estrangement which would make the artistic truth again communicable." (pg. 66)
  - "Creating and moving in a medium which presents the absent, the poetic language is a language of cognition - but a cognition which subverts the positive. In its cognitive function, poetry performs the great task of thought" (pg. 67)
- "**The individual must adapt himself to a world which does not seem to demand the denial of his innermost needs** - a world which is not essentially hostile. The organism is thus being preconditioned for the spontaneous acceptance of what is offered. Inasmuch as the **greater liberty involves a contraction rather than extension and development of instinctual needs**, it works for rather than against the status quo of general repression - one might speak of "institutionalized desublimation." The latter appears to be a vital factor in the making of the authoritarian personality of our time." (pg. 74)
- "This mobilization and administration of libido may account for much of the voluntary compliance, the absence of terror, the pre-established harmony between individual needs and socially-required desires, goals, and aspirations. The technological and political conquest of the transcending factors in human existence, so characteristic of advanced industrial civilization, here asserts itself in the instinctual sphere: **satisfaction in a way which generates submission and weakens the rationality of protest.** The range of socially permissible and desirable satisfaction is greatly enlarged, but through this satisfaction, the Pleasure Principle is reduced - deprived of the claims which are irreconcilable with the established society. **Pleasure, thus adjusted, generates submission.**" (pg. 75)
  - "The Superego, in censoring the unconscious and in implanting conscience, also censors the censor because the developed conscience registers the forbidden evil act not only in the individual but also in his society. Conversely, loss of conscience due to the satisfactory liberties granted by an unfree society makes for a happy consciousness which facilitates acceptance of the misdeeds of this society. It is the token of declining autonomy and comprehension. **Sublimation demands a high degree of autonomy and comprehension; it is mediation between the conscious and the unconscious, between the primary and secondary processes, between the intellect and instinct, renunciation and rebellion.** In its most accomplished modes, such as in the artistic oeuvre, sublimation becomes the cognitive power which defeats suppression while bowing to it. In the light of the cognitive function of this mode of sublimation, **the desublimation rampant in advanced industrial society reveals its truly conformist function.** This liberation of sexuality (and of aggressiveness) frees the instinctual drives from much of the unhappiness and discontent that elucidate the repressive power of the established universe of satisfaction. To be sure, there is pervasive unhappiness, and the happy consciousness is shaky enough - a thin surface over fear, frustration, and disgust. This unhappiness lends itself easily to political mobilization; without room for conscious development, it may become the instinctual reservoir for a new fascist way of life and death. But there are many ways in which the unhappiness beneath the happy consciousness may be turned into a source of strength and cohesion for the social order. The conflicts of the unhappy individual now seem far more amenable to cure than those which made for Freud's "discontent in civilization," and they seem more adequately defined in terms of the "neurotic personality of our time" than in terms of the eternal struggle between Eros and Thanatos." (pg. 76-77)
    - "The dominion of Eros is, from the beginning, also that of Thanatos. Fulfillment is destruction, not in a moral or sociological but in an ontological sense. It is beyond good and evil, beyond social morality, and thus it remains beyond the reaches of the established Reality Principle, which this Eros refuses and explodes." (pg. 77)
  - "The concept of controlled desublimation would imply the possibility of a simultaneous release of repressed sexuality and aggressiveness, a possibility which seems incompatible with Freud's notion of the fixed quantum of instinctual energy available for distribution between the two primary drives. According to Freud, strengthening of sexuality (libido) would necessarily involve weakening of aggressiveness, and vice versa. However, if the socially permitted and encouraged release of libido would be that of partial and localized sexuality, it would be tantamount to an actual compression of erotic energy, and this desublimation would be compatible with the growth of unsublimated as well as sublimated forms of aggressiveness. The latter is rampant throughout contemporary industrial society." (pg. 78)
    - "Assuming that the Destruction Instinct (in the last analysis: the Death Instinct) is a large component of the energy which feeds the technical conquest of man and nature, it seems that society's growing capacity to manipulate technical progress also increases its capacity to manipulate and control this instinct, i.e., to satisfy it "productively." Then social cohesion would be strengthened at the deepest instinctual roots. The supreme risk, and even the fact of war would meet, not only with helpless acceptance, but also with instinctual approval on the part of the victims. Here too, we would have controlled desublimation. Institutionalized desublimation thus appears to be an aspect of the "conquest of transcendence" achieved by the one-dimensional society. Just as this society tends to reduce, and even absorb opposition (the qualitative difference!) in the realm of politics and higher culture, so it does in the instinctual sphere. The result is the atrophy of the mental organs for grasping the contradictions and the alternatives and, in the one remaining dimension of technological rationality, the Happy Consciousness comes to prevail. It reflects the belief that the real is rational, and that the established system, in spite of everything, delivers the goods. **The people are led to find in the productive apparatus the effective agent of thought and action to which their personal thought and action can and must be surrendered.** And in this transfer, the apparatus also assumes the role of a moral agent. Conscience is absolved by reification, by the general necessity of things. In this general necessity, guilt has no place. One man can give the signal that liquidates hundreds and thousands of people, then declare himself free from all pangs of conscience, and live happily ever after." (pg. 79)
      - ◆ "The Happy Consciousness has no limits - it arranges games with death and disfiguration in which fun, team work, and strategic importance mix in rewarding social harmony." (pg. 80)

- Chapter 4 - The Closing of the Universe of Discourse (pg. 84)
