

It's Not Getting Better: The transformative potentials of hopelessness

by

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BSc, University of Alberta, 2005

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Thought

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Supervisory Committee

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Abstract

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This thesis approaches hopelessness through the work of Deleuze and Guattari, situating their thought in relation to Baruch Spinoza and Brian Massumi. Drawing on Massumi's theorizing of fear, and Spinoza's theorizing the link between hope and fear, I argue that hope keeps bodies and politics bound to a future that comes to organize the present. From this perspective, I argue that hopelessness can become an important element of not only undoing the ways that future forces come to organize the present, but can open immanent ways of participating in the organization of emergent forces. The thesis also clarifies the differences between affect and emotion, and the body and the subject. This supports an understanding of politics as the undoing and warding off of hope through attending to hopelessness, and an increase in bodies' capacities to experiment and participate in the organization of their own desires and situations.

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I came to this degree seeking to work through some embodied knowledge that I didn't have the capacity to in context. I came here knowing that I had many people and experiences to honour, and that in order to honour them I needed to step away from them momentarily. Grad school turned out to be far more complex than that, as did my health and life. In this all, I know that I have kept my heart true in many important ways, and also have kept it muted to survive until this is over. K-House and H-House, this is yours.

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Introduction

This thesis came into being over a very long period of time, its main argument based in an intuition from many years ago that drew me to grad school. The key intuition that this thesis investigates is how *hopelessness* – the embodied loss of hope for a better future – can play a significant role in social change.

From the perspective developed in this thesis, the search for hope in the face of its absence is actually an impediment to change. In this I seek to avoid recuperating hopelessness into a normative social change project. Rather, I seek not only to undermine hopeful ideals of social change, but to create different grounds for conceptualizing change. That is, I argue that normative social change necessarily entails hope, and acts to pre-empt the transformative potentials of hopelessness. In this, the capacity to attend to hopelessness – without either being destroyed by it or being recaptured by hope – allows for a more active participation in the composition of one's own desires. In this, the site and constitution of politics, the subject, emotion, bodies, and affect are all reconsidered.

Personal Context for thesis

This thesis comes from the context of me being not only exhausted by the daily violences entailed in living in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, but also by the modes of social change I found myself participating in, inherited from the communities I was organizing as a part of, and also inherited from what I understood as broader radical/anarchist/queer political movements. In this I also inherited a cynicism and an exhaustion from a previous generation of leftist organizers who had all but given up hope in broader social change projects. It was in this context that the transformative potentials of hopelessness sensed themselves open to me; it was spaces that were no longer guided

by normative radical social change work, though were somehow of the same milieu, that movement and change felt most palpable, yet quickly dissolved as it was grasped after.

The situations in which this emerged felt precarious in some ways, and inevitably robust in others; they felt palpably to be spaces that hope left behind. In its absence, however, a vast world of something completely otherwise yet also completely of that same world shimmered vibrantly. I came to realize that these were necessarily spaces outside of those composed by the political movements I was a part of, yet were somehow tangentially related. And they were not the spaces of solo retreat into basements and books, nor intellectual critiques of social movement inadequacies, nor spaces hidden behind white picket fences or sexy artist scenes. They were humble spaces of gathering and survival, found in back alleys, night-time wanders, experimental art, and obliquely a/political spaces created explicitly for support. In contrast to the political work I was doing to usher in new worlds, these spaces were utterly hopeless. They didn't follow the rules – they didn't have rules to follow. That said, however, they were certainly not utopian, not exactly that world we were trying to create. They were often filled with violence and what we otherwise would have called injustice. But it was when I participated in them, found myself creating them, that I felt alive and capable, responsive and filled with embodied capacities – so stifled everywhere else – that allowed me to attend to those violences in different ways.

Theoretical Context for thesis

These vague intuitions around what happens when hope is lost were what helped usher me to grad school, and reading Deleuze and Guattari (1987) felt like coming home. *A Thousand Plateaus* spoke to what I had been living. In my search for a friend to

explore ideas with, Deleuze and Guattari came to play. The more I read in the realm of affect theory, the more the wonderful poetry of its core theorists –from Deleuze and Guattari to Massumi (2002, 2005, 2010), to Lauren Berlant (2011) (who I attend to much less in this thesis) became an embodied, joyful experimentation for me. Such a playful, experimental, and performative approach to writing with affect theory poses its own challenge, however: clarity around concepts leaves much to be desired, and theorists are often vague with respect to both their influences and their intellectual opponents, heightening the possibility of misreadings and poor interpretations of key concepts in the field.¹

Part of this is that within what has been called ‘affect theory’ there are vastly different theoretical lineages which draw upon and transgress significantly different theoretical traditions,² not to mention a superficially related but very different field of psychological theorizations.³ This has led to a series of debates within affect theory, such as the relationship of affect theory and science and technology studies, complexity theory, and cognitive sciences.⁴ Perhaps most importantly for my thesis, what is often called Deleuze’s ‘positivity’ is profoundly misunderstood,⁵ which is connected to what I see as misguided attempts to (re)claim a ‘negative’ reading of him.⁶ Rather than stake out a

¹ See for example Nicholas Thoburn’s “The People are Missing” (2016) for his clarification of a clear misreading of his reading of the Deleuzian concept of ‘cramped space’ in *Deleuze, Marx and Politics* (2003); or Ahmed’s 2010 [210-215] reading of joy in Deleuze, Spinoza, and Massumi.

² For delineation into 8 different lineages see Greg Seigworth and Melissa Gregg (2010).

³ See Margaret Wetherell (2015) for example of tensions between this lineage and affect theory in social and political thought understood broadly.

⁴ See Lisa Blackman (2014) for a summary of these debates and a proposal of addressing them in interdisciplinary inquiry.

⁵ See Ahmed’s 2010 reading of joy as happiness (210-215)

⁶ Andrews Culp’s *Dark Deleuze* (2016) attempts to recover a ‘negative’ reading of Deleuze, that he contrasts with the ‘positive’ readings associated with joy and connection. In doing so, he conflates joy with positive

position within existing metatheoretical debates, or advance an argument within and against these various approaches, I have chosen to work specifically within the lineage that is often traced to Baruch Spinoza (1985), and the way he has been interpreted by Gilles Deleuze (n.d., 1988, 1990a), Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987), and in turn by Brian Massumi (1992, 2002, 2005, 2010).

With this in mind, a main task in my work is to unpack some core concepts from a line that runs through Spinoza to Deleuze and his work with Guattari to Massumi, and other contemporary affect theorists within this lineage. These concepts form a scaffolding through which I develop my argument about hope and hopelessness. Rather than offering a review of broadly-defined affect theory, or even more narrowly reviewing Deleuze-inspired work on hopelessness, this thesis advances a specific argument about hope and hopelessness via a Deleuzian ontology. Through this I pay close attention to key concepts in the Deleuzian lineage of thought to help work through some of the ambiguities otherwise all-too-common in this field. I seek to achieve this not-small task without doing too much violence to concepts that are, by definition, immanent to the texts from which they emerge.

In doing this close reading of those three sets of theorists into a cohesive-enough conception of affect, I develop an argument of how hope and hopelessness emerge through this, and the work that hope can do in maintaining the logic of contemporary politics, and the work that hopelessness can do in enabling a different one to emerge. More specifically, I argue that hope renders bodies passive in terms of their capacity to

feelings and happiness, and obfuscates that way in which joy can be dark, destructive, and negative in the way he seeks to embrace.

participate in change itself, whereas the capacity to attend to the loss of hope (hopelessness) can render bodies more capable of participating in transformation.

