

Virtual reality & Cinema #2



Win some, deleuze some.

welcome to virtual reality
and cinema #2!

This zine is meant to be a
collection of thoughts over
the last couple of weeks,
inspired from our reading
of Deleuze, our
discussions, and the films.
Like the last issue, these
thoughts appear in shorter
fragments, poems, and
images, rather than in
traditional paper format.
Thank you for reading!

xo liz

What is the virtual,
according to Deleuze?

Deleuze is not writing a traditional history of cinema in *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2*. Rather, his work is a constructive study of cinema as means to produce philosophical concepts. Art and philosophy intersect. This constructivism manifests itself in the notion that from his work, one can continue to draw new concepts. Perhaps this is why he is contested among some film critics. His project is not to apply philosophy to cinema, nor is it to traditionally critique cinema via theory. Deleuze's study of cinema, rather, is a way to re-see art and philosophy, as a "physical" manifestation of thought.

For Deleuze, cinema is a unique art form, in that it creates new understandings and questions about space and time. It also reveals new ideas about identity, the body, and the image. There is no longer a signifier/signified distinction. The image of the body does not signify the body. The body is an image:

My body is an image, hence a set of actions and reactions. My

eye, my brain, are images, parts of my body. How could my brain contain images since it is one image among others...The infinite set of images constitutes a kind of plane of immanence. The image exists in itself, on this plane. This in-itself of the image is matter: not something hidden behind the image, but on the contrary the absolute identity of the image and movement. (*Cinema 1*, 58-59).

Cinema before WWII exists in the era of the movement-image, a linear narration. WWII changes everything. The seeming naturalness of movement and relationships can no longer be trusted. The time-image enters the scene, with its obvious false links, skips, and jumps (as seen with Welles). Movement, thus, becomes prisoner to time. Images no longer represent, they express.

What is "real" then? What is the "truth"?

When cinema is truly generative, it denaturalizes movement, thus de-centering what "truth" is. This idea is most easily seen through the forger in Cinema 2:

He is simultaneously the man of pure descriptions and the maker of the crystal-image, the indiscernibility [sic] of the real and the imaginary; he passes into the crystal, and makes the direct time-image visible; he provokes undecidable alternatives and inexplicable differences between the true and the false, and thereby imposes a power of the false as adequate to time, in contrast to any form of the true which would control time. (Cinema 2, 132-133).

In opposition to the unity of the true, the power of the false is that it "cannot be separated from an irreducible multiplicity," (133). Subjectivity is always split.

Je est un autre.

Rather than trying to mimic the truth, or the "real," truly creative cinema must forge, falsify, and multiply in order to manifest its power.

The political power of cinema is cinema that looks at what is missing, that employs the storytelling of the "other," the "people to come." This section of Cinema 2 is perhaps the most powerful, as it navigates a politics of possibility, and through his discussion of collective utterance, of speaking a foreign tongue within a dominant language, Deleuze links the forger and radical political potential.



"There's something... explosive about film. A running person brings it all together; explosive dynamics and emotion, b/c it's when people move that express things: despair, happiness, whatever... I wanted the sheer, unadorned pleasure of speed." — TOM

Turner
director, Run Lola Run

Lola is a temporally spiralling body, sparking the dialectical relationship b/w life/death.

The Bicycle Thief as example of perception-image — who is looking? The child, on the plane of immanence.

true immersion

"is not to anything other than itself"