  - **"The Happy Consciousness - the belief that the real is rational and that the system delivers the goods - reflects the new conformism which is a facet of technological rationality translated into social behavior. It is new because it is rational to an unprecedented degree.** It sustains a society which has reduced-and in its most advanced areas eliminated - the more primitive irrationality of the preceding stages, which prolongs and improves life more regularly than before. The war of annihilation has not yet occurred; the Nazi extermination camps have been abolished. The Happy Consciousness repels the connection. Torture has been reintroduced as a normal affair, but in a colonial war which takes place at the margin of the civilized world. And there it is practiced with good conscience for war is war. And this war, too, is at the margin - it ravages only the "under-developed" countries. Otherwise, peace reigns. **The power over man which this society has acquired is daily absolved by its efficacy and productiveness. If it assimilates everything it touches, if it absorbs the opposition, if it plays with the contradiction, it demonstrates its cultural superiority"** (pg. 84-85)
  - **"This sort of well-being, the productive superstructure over the unhappy base of society, permeates the "media" which mediate between the masters and their dependents. Its publicity agents shape the universe of communication in which the one-dimensional behavior expresses itself. Its language testifies to identification and unification, to the systematic promotion of positive thinking and doing, to the concerted attack on transcendent, critical notions.** In the prevailing modes of speech, the contrast appears between two-dimensional, dialectical modes of thought and technological behavior or social "habits of thought." In the expression of these habits of thought, the tension between appearance and reality, fact and factor, substance and attribute tend to disappear. The elements of autonomy, discovery, demonstration, and critique recede before designation, assertion, and imitation. **Magical, authoritarian and ritual elements permeate speech and language. Discourse is deprived of the mediations which are the stages of the process of cognition and cognitive evaluation. The concepts which comprehend the facts and thereby transcend the facts are losing their authentic linguistic representation. Without these mediations, language tends to express and promote the immediate identification of reason and fact, truth and established truth, essence and existence, the thing and its function."** (pg. 85)
    - "It is the word that orders and organizes, that induces people to do, to buy, and to accept. It is transmitted in a style which is a veritable linguistic creation; a syntax in which the structure of the sentence is abridged and condensed in such a way that no tension, no "space" is left between the parts of the sentence. This linguistic form militates against a development of meaning. I shall presently try to illustrate this style." (pg. 86)
  - "...technological reasoning...tends 'to identify things and their functions'" (pg. 87)
    - "I have alluded to the philosophy of grammar in order to illuminate the extent to which the linguistic abridgments indicate an abridgment of thought which they in turn fortify and promote. Insistence on the philosophical elements in grammar, on the link between the grammatical, logical, and ontological "subject," points up the contents which are suppressed in the functional language, barred from expression and communication. Abridgment of the concept in fixed images; arrested development in self-validating, hypnotic formulas; immunity against contradiction; identification of the thing (and of the person) with its function - **these tendencies reveal the one-dimensional mind in the language it speaks. If the linguistic behavior blocks conceptual development, if it militates against abstraction and mediation, if it surrenders to the immediate facts, it repels recognition of the factors behind the facts, and thus repels recognition of the facts, and of their historical content.** In and for the society, **this organization of functional discourse is of vital importance; it serves as a vehicle of coordination and subordination.** The unified, functional language is an irreconcilably anti-critical and anti-dialectical language. In it, **operational and behavioral rationality absorbs the transcendent, negative, oppositional elements of Reason."** (pg. 96-97)
      - "I shall discuss these elements in terms of the tension between the "is" and the "ought," between essence and appearance, potentiality and actuality - ingression of the negative in the positive determinations of logic. This sustained tension permeates the two-dimensional universe of discourse which is the universe of critical, abstract thought. The two dimensions are antagonistic to each other; the reality partakes of both of them, and the dialectical concepts develop the real contradictions. In its own development, dialectical thought came to comprehend the historical character of the contradictions and the process of their mediation as historical process. Thus the "other" dimension of thought appeared to be historical dimension - the potentiality as historical possibility, its realization as historical event. The suppression of this dimension in the societal universe of operational rationality is a suppression of history, and this is not an academic but a political affair. It is suppression of the society's own past - and of its future, inasmuch as this future invokes the qualitative change, the negation of the present. A universe of discourse in which the categories of freedom have become interchangeable and even identical with their opposites is not only practicing Orwellian or Aesopian language but is repulsing and forgetting the historical reality - the horror of fascism; the idea of socialism; the preconditions of democracy; the content of freedom. If a bureaucratic dictatorship rules and defines communist society, if fascist regimes are functioning as partners of the Free World, if the welfare program of enlightened capitalism is successfully defeated by labeling it "socialism," if the foundations of democracy are harmoniously abrogated in democracy, then the old historical concepts are invalidated by up-to-date operational redefinitions. The redefinitions are falsifications which, imposed by the powers that be and the powers of fact, serve to transform falsehood into truth." (pg. 97-98)
        - ◆ **"The functional language is a radically anti-historical language: operational rationality has little room and little use for historical reason"** (pg. 98)
          - ◇ "Remembrance is a mode of dissociation from the given facts, a mode of "mediation" which breaks, for short moments, the omnipresent power of the given facts. Memory recalls the terror and the hope that passed. Both come to life again, but whereas in reality, the former recurs in ever new forms, the latter remains hope. And in the personal events which reappear in the individual memory, **the fears and aspirations of mankind assert themselves** - the universal in the particular. It is history which memory preserves. It succumbs to the totalitarian power of the behavioral universe..." (pg. 98-99)