Of course the risk of making such claims is that hopelessness becomes identified as a disposition that holds the secret of social change, serving to install it as the new hope. Thus, from there I delicately unpack how hopelessness may be maintained *as* hopelessness, such that it does not shift into filling the role of hope.

While other theorists seek to parse out and identify different modes of hoping,⁷ the task of this thesis is not to argue that this theoretical approach to hope is the *best* one, so much as an exploration of what hope and hopelessness can be seen to do through the theoretical milieu of Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari, and Massumi. While Lauren Berlant's (2011) conception of cruel optimism and Sara Ahmed's (2010) critique of happiness are both resonant with my reading of hope, these texts draw from very different theoretical lineages (namely psychoanalysis and phenomenology, respectively). They also work more with contemporary culture, including analyses of film and fiction. More importantly, rather than (only) advancing a critique of hope and the way it binds us (similar to cruel optimism and happiness), I am far more interested in the transformative potential of hopelessness. In this sense, I am interested in the way in which transformation is always already happening, and I am curious about how to support the capacities that this mode of transformation relies upon, without capturing them into hopeful dispositions. With this in mind, I work to build a coherent ontological conception of hope and its loss in order to conceptualize this potential.

⁷ See Darren Webb (2007) for a comprehensive overview of how hope has been taken up and defined in various disciplines.

In this, the scope of this thesis ends up being very narrow. I do not give complexity theory its due, nor do I engage explicitly with other theories of affect or emotion that run alongside and against what I am theorizing here, nor do I situate extensively how this work differs from other theories of radical political change. I have chosen instead to focus on the question of what a Deleuzean lineage of thought can help us understand about the role of hopelessness in radical political change. Doing such an in-depth, focused reading allows for a thorough understanding of difficult texts, such that future work to address related questions can be attended to with more clarity and the attention that allows for attending to their complexity.

Summary

The thesis is broken up into three chapters. The first chapter connects hopelessness and hope to the related concept of fear, as theorized by Brian Massumi (2010). Here I pick up on his key concept of operative logic, theorized elsewhere as a diagram or abstract machine (69). I then go on to unpack the theory implicitly behind Massumi's work, the work of Baruch Spinoza (1985), and then how it is taken up by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (primarily 1987). Specifically, I work through Spinoza's concepts of desire, joy and sadness, passivity, affection-ideas, and (briefly) activity and notion-ideas (these last concepts are more thoroughly dealt with in Chapter Two). I then go on to show how those ideas are taken up by Deleuze and Guattari in their concepts of the Body without Organs (BwO) and Plane of Consistency of Desire (PoCoD), and how they are organized and disorganized. This helps me attend to their related concepts of possible, potential, and virtual. That forms the major theoretical overview of the chapter. I then go on to show how fear and hope are related, theoretically, given this framework, and how

each hold bodies passive, revisiting Massumi to extend his analysis of fear into the conception of passive hope. In this, I argue that passive hope serves to capture experimentation at the level of potential in the virtual into possibilities as opportunities, resulting in a body participating in and perpetuating the current organization of the BwO, rather than helping support the emergence of new/different operative logics, its ostensible task. Beyond this, the imperative for hope means that in its absence, *striving* for hope takes over, and is what further prevents new operative logics from emerging. My key contributions in this chapter include making a clear link between hope and fear, including how both hold bodies passive, a clarifying close reading Deleuze and Guattari's oft misunderstood work, including a clarification of the also often misunderstood Spinozan concepts of desire, joy, and sadness, passivity, and activity. This allows for a clear understanding of the basis of Massumi's work on fear, while also creating a framework for my own work on hopelessness in the next chapter.

The second chapter attends more explicitly to hopelessness, doing so through a close reading of what Spinoza means by activity, and Deleuze & Guattari and Massumi's taking up of the concept in becoming active and becoming other. With specific attention to spaces without hope, I draw on Susan Ruddick's (2010) reading of how Spinoza is differentially taken up by Deleuze and Negri – a theorist with similar political and theoretical lineages as Deleuze – which highlights the importance of what are seen as negative emotions or experiences in becoming active. Drawing on her reading of the Deleuzian concepts of cramped space, scream, and thought or thought-in-becoming, I then go on to show how that is exemplary of what I am arguing about hopelessness. My main contributions in this chapter are a clarification and deepening of Ruddick's

argument as well as an explicit clarification of the all-too-frequent misreading of ‘positivity’ in Deleuze. Additionally, attending to how hopelessness, given this, can be becoming-active is at the core of my thesis argument, and a key contribution to the literature.

Chapter Three summarizes the implications of the arguments made in the first two chapters. I clarify how hope and hopelessness overlap with understandings of emotion and affect. I then go on to attend to the question of politics and change given the theoretical and empirical implications of my argument. Bringing together all of my work in the thesis, I then go on to a close reading of a theoretically-oriented text coming out of the contemporary American anarchist milieu, *Hello: a greeting from nowhere* (2014). This text has many clear resonant themes and commitments, but comes with an explicitly grounded set of commitments rather than having (only) academic intentions. This text helps contextualize the importance of my work, as it suggests some of the ways and sites that hope shows up in (and, they say, comes to define) contemporary politics in a way that is quite resonant with my own arguments that remain more theoretical. While this text does an excellent job at not recuperating hopelessness into a new hope, I argue that it does reproduce a different mode of passivity. I suggest that their analysis of the ways that hope comes to define politics extends itself to create a new operative logic based on *fear of hope* itself. This allows me to make more nuanced suggestions around the ways that hopelessness can be cultivated and sustained. My main contributions in this chapter are a clarification of emotions and affect given a Deleuzean lineage of affect theory, and a clear argument of how hope and hopelessness emerges through political commitments. Additionally, this chapter provides a more empirically-inflected contribution in terms of

how this type of analysis is emerging in contemporary anarchist milieux, and the associated challenges not simply of coming to objectify hopelessness, but a perhaps more easily overlooked manifestation of the *fear* of hope itself can emerge in such circles.

Chapter One: Hope

I start this thesis not with hopelessness but with hope not to suggest that hopelessness is simply a lack of hope, but to acknowledge the draw of hope in the case of hopelessness, and the constitutive nature of hope and fear. In this, hope is good, desirable, necessary. Hope is said to be that thing that keeps us buoyant when things are otherwise unbelievably and perhaps even unsurvivalably challenging. I will, throughout this thesis, challenge and inquire into the complexity of this thing that is often seen as straightforwardly good, a key ingredient for social change.⁸ I start with hope, then, to understand a bit about how it moves, what it does, before we move to think hopelessness as understood as a lack of hope, as well as independently of hope.

Similar to what Massumi (2010) argues with relation to fear, I argue that hope is pervasive not only in politics but is so in part because of its role in the formation of subjectivity. Because, as Spinoza argues, hope is fear's correlate (Spinoza 1985: *Ethics* III Def. of the Affects XII)⁹, I am interested in the ways that hope creates not only the subject but also the context that emerges along with the subject. What is at stake here, I argue, is what is being sacrificed when bodies are not only subjectified in this way but also when what becomes *possible* is animated through this.