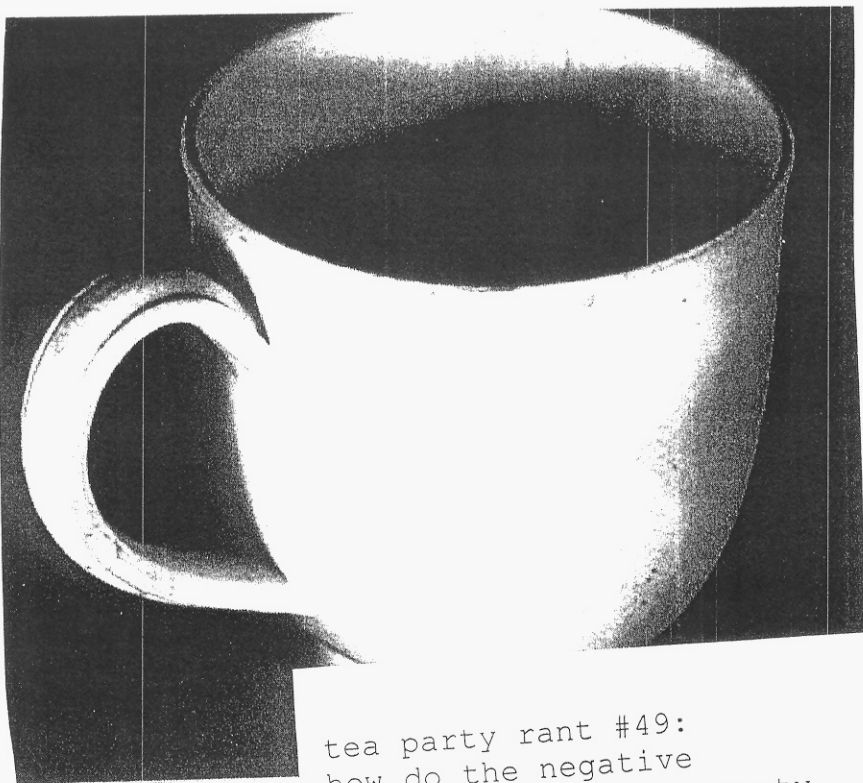
is substance



Saving private ryan
as action-image = we
follow Tom Hanks
character throughout the
film until he valiantly gives
his life for the cause.
[ugh.]



Deleuze Test = If you can reverse or
swap characters ("flip the script") w/no
or little effect, it's action-image