      - **"If the progressing rationality of advanced industrial society tends to liquidate, as an "irrational rest," the disturbing elements of Time and Memory, it also tends to liquidate the disturbing rationality contained in this irrational rest. Recognition and relation to the past as present counteracts the functionalization of thought by and in the established reality. It militates against the closing of the universe of discourse and behavior; it renders possible the development of concepts which de-stabilize and transcend the closed universe by comprehending it as historical universe. Confronted with the given society as object of its reflection, critical thought becomes historical consciousness; as such, it is essentially judgment. Far from necessitating an indifferent relativism, it searches in the real history of man for the criteria of truth and falsehood, progress and regression.** The mediation of the past with the present discovers the factors which made the facts, which determined the way of life, which established the masters and the servants; it projects the limits and the alternatives. When this critical consciousness speaks, it speaks "le langage de la connaissance" (Roland Barthes) which breaks open a closed universe of discourse and its petrified structure. The key terms of this language are not hypnotic nouns which evoke endlessly the same frozen predicates. They rather allow of an open development; they even unfold their content in contradictory predicates." (pg. 99-100)
    - **"Functional communication is only the outer layer of the one-dimensional universe in which man is trained to forget** - to translate the negative into the positive so that he can continue to function, reduced but fit and reasonably well. The institutions of free speech and freedom of thought do not hamper the mental coordination with the established reality. What is taking place is a sweeping redefinition of thought itself, of its function and content. The coordination of the individual with his society reaches into those layers of the mind where the very concepts are elaborated which are designed to comprehend the established reality. These concepts are taken from the intellectual tradition and translated into operational terms - a

- translation which has the effect of reducing the tension between thought and reality by weakening the negative power of thought." (pg. 104)
- Chapter 5 - Negative Thinking: The Defeated Logic of Protest (pg. 123)
    - "In classical Greek philosophy, Reason is the cognitive faculty to distinguish what is true and what is false insofar as truth (and falsehood) is primarily a condition of Being, of Reality and only on this ground a property of propositions. True discourse, logic, reveals and expresses that which really is - as distinguished from that which appears to be (real). And by virtue of this equation between Truth and (real) Being, Truth is a value, for Being is better than Non-Being. The latter is not simply Nothing; it is a potentiality of and a threat to Being - destruction. The struggle for truth is a struggle against destruction, for the "salvation" (ockew) of Being (an effort which appears itself to be destructive if it assails an established reality as "untrue": Socrates against the Athenian city state). Inasmuch as the struggle for truth "saves" reality from destruction, truth commits and engages human existence. It is the essentially human project. If man has learned to see and know what really is, he will act in accordance with truth. **Epistemology is in itself ethics, and ethics is epistemology.**" (pg. 124-125)
      - **"...philosophy moves in a universe which is broken in itself (déchirement ontologique) — two-dimensional. Appearance and reality, untruth and truth, (and, as we shall see, unfreedom and freedom) are ontological conditions."** (pg. 125)
        - "The distinction is not by virtue or by fault of abstract thought; it is rather rooted in the experience of the universe of which thought partakes in theory and practice. In this universe, there are modes of being in which men and things are "by themselves" and "as themselves," and modes in which they are not—that is, in which they exist in distortion, limitation, or denial of their nature (essence). **To overcome these negative conditions is the process of being and of thought. Philosophy originates in dialectic; its universe of discourse responds to the facts of an antagonistic reality.**" (pg. 125)
      - "Analyzed in the condition in which he finds himself in his universe, man seems to be in possession of certain faculties and powers which would enable him to lead a "good life," i.e., a life which is as much as possible free from toil, dependence, and ugliness. To attain such a life is to attain the "best life": to live in accordance with the essence of nature or man." (pg. 126)
      - **"To be sure, this is still the dictum of the philosopher; it is he who analyzes the human situation. He subjects experience to his critical judgment, and this contains a value judgment - namely, that freedom from toil is preferable to toil, and an intelligent life is preferable to a stupid life. It so happened that philosophy was born with these values. Scientific thought had to break this union of value judgment and analysis, for it became increasingly clear that the philosophic values did not guide the organization of society nor the transformation of nature.** They were ineffective, unreal. Already the Greek conception contains the historical element - the essence of man is different in the slave and in the free citizen, in the Greek and in the Barbarian. Civilization has overcome the ontological stabilization of this difference (at least in theory). But this development does not yet invalidate the distinction between essential and contingent nature, between true and false modes of existence - provided only that the distinction derives from a logical analysis of the empirical situation, and understands its potential as well as its contingency." (pg. 126-127)
        - **"But the essential potentiality is not like the many possibilities which are contained in the given universe of discourse and action; the essential potentiality is of a very different order. Its realization involves subversion of the established order, for thinking in accordance with truth is the commitment to exist in accordance with truth. (In Plato, the extreme concepts which illustrate this subversion are: death as the beginning of the philosopher's life, and the violent liberation from the Cave.) Thus, the subversive character of truth inflicts upon thought an imperative quality. Logic centers on judgments which are, as demonstrative propositions, imperatives,— the predicative "is" implies an "ought." This contradictory, two-dimensional style of thought is the inner form not only of dialectical logic but of all philosophy which comes to grips with reality. The propositions which define reality affirm as true something that is not (immediately) the case; thus they contradict that which is the case, and they deny its truth."** (pg. 132)