This is particularly important given what I argue is the related imperative for hope in politics, that if or when hope is lost, the imperative is to find another thing that will bring it back. In this context, to be without hope would be to be lacking, stagnant — hopeless.

⁸ Note that I will be investigating one mode of hope in this thesis, what I come to call 'passive hope.' This is to not say that other forms of hope cannot *do* other things, but the focus of this thesis is the circumstance of being *without* any sort of hope, which presents striving for hope and passive hope as the mode of hoping most relevant to my thesis question.

⁹ Convention while referencing Spinoza is to cite the part of the book and then its numbered subsections, which will be followed throughout this thesis.

In a context generated through hope and fear, this stagnant hopelessness must be fended off by striving for hope itself.

This chapter revolves around three intertwined problematics that underlie my engagement with hope, and unpacking them will enable me to work through hopelessness in later chapters. The first problematic is how a body is conceptualized, with relation to the subject and its context or environment, such that we can address the next problematic: how hope holds bodies passive. The final problematic is the question of how this plays out in contemporary radical political thought.

The task of this chapter is to address these three problematics such that their complexities are honoured while also addressed in a comprehensible way. As such, we shall start in the middle, with how Massumi theorizes a similar set of problematics through his work on fear. I then move on to working through Spinoza's concepts of desire, joy, and sadness to develop a conceptualization of passivity, key to both Massumi's work on fear and my theorizing of hope as a passive affect and also integral in understanding the development of the subject, and emergence of the body. With more help from Deleuze and Guattari, I then more directly situate passivity and passive affects in their theorizing of the Body without Organs (BwO). Through this, I shall be drawing us to a point where we come to understand that not only is the subject created through and animated by the inexorable demand for hope, but that it also emerges through a society modulated via hope and fear. I will revisit Massumi's work on fear to help with this, and from there spend time working through what this approach can tell us about hope and a bit about when it is absent.

For now it is useful to use an introductory understanding of hope as an access point for understanding how we see particular modes of hope working politically. Spinoza's definition will serve as our starting place for this, and we will complexify it from there. Hope, according to Spinoza, is "an inconstant joy, born of the idea of a future or past thing whose outcome we to some extent doubt" (Spinoza 1985: *Ethics* III Def. of the Affects XII).¹⁰

Massumi: Operative logics of fear

In Massumi's (2010) work on fear, "The Future Birth of the Affective Fact", he argues that an "ecological approach" is necessary for understanding the political workings of fear and (counter-)terrorism in the present. Fear is a response to threats; however, what Massumi calls a 'threat' is neither objective (an empirically verifiable instance of terrorism or an accurate prediction of future terrorist acts) nor is it merely 'subjective' (a threat that is merely perceived or believed by a subject). Rather, a threat is the way a negative future potential becomes present in the present, causing fear. Terrorist threats are always uncertain, and it is this uncertainty that is important. Threat, for Massumi, is "self-renewing" (53); if a threat is actualized, fear is validated and thus preparation for dealing with the threat is justified and increased. If it is not actualized, it is maintained as a threat nonetheless, as the feeling of its presence is what constitutes the reality of the present. Threat cuts across standard divisions of objective and subjective. A future threat is manifested in the present in the ways that it orients subjects to prepare for either a potential future and to prevent certain futures from being realized.

¹⁰ Note that the related *feeling* that is experienced is not described here, so much as the circumstances that create the conditions for hope. This distinction will be further elaborated in the final chapter.

The past preparation to address the threat is justified even in the event that the reality of the threat is not validated, as it *could have been* a reality. Additionally, depending on the type of threat, there is still the potential for that threat to still be realized, continuing to justify this logic. From within the ecology of fear induced by terrorism and counterterrorism, Massumi argues that the invasion of Iraq was justified, retroactively, on the grounds that even though there were no weapons of mass destruction, there could have been, and in that case Saddam Hussein would have used them. The assumption about would-have/could-have, according to Massumi, is "based on an assumption about character and intent that cannot be empirically grounded with any certainty" (55). It is affective.

This throws a wrench in the linearity of time when it comes to threat, and inserts us into the (spatio-)temporality and grammar of what Massumi calls the "would-have/could-have" — the double conditional (54). This temporality brings potential of an uncertain future into the present as an affectively factual present threat. The affective fact of fear, induced by the threat, justifies actions even when the 'empirical facts' are uncertain. This is the logic that justifies pre-emptive action (54).

Massumi suggests that the pre-emptive actions to address threats may disrupt the economy and curtail freedom in ways that "cause the destruction to the economy and everyday life" just as does an actual act of terror (beyond its "immediate impact"), but without that attack actually ever having happened (57). Massumi notes that, "in the United States alone in 2003 there were 118 airport evacuations. In 2004, there were 276. None was linked to a terrorist attempt, let alone an actual bombing" (61). The alert, the response to the perceived threat becomes that which curtails more freedoms than the

attacks. In this way the affective environment is conditioned, ongoingly, by the affective impact of these threats even as they do (or do not) materialize. An example of this curtailment of what would be called 'freedom' in the United States as the ostensible threats associated with terrorism proliferate, is the increasing of both overt as well as extra-judicial and thus secret surveillance of all forms of communication, that, when revealed, is acceptably justified by the threat associated with a potential act of terrorism.

Massumi calls this a "shared atmosphere of fear" (61). The power proper to atmospheres is what he calls, following Foucault, "environmental power" (62); importantly, this power does not "empirically manipulate an object (of which actually it has none), it *modulates* felt qualities infusing a life-environment" (62). To understand this regime of power and the ways that it interacts with others is to adopt what Massumi calls an "ecological approach to threat's environmental power" (62). Each regime has its own "operative logic," a particular way of moving, and an "ontological status" unique to itself, having its own "epistemology guiding the constitution of its political 'facts' and guaranteeing their legitimation" (62). Massumi explains that the concept of an operative logic is synonymous with what Deleuze and Guattari call 'machine processes' or 'abstract machines' (69). Rather than revealing a stable structure, an operative logic helps us attend to the way that the 'environment' produced through the threat allows the threat itself to flourish and be realized affectively in the present, eventually not just in the "affective facts," but also in the "actual facts" (55) of the situation. Its own futurity, its very justification, is self-caused via this "affect-driven logic of the would-have/could-have" (55). There is a particular spatio-temporality evoked in this logic, a particular form of causality that emerges as a part of this environment. This is why Massumi insists that

any "political analysis of regimes of power must extend to these metaphysical dimensions" (62). The operative logic of fear is metaphysical in the sense that an affective fact concerning the (fearful) future folds back to shape the present reality.

Massumi describes an operative logic as being a "process of becoming formative of its own species of being" (63); it is, with reference to Nietzsche, a "*will-to-power*" (63), or in the words of Deleuze or Spinoza, desire, or *conatus*. It wants "its own continuance. It is autopoietic" (63). An operative logic is the movement of bodies, the logic inherent in them such that they contain the whole universe. They have, in constituting the universe, their own time-signature, their own unique way of constituting this universe, as it morphs and changes and shifts in its ever-becoming, as it interacts with other operative logics in their becomings.

Given that this operative logic is emergent through affect as a felt quality, Massumi argues that, "the pertinent theory of signs would have to be grounded first and foremost in a metaphysics of *feeling*" (63). What does this mean? It means that political analysis must take affect *and* feeling seriously. An analysis of fear can show us how we find ourselves navigating our becoming with/as the world. Fear flows through the world itself, shaping it, at work in the operative logics in the becoming of this world. That is not to say, however, fear is completely outside of discourse, or that everyone feels it in essentially the same way. Taking 'feeling' as a starting point does not mean beginning with the feelings or emotions registered by individual subjects.