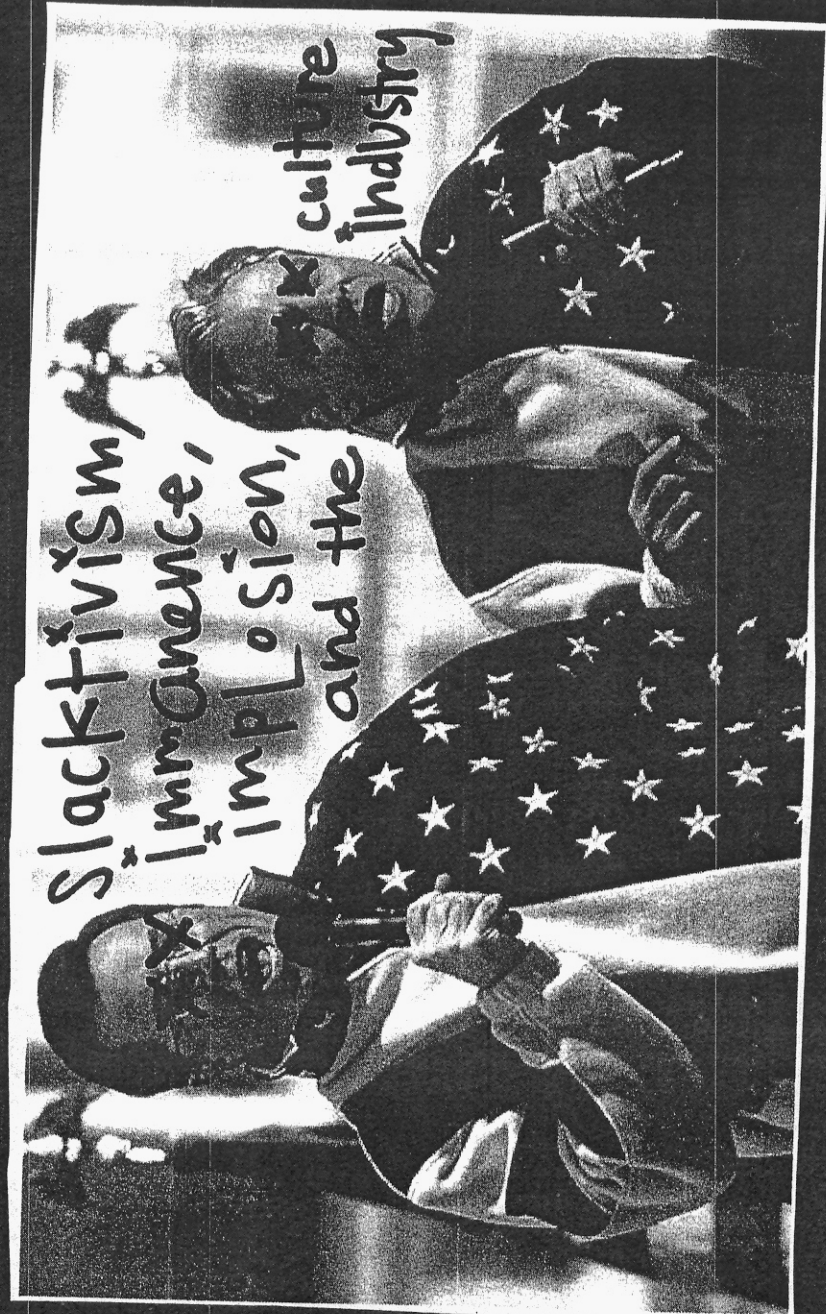


tea party rant #49:
how do the negative
politics of the tea party
reveal what is missing?

the point is to show up
without an agenda to reveal
what is missing.

this is not a simple
duality or dialectic,
however, as in "here/not-
here," but rather a more
complex relationship.

However, I don't think the Tea
Party (or the Jon Stewart
Slacktivists) are what Deleuze
considers "the people to come"



F.U., Jon Stewart, for making me agree with Malcolm Gladwell. Seriously. Conservative Gladwell, in his October 2010 *New Yorker* article, "Small Change," argues that our "outsized enthusiasm for social media" has caused us to be smugly convinced that the virtual suffices for the actual when it comes to popular movements and political protest. Citing Stanford sociologist Doug McAdam, Gladwell maintains that the success of popular activism like the Freedom Summer in 1964 is due to a "strong tie" phenomenon, where participants feel personally connected to the other participants (and yes, this is in a F2F way). He illustrates this by discussing the fact that the Greensboro Four, whose direct action sparked the lunch counter protests of 1960-61, were college friends. Gladwell smugly reminds us that the spread of the direct actions that sparked the Civil Rights Movement happened without email, texting, Facebook or Twitter, and that the "social network" that sparked one of the largest popular movements in U.S. history was one among friends, colleagues, and allies.

Jon Stewart holding a virtual rally to parody direct political action and protest (regardless if buffoon Glen Beck started it) is not only annoying, but it is a fine example of the hyper-real of Baudrillard. We are catapulted into the grand spectacle, the copy of the copy of popular political action. The peanut-crunching crowd stands cheek to cheek in the cold October weather, happily immersed in the culture industry. We are always already televised. White, middle class, entitled, we catch the train to D.C. to be entertained by American flag-wrapped jesters, who attempt to

lampoon the labor movements, peace, and feminist activists (while listening to them poo-poo labor unions, I couldn't help but think that we have the labor movement to thank for the 40-hour work week, but I digress). The class and race privilege of the crowd indicates that the smug sham of post-modern detachment and erroneous relativism is more Gen-X entitled slackerism than anything intelligent, progressive, or transcendent.

Slacktivism-as-glittering-prize for immersion in the hyper-real. In a nightmarish Deleuzian twist, this immersion/immanence is one where there is no longer a distinction between representation and actuality. However, in this nightmare, there is nothing revolutionary, artistic, or liberating about this immanence.

Perhaps implosion isn't such a bad idea after all.

Sorry, y'all. If we are
going to discuss the
tea party, it's only fair...