      - **"Dialectical thought understands the critical tension between "is" and "ought" first as an ontological condition, pertaining to the structure of Being itself.** However, the recognition of this state of Being - its theory - intends from the beginning a concrete practice. Seen in the light of a truth which appears in them falsified or denied, the given facts themselves appear false and negative." (pg. 133)
        - **"Consequently, thought is led, by the situation of its objects, to measure their truth in terms of another logic, another universe of discourse. And this logic projects another mode of existence..."** (pg. 133-134)
          - "By virtue of this dissociation, **critical philosophic thought is necessarily transcendent and abstract.** Philosophy shares this abstractness with all genuine thought, **for nobody really thinks who does not abstract from that which is given, who does not relate the facts to the factors which have made them, who does not - in his mind - undo the facts. Abstractness is the very life of thought, the token of its authenticity.**" (pg. 134)
            - ◆ "But there are false and true abstractions" (pg. 134)
        - **"the most formalized universe of logic still refers to the most general structure of the given, experienced world; the pure form is still that of the content which it formalizes. The idea of formal logic itself is a historical event in the development of the mental and physical instruments for universal control and calculability. In this undertaking, man had to create theoretical harmony out of actual discord, to purge thought from contradictions, to hypostatize identifiable and fungible units in the complex process of society and nature.** Under the rule of formal logic, the notion of the conflict between essence and appearance is expendable if not meaningless; the material content is neutralized; the principle of identity is separated from the principle of contradiction (contradictions are the fault of incorrect thinking); final causes are removed from the logical order. Well defined in their scope and function, **concepts become instruments of prediction and control. Formal logic is thus the first step on the long road to scientific thought** - the first step only, for a much higher degree of abstraction and mathematization is still required to adjust the modes of thought to technological rationality." (pg. 137)
          - "The contemporary mathematical and symbolic logic is certainly very different from its classical predecessor, but they share the radical opposition to dialectical logic. In terms of this opposition, the old and the new formal logic express the same mode of thought. It is purged from that "negative" which loomed so large at the origins of logic and of philosophic thought - the experience of the denying, deceptive, falsifying power of the established reality. And with the elimination of this experience, the conceptual effort to sustain the tension between "is" and "ought," and to subvert the established universe of discourse in the name of its own truth is likewise eliminated from all thought which is to be objective, exact, and scientific. For the scientific subversion of the immediate experience which establishes the truth of science as against that of immediate experience does not develop the concepts which carry in themselves the protest and the refusal. The new scientific truth which they oppose to the accepted one does not contain in itself the judgment that condemns the established reality." (pg. 139-140)
        - "In contrast, dialectical thought is and remains unscientific to the extent to which it is such judgment, and the judgment is imposed upon dialectical thought by the nature of its object - by its objectivity. This object is the reality in its true concreteness; dialectical logic precludes all abstraction which leaves the concrete content alone and behind, uncomprehended. Hegel detects in the critical philosophy of his time the "fear of the object" (Angst vor dem Objekt), and he demands that a genuinely scientific thought overcome this position of fear and comprehend the "logical and the pure-rational" (*das Logische, das Rein-Vernünftige*) in the very concreteness of its objects. Dialectical logic cannot be formal because it is determined by the real, which is concrete. And this concreteness, far from militating against a system of general principles and concepts, requires such a system of logic because it moves under general laws which make for the rationality of the real. **It is the rationality of contradiction, of the opposition of forces, tendencies, elements, which constitutes the movement of the real and, if comprehended, the concept of the real.** Existing as the living contradiction between essence and appearance, the objects of thought are of that "inner negativity" which is the specific quality of their concept. The dialectical

- definition defines the movement of things from that which they are not to that which they are. The development of contradictory elements, which determines the structure of its object, also determines the structure of dialectical thought. The object of dialectical logic is neither the abstract, general form of objectivity, nor the abstract, general form of thought - nor the data of immediate experience. Dialectical logic undoes the abstractions of formal logic and of transcendental philosophy, but it also denies the concreteness of immediate experience. To the extent to which this experience comes to rest with the things as they appear and happen to be, it is a limited and even false experience. It attains its truth if it has freed itself from the deceptive objectivity which conceals the factors behind the facts - that is, if it understands its world as a historical universe, in which the established facts are the work of the historical practice of man. This practice (intellectual and material) is the reality in the data of experience; it is also the reality which dialectical logic comprehends. When historical content enters into the dialectical concept and determines methodologically its development and function, dialectical thought attains the concreteness which links the structure of thought to that of reality. Logical truth becomes historical truth. The ontological tension between essence and appearance, between "is" and "ought" becomes historical tension, and the "inner negativity" of the object-world is understood as the work of the historical subject-man in his struggle with nature and society. Reason becomes historical Reason. It contradicts the established order of men and things on behalf of existing societal forces that reveal the irrational character of this order - for **"rational" is a mode of thought and action which is geared to reduce ignorance, destruction, brutality, and oppression.** The transformation of ontological into historical dialectic retains the two-dimensionality of philosophic thought as critical, negative thinking. But now essence and appearance, "is" and "ought," confront each other in the conflict between actual forces and capabilities in the society. And they confront each other, not as Reason and Unreason, Right and Wrong - for both are part and parcel of the same established universe, both partaking of Reason and Unreason, Right and Wrong. The slave is capable of abolishing the masters and of cooperating with them; the masters are capable of improving the life of the slave and of improving his exploitation. **The idea of Reason pertains to the movement of thought and of action. It is a theoretical and a practical exigency.**" (pg. 140-142)