A more nuanced delineation of affect and feeling will come in Chapter 3, but in this chapter I develop a Spinozan or Deleuzean perspective to show how fear – and hope – organize the world because they *do* something; the relevant unit of analysis is not the

subject and what or how it feels, but the operative logic connected to discourses and infrastructures of the world. These operative logics also exist in excess of it, as the potential of the not-yet that configures and is configured by fear and hope. What Massumi is able to show is the ways that the affective presence of a future in doubt draws a self-perpetuating operative logic into the world. Counterterrorism, for example, is not just a discourse, but an operative logic that feeds on itself through threat and fear, modulating and being reproduced through the felt qualities of the world. Put another way, in Massumi's analysis, threats and the fears induced by them are irreducibly connected to – help create and are perpetuated by – the material infrastructures of counterterrorism: threat levels, airport security checks, the televised speculation of pundits, and so on.

Operative logics involving fear — and, as I will argue, hope — allow for fear and hope to maintain not only subjects but the social context through which these subjects emerge. The discourse of counterterrorism is a particularly stark example of the ways that certain operative logics work through a logic of pre-emption that is perpetually oriented towards future threats. What would it mean to counter the discourse of counterterrorism? For Massumi, politics here is not the struggle of subjects in or against operative logics, but takes place in the areas of potential indeterminacy between the bodies themselves, on the plane of consistency of desire itself – which we will explore more later in this chapter. Massumi suggests that politics takes place through what he calls "that bustling zone of indistinction" of forces (66); operative logics are always at work on us and thus it is not a question of escaping them, but of becoming capable of attending to the zone of indistinction between those operative logics where the experimentation between them plays out. To be attuned to the affective modulations of fear-inducing operative logics

might enable other modulations, other ways of organizing. The question of *how* this becomes possible is attended to in the next chapter. In this, the question of what *else* could be done with the affective facts of threat and fear (and implicitly, the correlates of opportunities and hope) becomes an important question for this thesis. What other operative logics – which don't rely on hope and fear – might be animated or actualized, and how might they interrupt future-oriented pre-emption of the present that hope and fear mandate?

In order to tackle these questions, I want to draw out further the links between hope and fear through a reading of Spinoza. I argue that hopeful operative logics work in a way that is similar to—yet distinct from—the fearful machine of counterterrorism analyzed by Massumi. To grasp the distinction, I argue, it is necessary to take a detour through Spinoza's philosophy, as hope and fear are linked differently to joy and sadness.

Thus far we have seen the ways that fear evokes a spatio-temporality in which the present and its related subjectivities emerge as attuned to a future whose outcome is in doubt. Self-justificatory, this present becomes affectively political, as the situational facts to which bodies respond – and through which they emerge – are affective. As we shall see as we go over concepts from Spinoza in the next section, it is in these ways that bodies' capacities to affect and be affected are held passive by hope and fear. To understand this and its implications for my theorizing of hope and hopelessness at a more complex level, we must understand how Spinoza conceptualizes passivity. As to be held passive is to be at the whim of the operative logic of the encounter, incapable of attending to whether encounters will be joyful or sad, we will first explore his concepts of desire, and following that, joy and sadness.

Spinoza: Desire, joy, sadness, affection-ideas and passivity

Desire

Desire for Spinoza is the very "essence of man" [sic].¹¹ It is the striving of bodies to persevere in their being.¹² Desire leads a body to pass from a lesser to greater degree of "perfection," which entails an increase in the body's capacity to affect and be affected or, in other words, an increase of the body's power of acting, also known as joy (1985, III Def. Aff. II; IV Preface, see also III Gen. Def. of Affects; IV Preface).

If a body's capacities are decreased, this is sadness, meaning that the body is not moving towards its essence – essence being the ever-changing nature of its desire, as I outline below. Causality is interesting and important here: desire is this appetite for an increase in the powers of acting, but not for a thing to be acquired. All that is acquired is the capacity to continue following desire, the body expressing its essence, moving 'towards' perfection. Through joyful and sad encounters, the body navigates this movement 'towards' perfection. Remember, though, that perfection is the essence of the body itself, and is thus simply the capacity to follow desire (Deleuze n.d.).

As desire is the essence of a body, in this understanding of desire, a body's essence is not constant, with particular static properties or characteristics, but is, rather, a relational,

¹¹ Note: while Spinoza uses the term "man," it is clear that his logic not only refers to all humans in his work, but beyond, to what we will come to call 'bodies,' the greatest of which encompasses all of everything in existence, or God-and-Nature.

¹² In addition to the preservation of its being, desire comprises "the consciousness of this appetite" (Spinoza 1985, III P9S). However, I have chosen not to use the concept of consciousness because conventional understandings of the term runs against the grain of its meaning in Spinoza. For Spinoza, consciousness is not only what the body does but also how it responds as a *part* of this appetite. Not 'responds' as in reference to the mind, necessarily, but responds in the body, inseparable from and never having been separated from the mind. The non-differentiation of body and mind will be further addressed as we unpack the concepts of joy and sadness. What would be conscious is, in Deleuze's Spinoza (via Bergson), not what we would typically think of as 'the mind' (see also Massumi 2002, 31) In brief, consciousness in this sense is that the ever-changing bundle of forces and capacities which is a body (nested, layered, in all its multiplicities) objectively responds with an increase or decrease of capacities under these circumstances, expressing joy or sadness. It is not that a body's conscious, intellectual brain somehow knows that an encounter is joyful or sad; the consciousness of the joy and/or sadness of an encounter is consciousness in the sense that the body responds with an increase or decrease in capacities.

ever-changing capacity to affect and be affected. That is, through the expression of a body's essence a body finds itself changed (Spinoza 1985, IV Preface). "Very often it happens that while we are enjoying a thing we wanted, the body acquires from this enjoyment a new constitution, by which it is differently determined, and other images of things are aroused in it; and at the same time the mind begins to imagine other things and desire other things" (III P59S). Essence is a changing, morphing non-thing thing. A simple example of this is finding yourself in (mutual) love with someone; the increase in that person's capacity to affect and be affected would, again, put simply, increase your own capacity to affect and be affected. In turn, doing things that increase that body's 'perfection,' in Spinozan terms, increases your perfection, but this is a different perfection than prior to love; each person's essence has changed such that what perfection is for each has also changed.

Here it is possible to see the centrality and importance of Spinoza's oft-quoted focus on what a body can do (III P2): a body is defined by what it is capable of, and that is something that is constantly changing. Thus, at the same moment that the question of what a body can do reveals itself as central, we find a decisive response simultaneously out of reach: this is a question that will never have a final answer. As the essence of a body is constantly morphing (as it affects and is affected by other bodies), the ways that the body itself finds its powers of affecting and being affected is modulated, in turn changing the modes through which its essence is expressed and followed, and in turn, how that body is defined, what it is capable of. The question of understanding a body not according to what it is but what it can do, then, is not a question of mapping out a determinate set of doings, or of creating a definitive list, but rather a task of ongoing

experimentation and exploration, processes which feed back on those very capacities. In this, the body can be understood spatiotemporally, in its everchangingness, as always already in movement, in the context of movement.

Following this, something is desired not because it is good; rather, something is deemed good by virtue of the body desiring it (IV Preface). As desire flows, the developed capacities of the body fold back on themselves and thus change desire itself. Desire is not, then, what moves a subject towards a thing that will satiate a want — which would be an ontology based in an emptiness that needs to be filled — so much as the movement of a body which, in itself, increases its capacities to affect and be affected, and allows for a further increase in them. As with the operative logic of counterterrorism analyzed by Massumi, all bodies have a self-renewing desire immanent to them, constantly shifting and changing. To pose the question of politics from within this Spinozan ontology is not to ask how one can get outside the passions or control them, nor is it an attempt to understand their workings systematically. For Spinoza, we are always guided by passions and affected in ways that we cannot fully comprehend or perceive.

Joy and Sadness

Spinoza's name for the body's increase in capacity is joy (III Def. of Affects II; IV Preface). Joy happens when a body follows its desire, increasing its capacity to affect and be affected (III P11). Conversely, sadness is when the body's essence is not moved toward the reality of its essence, when desire is not able to be followed (III Def. of Affects III), and thus when the body's power to affect and be affected decreases (III P11). Joy and sadness are what they do; they are not subjectively interpreted to be joyful or sad — they are not emotions. A sad encounter is an objective thing: it decreases capacities to

affect and be affected. In turn, joy is also an objective thing: a joyful encounter is one in which a body's capacity to affect and be affected is increased through an encounter. Joy and sadness are verbs and processes, not nouns in the way grammar suggests. In terms of joy, this process is not the same as its more colloquial meaning, as a subjective experience of bliss, associated with overwhelming happiness. An increase in capacity is not necessarily felt as a positive emotion. Relatedly, sadness may not be experienced as a sad emotion; it may even be associated with pleasure, comfort, or feeling good.

Insofar as a body is actualizing its desire or *conatus* and increasing its powers of acting, its encounters are joyful and not sad. Deleuze states clearly in his reading of Spinoza that, "sadness makes no one intelligent. In sadness one is wretched. It's for this reason that the powers-that-be [*pouvoirs*] need subjects to be sad. [...] [N]othing in sadness can induce you to form the common notion, that is to say the idea of something in common between two bodies and two souls" (Deleuze n.d., 20). There is no joy immanent to sadness; even to *understand* what about the encounter makes it sad would be, in itself, joyful. To the extent, then, that we understand what makes something sad it is joyful, but it is nonetheless still sad to the extent that it decreases capacities. To complexify this, as bodies are multiple and overlapping, joy and sadness may come alongside each other in an encounter: "We may both love and hate the same object, not only by virtue of these relations, but also by virtue of the complexity of the relations of which we are ourselves intrinsically composed" (Deleuze 1990a, 243).

Affection-ideas

In this way, the increase or decrease of capacities is connected to what Spinoza calls the affection-idea (or *affectio* ideas): the way a body registers an affection. Integral to joy

and sadness—to the increase or decrease in capacity—is the idea of this increase or decrease. Spinoza defines affect as "affections of the body by which the body's power of acting is increased or diminished, aided or restrained, and at the same time, the ideas of these affections." (III D3) This is the first level of knowledge and ideas—the level at which joy and sadness emerge. It is the level of affection-ideas and what Spinoza calls the passions, passivity. Again, there is an objectivity to these ideas: they are not fallible or subjective feelings, but the body's registering and responsiveness to the increase or decrease in its power of acting. To understand this clearly we must first understand that affection-ideas are much less abstract than ideas are typically understood to be. If we understand an idea to be as much of the body as of the mind (Massumi 2002, 31), and that consciousness of an idea means really just that a body engages with it, we can understand affection-ideas to be simply that a body (defined by its capacities to affect and be affected) responds to the forces affecting it – that is, that the body has an idea of those other forces as demonstrated through its very responding to them. At the level of affection-ideas, the body is only able to do so at the level of passivity, of the passions, where it is not actively engaging in the encounter, but is rather at its whim. One may not mistake a joyful encounter for a sad one at the level of affection-ideas, for the affection-idea is not about intellectual understanding so much as what happens to the capacities of a body: its powers of acting are increased or decreased. Crucially, the intellectual understanding of whether an encounter was joyful or sad is something different, and relates to the importance of not conflating joy and sadness with emotions experienced by a subject.

Passivity¹³

To be passive in an encounter is to be the inadequate cause of a body's encounter; that is, the "effects [of the encounter] cannot be understood through [that body] alone" (Spinoza 1985, III D2). Put simply, a body passionately following its desire leads to passive encounters with other bodies, which are passive in the sense that they will be joyful or sad without the body having the capacity to actively enable a joyful encounter, simply because it does not yet know how to do this – it doesn't know how to be the adequate cause of one, in that situation. Spinoza calls affects associated with passive encounters passions. In the same sense as explained earlier, passive ideas of joy and sadness are 'objective' in the sense that they are what they do. Again, those ideas that a body has at the level of passions Spinoza calls affection-ideas.

Bodies become passively assembled or synthesized. We will understand this more significantly in the next section, which overviews how Deleuze and Guattari attend to and extend these Spinozan concepts. Put simply for now, when a body has a passive joyful encounter, it will seek to reproduce that encounter, simply to avoid having future sad ones and to continue to follow its desire. This is not becoming active: the body does continue to try to avoid sad encounters, but does not know how to attend to those sad encounters to shift them into joyful ones, thus is still at the level of affection-ideas. The nuances of this will be attended to in the next section and next chapter.

¹³ Here I wish to differentiate this type of passivity from that asserted to be a feminine characteristic. The conflation of what could be seen as the 'inverse' of a sovereign agency is the not the type of passivity I am referring to here. Rather, passivity here is an incapacity to engage with those forces that we are confronted with, and constituted through. The pacification of femininity into a weak meekness that is unable to respond to the world around 'her' is an example of passivity, but so is the pacification of masculinity into an 'agentic' strength that is impervious to the world around 'him.' Both of these attenuate desires by disallowing the active participation in the forces that constitute these bodies (let alone how bodies come to be defined as feminine or masculine in the first place). Similarly, as will be worked through in the next chapter, activity is not the activity associated with the sovereign agent, fully capable of making 'the world his oyster.' Rather, becoming active is the capacity to attune to and participate in the forces that constitute (you in) the world.

How, then, does a body increase its power of acting? Again, we will address this more thoroughly in Chapter 2, but, briefly, this cannot simply be a question of following one's preferences or doing what feels good. In fact, doing what feels good may also be sad and depleting – both in terms of concomitant encounters as well as in the sense that certain joyful encounters – what I will be arguing hope is an example of – keep the body at the level of affection-ideas.

To follow habit or comfort – or hope – would simply be to attend only to the joyful aspect of the encounter, while staving off or simply avoiding the sad. While bodies are implicated in encounters, we can see here how they are also emergent from them – relationally – while being nonetheless simultaneously reflective of the unique essences of the bodies.

To move from being passive in an encounter to being active in one, to be able to participate in an encounter such that it enables joy is at a different level of ideas: notion-ideas, and what Spinoza calls activity. For now, what is important to note is that joy is a necessary but not sufficient element of becoming active; one does not simply become active by following joy. This will be explored further in the next chapter.