- "all established reality militates against the logic of contradictions - it favors the modes of thought which sustain the established forms of life and the modes of behavior which reproduce and improve them. The given reality has its own logic and its own truth; the effort to comprehend them as such and to transcend them presupposes a different logic, a contradicting truth. They belong to modes of thought which are non-operational in their very structure; they are alien to scientific as well as common-sense operationalism; their historical concreteness militates against quantification and mathematization on the one hand, and against positivism and empiricism on the other. Thus these modes of thought appear to be a relic of the past, like all non-scientific and non-empirical philosophy. They recede before a more effective theory and practice of Reason." (pg. 142-143)
  - Chapter 6 - From Negative to Positive Thinking: Technological Rationality and the Logic of Domination (pg. 144)
    - "This transformation of negative into positive opposition points up the problem: the "wrong" organization, in becoming totalitarian on internal grounds, refutes the alternatives. Certainly it is quite natural, and does not seem to call for an explanation in depth, that the tangible benefits of the system are considered worth defending - especially in view of the repelling force of present day communism which appears to be the historical alternative. But it is natural only to a mode of thought and behavior which is unwilling and perhaps even incapable of comprehending what is happening and why it is happening, a mode of thought and behavior which is immune against any other than the established rationality. **To the degree to which they correspond to the given reality, thought and behavior express a false consciousness, responding to and contributing to the preservation of a false order of facts. And this false consciousness has become embodied in the prevailing technical apparatus which in turn reproduces it.** We live and die rationally and productively. We know that destruction is the price of progress as death is the price of life, that renunciation and toil are the prerequisites for gratification and joy, that business must go on, and that the alternatives are Utopian. This ideology belongs to the established societal apparatus; it is a requisite for its continuous functioning and part of its rationality." (pg. 145)
    - **"Values may have a higher dignity (morally and spiritually), but they are not real and thus count less in the real business of life—the less so the higher they are elevated above reality."** (pg. 147)
    - "The point which I am trying to make is that science, by virtue of its own method and concepts, has projected and promoted a universe in which the domination of nature has remained linked to the domination of man—a link which tends to be fatal to this universe as a whole." (pg. 166)
    - "...technology has become the great vehicle of reification..." (pg. 168)
    - "The world tends to become the stuff of total administration, which absorbs even the administrators. The web of domination has become the web of Reason itself, and this society is fatally entangled in it. And the transcending modes of thought seem to transcend Reason itself." (pg. 169)
  - Chapter 7 - The Triumph of Positive Thinking: One-Dimensional Philosophy (pg. 170)
    - "...the term **"positivism" has encompassed (1) the validation of cognitive thought by experience of facts; (2) the orientation of cognitive thought to the physical sciences as a model of certainty and exactness; (3) the belief that progress in knowledge depends on this orientation.** Consequently, positivism is a struggle against all metaphysics, transcendentalisms, and idealisms as obscurantist and regressive modes of thought. To the degree to which the given reality is scientifically comprehended and transformed, to the degree to which society becomes industrial and technological, positivism finds in the society the medium for the realization (and validation) of its concepts - harmony between theory and practice, truth and facts. Philosophic thought turns into affirmative thought; the philosophic critique criticizes within the societal framework and stigmatizes non-positive notions as mere speculation, dreams or fantasies." (pg. 172)
    - **"The philosopher is not a physician; his job is not to cure individuals but to comprehend the world in which they live - to understand it in terms of what it has done to man, and what it can do to man.** For philosophy is (historically, and its history is still valid the contrary of what Wittgenstein made it out to be when he proclaimed it as the renunciation of all theory, as the undertaking that 'leaves everything as it is'" (pg. 183)
    - "To be sure, **mythology is primitive and immature thought.** The process of civilization invalidates myth (this is almost a definition of progress), but it may also return rational thought to mythological status." (pg. 188)
      - **"The unscientific, speculative character of critical theory derives from the specific character of its concepts, which designate and define the irrational in the rational, the mystification in the reality."** (pg. 189)
        - "critical analysis must dissociate itself from that which it strives to comprehend; the philosophic terms must be other than the ordinary ones in order to elucidate the full meaning of the latter." (pg. 193)
    - **"Philosophy approaches this goal to the degree to which it frees thought from its enslavement by the established universe of discourse and behavior, elucidates the negativity of the Establishment** (its positive aspects are abundantly publicized anyway) **and projects its alternatives.** To be sure, philosophy contradicts and projects in thought only. It is ideology, and this ideological character is the very fate of philosophy which no scientism and positivism can overcome. Still, its ideological effort may be truly therapeutic - **to show reality as that which it really is, and to show that which this reality prevents from being.** In the totalitarian era, the therapeutic task of philosophy would be a political task, since the established universe of ordinary language tends to coagulate into a totally manipulated and indoctrinated universe. Then politics would appear in philosophy, not as a special discipline or object of analysis, nor as a special political philosophy, but as the intent of its concepts to comprehend the unmutated reality. If linguistic analysis does not contribute to such understanding; if, instead, it contributes to enclosing thought in the circle of the mutilated universe of ordinary discourse, it is at best entirely inconsequential. And, at worst, it is an escape into the non-controversial, the unreal, into that which is only academically controversial." (pg. 199)