Deleuze explains that Spinoza sees passive affections as, "opposed to active ones because they were not explained by our power of action. Yet, involving the limitations of our essence, they in some sense involved the lowest degree of that power. They are in their own way our power of action, but this in a state of involvement, unexpressed, unexplained" (Deleuze 1990a, 246). That is, bodies are animated according to affection-ideas, able to experiment to determine ways they are affected by joy or sadness in encounters, but this is not active experimentation, which knowledge of such an encounter

will enable. Rather, he writes that, "If passive affections cut us off from that of which we are capable, this is because our power of action is reduced to attaching itself to their traces, either in attempt to preserve them if they are joyful, or to ward them off¹⁴ if they are sad" (246). There is not a knowledge, according to Spinoza, of causes. The body does not know how to enable joyful encounters, or attend to the ways encounters are sad to turn them into joyful ones. Rather, the body simply attempts to reproduce something that has happened previously; this is at the whim of what is available for encounters given the operative logic. In attempts to do only this, the body is not able to move from having affection-ideas to notion-ideas.

These habits that attend to preserving that which is joyful of the encounter, and these wardings off of that which is sad do, however, serve to assemble a body in particular ways, but passively, not actively. We will get into the understanding of a body as assembled in the next section, dealing with the work of Deleuze and Guattari.

Deleuze and Guattari

The Body without Organs and the Plane of Consistency of Desire

Having outlined a Spinozan conception of the body, here I want to situate the body within the larger field from which it emerges, and attend to the question of how the subject is understood with relation to the body. Deleuze and Guattari's work with the Spinozan ontology as outlined above, in conjunction with their work with Bergson, produced their concepts of Body without Organs (BwO) and the Plane of Consistency of

¹⁴ While Deleuze may be using this term quite deliberately, I use this term in a different way in this thesis. To ward something off, for me, is to be able to attend to it in a way that does not centre that thing – I use it in the sense of trying to 'ward off' hope without having it be that which subjectifies a body into a subject in the process. This is key to my thesis, and an unfortunate overlapping of terminology. To 'ward off' something in the sense that he means here, I use the term 'fend off.' This will become more clear in the final chapter.

Desire (what I will abbreviate as PoCoD), which help us situate the emergence of the bodies outlined above within fields or planes, and allows for particular understandings of both what constitutes a body, as well as how subjectivity emerges.

The BwO is defined as "the field of immanence of desire, the plane of consistency specific to desire," with desire defined differently than but compatibly with Spinoza, as "a process of production without reference to any exterior agency" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 154). When they refer to it as the plane of consistency of desire, they are referring to a plane that is produced via the forces of desire, whether desires come to form joyful encounters and continue to flow or not. When this plane is tipped, "making it pass over to the side of the plane of consistency[, i]t is only here that the BwO reveals itself for what it is: connection of desires, conjunction of flows, continuum of intensities" (161). That is, the PoCoD describes the forces whereas the BwO describes what it is when seen more from the perspective of the ways that it is organized: the ways that desire flows, the patterning and sedimentation of the flows of desires through passive and active encounters. The BwO is 'without organs' in the sense that no forces act upon it from the outside to organize it; nothing is transcendent. Rather, all its constitutive forces are immanent to the plane itself. However, as will be covered in the next section, organs immanent to the plane may indeed form on the BwO; it is more that they are without *organisms* that comes to be more important.

They state that there is "a perpetual and violent combat between the plane of consistency, which frees the BwO [from its organization], cutting across and dismantling all of the strata, and the surfaces of stratification that block it or make it recoil" (159). That is, the forces of desire that are part of the PoCoD – but not assembled into flows to

create the BwO – can undo the organization of the BwO. As outlined previously, as encounters fold back onto vital essences of bodies, those vital essences change, hence both the PoCoD and the BwO are constantly shifting and changing.

In some circumstances in my arguments of this thesis, then, either term (PoCoD or BwO) will work, and in some cases it is important to discern which I am referring to. Deleuze and Guattari themselves, however, are less discerning, which has certainly, I'm sure, not led to ease in interpretation of their works. Their fallback term is BwO, though I will seek to be more precise in my usage of these terms.

Organization and Disorganization of the BwO/PoCoD

As we have partially addressed above, and address more in the next chapter, the plane has two "poles:" organized and disorganized. As the BwO, it can and does become organized, stratified and "submitted to judgment and regulation" (159), as desires engage in regularized encounters. That is, as bodies have random and experimental encounters on the PoCoD, as they (passively) follow joy and avoid sadness – at the level of affection-ideas, not at the level of notion-ideas, there comes to be an organization immanent to the plane, though an organization without an organizer or organism. As bodies on the plane are unable to participate actively in the encounter, they rather simply seek to reproduce joyful encounters and avoid sad ones; this is how bodies themselves passively form a regularization of ways of moving, assembled in a regular pattern through the passive flow of desire. In this way, joys and sadnesses are predictable even while passive. This helps create nested and overlapping bodies that move together passively, immanently, in ways that don't require an outside power to organize or determine them.

As this organization emerges the PoCoD comes to be called the BwO. The most important distinction, again as mentioned in the previous section, is that forces on the PoCoD are those that remain at the level of forces, not seen from the perspective of their organization. Those forces that remain unassembled even passively remain as potential forces in the virtual, which will be addressed later in this chapter.

Viewing the forces on the plane as organized allows us to understand the emergence of what we have been calling, drawing on Massumi, the operative logic associated with the BwO; the BwO is both produced by and produces that operative logic. The flows of desires that, through encounters at the level of affection-ideas, organize and are organized by that emergent logic based simply on those immanent flows. It is thus the operative logic that not quite organizes encounters between bodies, so much as enables the bodies to form through this immanent organization of forces. In this the bodies are passive; as the operative logic enables particular encounters between them, and tends away from enabling others, a reliability of joyful encounters allows for the passive synthesis of those forces into bodies with increased capacities to affect and be affected passively, not moving from affection-ideas to notion-ideas, from passivity to activity.

In this, bodies can attend to available encounters in passive ways – without actively participating in the encounters, the body simply ‘chooses’ from the possibilities the operative logic has to offer it, all of which perpetuate the operative logic that organizes the plane itself.

This process forms what Deleuze and Guattari call machinic assemblages of desire: bodies that move together, come to affect and be affected in conjunction/combination/concomitantly with each other. Desires flow through these

bodies as a larger assembled body, not disrupting and thus perpetuating the operative logic itself.

Under certain circumstances, the passive synthesis of bodies can lead to bodies finding themselves subjugated to the larger assemblage. An operative logic that evokes and is dependent upon the regulation of its composing bodies via hope and fear is one in which the future comes in to provide joy when the possible encounters only otherwise provide sadness. In finding itself so assembled, being a part of the larger assemblage is what allows for an increase in that composing body's capacity to affect and be affected – but according to the operative logic of that larger assemblage – as well as the joy associated with hope for a future in which its own vital desire will be able to be expressed and able to flow.

Deleuze and Guattari call this "the judgement of God" (1987, 159): that which transcendentally organizes bodies to participate not only in strata or 'organs,' but also in that which comes to serve as an immanently transcendental justification which then goes on to fold back onto organs to organize them into an organism to accomplish this transcendent goal. This is subjectification, signification, the organism (160) isolable from its (thus created) 'environment.' The organs which previously were assembled merely based on their own desires in this case come to be subjugated to ends of keeping the organism alive so it can continue to transcendentally organize its component parts. In this formation of an organism is also the concomitant creation of an *outside* to the organism. It is in this way that the constituting bodies find themselves passive in the face of organization. This is also how a particular spatio-temporality emerges on the PoCoD, as the transcendent 'judgement of God' emerges to provide a point of an evaluation.