  - Chapter 8 - The Historical Commitment of Philosophy (pg. 203)

- "However, **the way in which such things and people are organized, integrated, and administered operates as an entity different from its component parts** - to such an extent that it can dispose of life and death, as in the case of the nation and the constitution." (pg. 205)
  - **"This reality has assumed a superimposed, independent existence;** therefore statements concerning it mean a real universal and cannot be adequately translated into statements concerning particular entities. And yet, the urge to try such translation, the protest against its impossibility indicates that there is something wrong here. To make good sense, "the nation," or "the Party," ought to be translatable into its constituents and components. The fact that it is not, is a historical fact which gets in the way of linguistic and logical analysis." (pg. 206)
  - **"The disharmony between the individual and the social needs, and the lack of representative institutions in which the individuals work for themselves and speak for themselves, lead to the reality of such universals as the Nation, the Party, the Constitution, the Corporation, the Church** - a reality which is not identical with any particular identifiable entity (individual, group, or institution). Such universals express various degrees and modes of reification. Their independence, although real, is a spurious one inasmuch as it is that of particular powers which have organized the whole of society. A retranslation which would dissolve the spurious substance of the universal is still a desideratum - but it is a political desideratum." (pg. 206)
    - "The hypostatized whole resists analytic dissolution, not because it is a mythical entity behind the particular entities and performances but because it is the concrete, objective ground of their functioning in the given social and historical context. As such, it is a real force, felt and exercised by the individuals in their actions, circumstances, and relationships. They share in it (in a very unequal way); it decides on their existence and their possibilities. The real ghost is of a very forcible reality - that of the separate and independent power of the whole over the individuals. And this whole is not merely a perceived Gestalt (as in psychology), nor a metaphysical absolute (as in Hegel), nor a totalitarian state (as in poor political science) - it is the established state of affairs which determines the life of the individuals." (pg. 207)
- "The substantive universal not only abstracts from concrete entity, it also denotes a different entity. The mind is more and other than conscious acts and behavior. Its reality might tentatively be described as the manner or mode in which these particular acts are synthesized, integrated by an individual. One might be tempted to say a priori synthesized by a "transcendental apperception," in the sense that the integrating synthesis which renders the particular processes and acts possible precedes them, shapes them, distinguishes them from "other minds" Still, this formulation would do violence to Kant's concept, for the priority of such consciousness is an empirical one, which includes the supra-individual experience, ideas, aspirations, of particular social groups. In view of these characteristics, **consciousness may well be called a disposition, propensity, or faculty. It is not one individual disposition or faculty among others, however, but in a strict sense a general disposition which is common, in various degrees, to the individual members of one group, class, society.** On these grounds, **the distinction between true and false consciousness becomes meaningful. The former would synthesize the data of experience in concepts which reflect, as fully and adequately as possible, the given society in the given facts.** This "sociological" definition is suggested, not because of any prejudice in favor of sociology, but because of the factual ingression of society into the data of experience. Consequently, the repression of society in the formation of concepts is tantamount to an academic confinement of experience, a restriction of meaning." (pg. 208)
  - "If I speak of the mind of a person, I do not merely refer to his mental processes as they are revealed in his expression, speech, behavior, etc, nor merely of his dispositions or faculties as experienced or inferred from experience. I also mean that which he does not express, for which he shows no disposition, but which is present nevertheless, and which determines, to a considerable extent, his behavior, his understanding, the formation and range of his concepts. Thus "negatively present" are the specific "environmental" forces which precondition his mind for the spontaneous repulsion of certain data, conditions, relations. They are present as repelled material. Their absence is a reality - a positive factor that explains his actual mental processes, the meaning of his words and behavior." (pg. 209)
- **"The protest against the vague, obscure, metaphysical character of such universals, the insistence on familiar concreteness and protective security of common and scientific sense still reveal something of that primordial anxiety which guided the recorded origins of philosophic thought in its evolution from religion to mythology, and from mythology to logic; defense and security still are large items in the intellectual as well as national budget.** The unpurged experience seems to be more familiar with the abstract and universal than is the analytic philosophy; it seems to be embedded in a metaphysical world." (pg. 211)
- "To the degree to which the philosophical project is ideological, it is part of a historical project - that is, it pertains to a specific stage and level of the societal development, and the critical philosophic concepts refer (no matter how indirectly!) to alternative possibilities of this development." (pg. 217)
- **"The quest for criteria for judging between different philosophic projects thus leads to the quest for criteria for judging between different historical projects and alternatives, between different actual and possible ways of understanding and changing man and nature.** I shall submit only a few propositions which suggest that the internal historical character of the philosophic concepts, far from precluding objective validity, defines the ground for their objective validity. **In speaking and thinking for himself, the philosopher speaks and thinks from a particular position in his society,** and he does so with the material transmitted and utilized by this society. But in doing this, he speaks and thinks into a common universe of facts and possibilities. Through the various individual agents and layers of experience, through the different "projects" which guide the modes of thought from the business of everyday life to science and philosophy, the interaction between a collective subject and a common world persists and constitutes the objective validity of the universals. It is objective: (1) by virtue of the matter (stuff) opposed to the apprehending and comprehending subject. The formation of concepts remains determined by the structure of matter not dissoluble into subjectivity (even if the structure is entirely mathematical-logical). **No concept can be valid which defines its object by properties and functions that do not belong to the object** (for example, the individual cannot be defined as capable of becoming identical with another individual; man as capable of remaining eternally young). However, matter confronts the subject in a historical universe, and objectivity appears under an open historical horizon; it is changeable. (2) by virtue of the structure of the specific society in which the development of concepts takes place. This structure is common to all subjects in the respective universe. They exist under the same natural conditions, the same regime of production, the same mode of exploiting the social wealth, the same heritage of the past, the same range of possibilities. All the differences and conflicts between classes, groups, individuals unfold within this common framework. The objects of thought and perception as they appear to the individuals prior to all "subjective" interpretation have in common certain primary qualities, pertaining to these two layers of reality: (1) to the physical (natural) structure of matter, and (2) to the form which matter has acquired in the collective historical practice that has made it (matter) into objects for a subject. The two layers or aspects of objectivity (physical and historical) are interrelated in such a way that they cannot be insulated from each other; the historical aspect can never be eliminated so radically that only the "absolute" physical layer remains." (pg. 217-218)
  - "I have tried to show that, **in the technological reality, the object world (including the subjects) is experienced as a world of instrumentalities. The technological context predefines the form in which the objects appear.** They appear to the scientist a priori as value-free elements or complexes of relations, susceptible to organization in an effective mathematico-logical system; and they appear to common sense as the stuff of work or leisure, production or consumption. **The object-world is thus the world of a specific historical project, and is never accessible outside the historical project which organizes matter, and the organization of matter is at one and the same time a theoretical and a practical enterprise.** I have used the term "project" so repeatedly because it seems to me to accentuate most clearly the specific character of historical practice. It results from a determinate choice, seizure of one among other ways of comprehending, organizing, and transforming reality. The initial choice defines the range of possibilities open on this way, and precludes alternative possibilities incompatible with it." (pg. 218-219)
    - "I suggest the phrase **"determinate choice"** in order to emphasize the ingression of liberty into historical necessity; the phrase does not

- more than condense the proposition that men make their own history but make it under given conditions.** Determined are (1) the specific contradictions which develop within a historical system as manifestations of the conflict between the potential and the actual; (2) the material and intellectual resources available to the respective system; (3) the extent of theoretical and practical freedom compatible with the system. These conditions leave open alternative possibilities of developing and utilizing the available resources, alternative possibilities of "making a living" of organizing man's struggle with nature. Thus, within the framework of a given situation, industrialization can proceed in different ways, under collective or private control, and, even under private control, in different directions of progress and with different aims. **The choice is primarily (but only primarily!) the privilege of those groups which have attained control over the productive process. Their control projects the way of life for the whole,** and the ensuing and enslaving necessity is the result of their freedom. And the possible abolition of this necessity depends on a new ingression of freedom - not any freedom, but that of men who comprehend the given necessity as insufferable pain, and as unnecessary." (pg. 221-222)
- "I shall now propose some criteria for the truth value of different historical projects. These criteria must refer to the manner in which a historical project realizes given possibilities - not formal possibilities but those involving the modes of human existence. Such realization is actually under way in any historical situation. Every established society is such a realization; moreover, it tends to prejudice the rationality of possible projects, to keep them within its framework. At the same time, every established society is confronted with the actuality or possibility of a qualitatively different historical practice which might destroy the existing institutional framework. The established society has already demonstrated its truth value as historical project. It has succeeded in organizing man's struggle with man and with nature; it reproduces and protects (more or less adequately) the human existence (always with the exception of the existence of those who are the declared outcasts, enemy-aliens, and other victims of the system). But against this project in full realization emerge other projects, and among them those which would change the established one in its totality. It is with reference to such a transcendent project that **the criteria for objective historical truth** can best be formulated as the criteria of its rationality: (1) The transcendent project must be in accordance with the real possibilities open at the attained level of the material and intellectual culture. (2) The transcendent project, in order to falsify the established totality, must demonstrate its own higher rationality in the threefold sense that (a) it offers the prospect of preserving and improving the productive achievements of civilization; (b) it defines the established totality in its very structure, basic tendencies, and relations; (c) its realization offers a greater chance for the pacification of existence, within the framework of institutions which offer a greater chance for the free development of human needs and faculties. Obviously, this notion of rationality contains, especially in the last statement, a value judgment, and I reiterate what I stated before: I believe that the very concept of Reason originates in this value judgment, and that the concept of truth cannot be divorced from the value of Reason." (pg. 219-220)