For the larger composed assemblage to be able to maintain the (passive) participation of the composing bodies in itself, however, it needs to continuously ensure that enough joy to enable the composing body's passive participation is sustained. That is, the vital desires of composing bodies are nourished by the larger composed and subjugating assemblage in order to maintain their investment in the larger body. I will argue this more explicitly later in this chapter, but, not only is the continuous regulation of bodies via hope and fear *enabling* for the larger assemblage, I argue that this is must be continuously attended to in order to maintain the operative logic that organizes it in such a way.

Regardless as to how organized the BwO becomes, however, it always exceeds its organization. There is always disorganization tearing away at any organization; this comes from capacities unrealized in passive encounters, thanks to the operative logic at play in organizing the plane. These forces are emergent from bodies on the PoCoD, but do not fit within its operative logic, and thus are unmachined, unassembled, and remain 'latent' at the level of the virtual. They are nonetheless present, participating in the encounter, emerging from it. They shift and change as they emerge from the constantly shifting and changing desires of the bodies, yet remain unassembled and in fact tear at its organization through experimentation that could result in different operative logics emerging. As the initial operative logic is not adequate for the flows of desire to continue, if potentials in the virtual are actualized, opening up a 'line of flight,' forming a different BwO moving according to an immanently different operative logic. This process is a complex one, and involves becoming-active, which will be addressed in the next chapter.

Possible versus Potential

Put simply, what Deleuze and Guattari call the ‘possible’ is that which remains within the domain of an operative logic produced by and perpetuating it. The operative logic of a BwO allows for a particular subset of capacities to be actualized without forming a new BwO. As mentioned previously, there are other capacities immanent to the plane, but unfollowable given the operative logic. These capacities remain in what Deleuze and Guattari call the ‘virtual;’ this virtual is an ever-shifting repository of potential capacities which are not engaged via the operative logic at play, incapable of being actualized as/on that particular BwO. In particular circumstances of experimentation or abrupt change that we will get into later in this thesis, these potential capacities in the virtual may be actualized into a different BwO, with a different operative logic.

Summary of Deleuze & Guattari contributions

The organization of the BwO is an ambivalent process for Deleuze and Guattari. A modification of an idiom explains this concisely: the ‘whole’ is *both greater and lesser* than the sum of its parts. A composite body enables new capacities and possibilities (it is more than the sum of its parts) but as a result, some of its virtual capacities are curtailed through the emergence of this larger body (it is thus also less than the sum of its parts, from this perspective). Additionally, the passive organization of a BwO is just that: passive. The body is not able to participate actively in the operative logic that organizes it, thus which forces remain unassembled is only based on the operative logic. And if, as is the case that I am interested in, the operative logic is based on hope or fear, passivity means the creation of something that *does* worry Deleuze and Guattari: the organism.

The organism is the subjugation of the composing bodies to the larger body/assemblage. By this I argue they mean the shift from the assemblage that allows for

the desires of all of the multiple, overlapping, nested bodies to flow and continue to experiment, to the creation of an assemblage in which the desire of the highest level of the assemblage is able to continue to flow, but only given the capture of the desire of the nested, overlapping, constituting bodies that makes it up. That is, the desires of smaller-level bodies ('organs') are subjugated to the desires of the larger overall assemblage; they are held passive by the *organism* which they rely upon for life, for movement, even though that movement only serves them to the minimum degree of keeping them participating in the larger assemblage. This creates a catch-22: to continue to participate in the organism may be ontologically sad, but it also provides at least the minimum conditions for the desire of the composing bodies to continue to flow, for them to express joy to the degree that the body will continue to participate in the assemblage.

I argue that a way that organisms capture the desire of the composing organisms into a teleological operative logic is via hope and fear, as these work to capture desires of the composing bodies, promising them to a future while sacrificing them in the present. In doing so, those composing bodies are unable to become active, and are instead passive not thanks to their own incapacities to experiment, but thanks to the possibilities enabled via such an operative logic. Given such an operative logic, in the face of an opportunity that animates the body with (passive) hope, or a threat that animates the body with fear, the alternative – to not have hope – would mean the dissolution of such bodies, as their capacities to engage as bodies on the plane would be fundamentally different were they not organized by such an operative logic. As this would be sad, a body would not voluntarily choose to participate in such a dissolution without some sort of concomitant joy. Regardless, this is the circumstance that this thesis is interested in: given an operative

logic of hope and fear, how is activity possible? This is a dangerous and complex process that will be unpacked in the next chapter.

Synthesis: Hope holds bodies passive

Hope and fear defined

Having outlined the Spinozan ontology based in desire, joy, and sadness, we are in a better position to give an account of hope, fear, and their interconnection. Hope is often conceptualized as the opposite or antidote to fear, but Spinoza provides the means to think them in a more complex and relational way. Again, Spinoza defines hope as, "an inconstant joy, born of the idea of a future or past thing whose outcome we to some extent doubt" (1985, III Def. Of the Affects XII). Relatedly, fear is "an inconstant sadness, born of the idea of a future or past thing whose outcome we to some extent doubt" (III Def of the Affects XIII). For Spinoza, then, "there is neither hope without fear, nor fear without hope. For he [sic] who is suspended in hopes and doubts a thing's outcome is supposed to imagine something which excludes the existence of the future thing. And so to that extent he is saddened (by P19), and consequently, while he is suspended in hope, he has fears that the thing [he imagines] will happen" (III Def of the Affects XIII, Exp.). Importantly, it is not that we necessarily feel both hope and fear so much as are animated by them both if we are animated by one: there is no hope without fear and thus sadness, nor fear without hope and thus joy; when hoping for something to appear, hope exists to the same extent as the fear that that very thing will not appear, and vice-versa, when there is something to be feared there will always be the concomitant hope that the thing will be destroyed in some way (IV 47).

Hope and fear are both linked to the future

For Spinoza, then, it is not only fear but also hope that brings the future into the present. Hope, like fear in response to threat, animates a form of subjectivity in the present through a hoped-for future; this subject seeks to fend off any present or possible threats that would get in the way of the hoped-for future. Emergent from, attuned to, and able to engage only with these future forces in ways that reinforce this future, hopeful subjects are bound to certain possibilities given a particular operative logic, a particular mode of power and powerlessness in its light; being bound by the passions, passive. A passive subject does not have the capacity to attend to forces of the present that are not related to the future in this circumstance, as those of the future demand their attention in the present. Bodies are only able to attend to these future forces thanks to what the operative logic possibilizes, which is actualized in terms of how bodies are able to enter into encounters.

Hope and fear render bodies passive

As suggested earlier, hope and fear render the body passive. The latter part of this chapter will address in more detail how this happens, and Chapter Two will address how, via Spinoza, we can understand how a body can attend to the passivity of hope and fear into becoming active, but only insofar as, I will argue, it can attend to the *loss* of that hope and fear.