  - "**As historical process, the dialectical process involves consciousness: recognition and seizure of the liberating potentialities.** Thus it involves freedom. To the degree to which consciousness is determined by the exigencies and interests of the established society, it is "unfree"; to the degree to which the established society is irrational, the consciousness becomes free for the higher historical rationality only in the struggle against the established society. The truth and the freedom of negative thinking have their ground and reason in this struggle. Thus, according to Marx, the proletariat is the liberating historical force only as revolutionary force; the determinate negation of capitalism occurs if and when the proletariat has become conscious of itself and of the conditions and processes which make up its society. This consciousness is prerequisite as well as an element of the negating practice. This "if" is essential to historical progress - it is the element of freedom (and chance!) which opens the possibilities of conquering the necessity of the given facts. Without it, history relapses into the darkness of unconquered nature. We have encountered the "vicious circle" of freedom and liberation before; here it reappears as the dialectic of the determinate negation. Transcendence beyond the established conditions (of thought and action) presupposes transcendence within these conditions. **This negative freedom - i.e., freedom from the oppressive and ideological power of given facts is the a priori of the historical dialectic; it is the element of choice and decision in and against historical determination.** None of the given alternatives is by itself determinate negation unless and until it is consciously seized in order to break the power of intolerable conditions and attain the more rational, more logical conditions rendered possible by the prevailing ones. In any case, the rationality and logic invoked in the movement of thought and action is that of the given conditions to be transcended. The negation proceeds on empirical grounds; it is a historical project within and beyond an already going project, and its truth is a chance to be determined on these grounds." (pg. 222-223)
  - Chapter 9 - The Catastrophe of Liberation (pg. 225)
    - "Positive thinking and its neo-positivist philosophy counteract the historical content of rationality" (pg. 225)
    - "**Critical thought strives to define the irrational character of the established rationality (which becomes increasingly obvious) and to define the tendencies which cause this rationality to generate its own transformation.** "Its own" because, as historical totality, it has developed forces and capabilities which themselves become projects beyond the established totality. They are possibilities of the advancing technological rationality and, as such, they involve the whole of society. The technological transformation is at the same time political transformation, but the political change would turn into qualitative social change only to the degree to which it would alter the direction of technical progress - that is, develop a new technology. For the established technology has become an instrument of destructive politics." (pg. 227)
    - "the transformation of values into needs, of final causes into technical possibilities is a new stage in the conquest of oppressive, unmastered forces in society as well as in nature." (pg. 233)
      - "the translation of values into needs is the twofold process of (1) material satisfaction (materialization of freedom) and (2) the free development of needs on the basis of satisfaction (non-repressive sublimation). In this process, the relation between the material and intellectual faculties and needs undergoes a fundamental change. The free play of thought and imagination assumes a rational and directing function in the realization of a pacified existence of man and nature. And the ideas of justice, freedom, and humanity then obtain their truth and good conscience on the sole ground on which they could ever have truth and good conscience - the satisfaction of man's material needs, the rational organization of the realm of necessity." (pg. 234-235)
    - "To the degree to which the goal of pacification determines the Logos of technics, it alters the relation between technology and its primary object, Nature. Pacification presupposes mastery of Nature, which is and remains the object opposed to the developing subject. But there are **two kinds of mastery: a repressive and a liberating one.** The latter involves the reduction of misery, violence, and cruelty. In Nature as well as in History, the struggle for existence is the token of scarcity, suffering, and want. They are the qualities of blind matter, of the realm of immediacy in which life passively suffers its existence. This realm is gradually mediated in the course of the historical transformation of Nature; it becomes part of the human world, and to this extent, the qualities of Nature are historical qualities. In the process of civilization, Nature ceases to be mere Nature to the degree to which the struggle of blind forces is comprehended and mastered in the light of freedom. **History is the negation of Nature.** What is only natural is overcome and recreated by the power of Reason. The metaphysical notion that Nature comes to itself in history points to the unconquered limits of Reason. It claims them as historical limits-as a task yet to be accomplished, or rather yet to be undertaken. If Nature is in itself a rational, legitimate object of science, then it is the legitimate object not only of Reason as power but also of Reason as freedom; not only of domination but also of liberation. With the emergence of man as the animal rationale - capable of transforming Nature in accordance with the faculties of the mind and the capacities of matter - the merely natural, as the sub-rational, assumes negative status. It becomes a realm to be comprehended and organized by Reason. And to the degree to which Reason succeeds in subjecting matter to rational standards and aims, all sub-rational existence appears to be want and privation, and their reduction becomes the historical task. Suffering, violence, and destruction are categories of the natural as well as human reality, of a helpless and heartless universe. The terrible notion that the sub-rational life of nature is destined to remain forever such a universe, is

neither a philosophic nor a scientific one; it was pronounced by a different authority..." (pg. 236-237)

- **"To be sure, a free society is defined by more...than private autonomy"** (pg. 245)

- Chapter 10 - Conclusion (pg. 247)

- **"Dialectical theory...cannot be positive. To be sure, the dialectical concept, in comprehending the given facts, transcends the given facts.** This is the very token of its truth. It defines the historical possibilities, even necessities; but their realization can only be in the practice which responds to the theory, and, at present, the practice gives no such response." (pg. 253)
- "The critical theory of society possesses no concepts which could bridge the gap between the present and its future; holding no promise and showing no success, it remains negative." (pg. 257)

d. Further Readings:

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