The significance of what Massumi argues in “The Future Birth of the Affective Fact” (2010) is more easily understood at this point. He is analyzing an operative logic based in fear and threat, through which bodies are subjected to encounters based in fearful, sad passions. In this sense, the capacities of these bodies to affect and be affected are animated by a logic of fear – towards a future thing whose outcome is in doubt,

participating in the present as a threat. That is, the material reality – the ‘facts’ – are the contemporary affects of this future animation. In this way concern for future outcome back-forms not only bodies as subjects – agents – but participate in forming bodies themselves, and their capacities in the affective present. In doing so, this animation ushers in and legitimizes not only the preparation for this future itself, but creates the conditions through which it, itself, arises. This not only legitimizes the present’s animation by these future forces, but ushers in this future as not only legitimate but necessary, normal, inevitable. The capacities that emerge at the level of possible here, then, relate to fending off these threats, and thus realizing the conditions that allow those threats to be realized.

Hope and opportunity

What does this mean in terms of hope, then? Hope orients a body to a future whose outcome is in doubt, and this uncertainty is inseparable from fear – the uncertainty is because there is still a possibility, and the concomitant fear – that the hoped-for future will not arise. Following from this, I argue that it is not fear alone that shapes the operative logic at play in the examples that Massumi uses in his work, but also hope. While it is important to note that hope also has a joy immanent to it, meaning it can do different things than fear, I argue that hope and fear participate in and feed into the same operative logic, and together they compose what possibilities may emerge through the BwO.

Where Massumi speaks of an affective threat that evokes the fear, I will conceptualize affective opportunity as the hope-inducing corollary to fear-inducing threat. Opportunity, in this sense, can be understood as that which evokes an understanding – and, moreover,

feeling – of hope: that there could be a different, better future world ushered in by this opportunity. However, to the extent that it is an opportunity (and thus gives hope), it is beyond our control and requires a future-oriented disposition.

In the case that we are affected by the opportunity, we internalize it and begin to move in the ways the opportunity suggests will bring about the desired future. But with this internalization is the dissolution of hope itself: the *realization* of this other world would be simultaneously the dissolution of hope. So what does this mean with respect to the future, if the future of fear is the realization of the thing that is feared, in itself? Is the future of hope the realization of that thing that is hoped for? Clarifying an ambiguous point in Massumi here will help me address this question.

In his text Massumi argues that it was the war on terror itself that created the presence of Al-Qaeda in Iraq. I want to nuance this by showing that there is a question of causality here that we cannot know via an affective framework. That it created an opportunity for Al-Qaeda to flourish may be the case, but the point I wish to pull out here is that, regardless, the affective fact in the present is the circulation of self-justificatory fear. The affective threat of Al-Qaeda is inseparable from the broader assemblage of the war on terror and its future-oriented mechanisms for assessing and evaluating, and propagating threats. It does not follow that the war on terror ‘caused’ the presence of Al-Qaeda. From the perspective I have been developing here, what matters is not isolating causes, but grasping the emergent and self-perpetuating operative logic through which the war on terror operates. Similarly, as Massumi explains, it does not matter whether an affective threat materializes in the future (through a bombing or a terror attack, for example);

rather, its affective power is to shape the present through an affective orientation to an uncertain future.

Similarly, it does not matter whether a hoped-for opportunity arises in the future. Instead, I am interested in attending to the way in which affective opportunities shape the present, through an inducement to orient to the future in the present. I am suggesting that it is possible to conceptualize an operative logic that is propelled by and productive of opportunities, and produces hopeful subjectivities and assemblages that tend to reproduce circumstances in which the hoped-for thing is always only present in the hoping for it.

Again, the point here is not that a hopeful disposition necessarily frustrates the realization of a certain outcome (that we never get what we hope for), or that hope is ineffective or unrealistic. The point I am interested in is that an opportunity that would usher in a desired future has effects in the present, similar to the way that Massumi's future threats have present effects. As affective facts, opportunities induce hopeful striving, calculation, or planning. Like fearful threats, hopeful opportunities induce a future-oriented striving. Opportunities animate an operative logic that works to discipline the present in order to realize a hoped-for future.

Revisiting Deleuze explaining Spinoza's understanding of passivity as mentioned earlier is pertinent here: "If passive affections cut us off from that which we are capable, *this is because our power of action is reduced to attaching itself to their traces*, either in the attempt to preserve them if they are joyful, or to ward them off if they are sad" (Deleuze 1990a, 246). Hope holds bodies passive insofar as those bodies attempt to preserve that in the encounter which gave it that joy in hoping. Relatedly and inseparably,

it is also passive insofar as it seeks to fend off that of the encounter which made it sad, the fear.

That is, to turn the situation into an opportunity in which hope can be invested is to stagnate the encounter, to objectify the other body in the encounter to be defined by a certain, unchanging set of forces that can be reencountered with regularity. Hope leads bodies to seek reproducible encounters without being active participants in them, which not only holds them passive, but constitutes the encountered forces as a coherent object, and the body itself becomes subjectified. These have effects in the present, in terms of the ways a body is able to participate in particular possibilities that are opened by the capturing of forces into an opportunity.

Hope is a way of trying to trace a line from the present to the future that is knowable, sensible, based on what is known and sensed now, about the world. It prevents emergence, prevents further attendance to forces currently in the virtual in its reliance only on the possible. The joy associated with hope, if simply followed, can serve as a way of avoiding the sadness in encounters, resulting not in a becoming active but rather in a passive synthesis of bodies which implicitly reproduces the operative logic of hope and fear.

Insight 1: Passive hope entails the loss of potential and experimentation

I argue that forces in the present are sacrificed for the purposes of attending to opportunities and threats—*affective facts*—which go on to animate the present itself. At stake in this is the loss of co-present potentials. It is the combination of passivity *with* an operative logic of hope that means that the co-present potentials are lost not out of joyfully immanent organization but out of a subjugation of those present forces for a

future. In this, bodies are *bound as* passive and subjugating through this, and those forces systematically excluded from realization, for the benefit of a larger organism that will maintain its transcendent organization over those composing bodies. And this, as I have been arguing, is maintained by hope being an integral part of that operative logic, keeping bodies bound to it through the joy of hope.

The operative logic of hopeful opportunity is not about a particular hoped-for future, but a continual process of adjustment, preparation, rethinking, and re-establishing the parameters for hope. As with the threats under the operative logic of counterterrorism, opportunities proliferate. If the results do not come into fruition, what emerges (or could emerge, to the extent that it is passive) is a critique and adjustment of strategies or assumptions such that the goal can be maintained or adjusted. The orientation to opportunity is questioned just enough to maintain an opportunistic orientation. This is not about becoming active but about a regime that maintains passivity by substituting new opportunities as the future arrives, with new means towards them.

With this understanding of hope, that which comes in to represent the hoped-for future – that which gives hope – an opportunity becomes an object, a sign that something otherwise is possible. This object comes to carve out and fill a place of lack in the present: a hopeful subject is formed on the basis of this absence. Here a double-lack takes shape: what happens when a body doesn't have anything to give it hope? Another fold happens: the search and striving for hope. The felt absence of opportunity impels a frenzied attempt to find one. Again, both of these are animated by an operative logic analogous to that of fear, holding bodies passive, unable to actively engage with the forces that constitute them.

Insight 2: Striving for hope

This element is emerging as relevant in contemporary politics: the striving for hope, itself. Insofar as hope is seen as integral to movement, to potential, to a future, what we see in the face of its absence is the constant search for hope rather than even for the future that hope would promise. In the absence of those things that give us hope, given the imperative of hope in the face of an uncertain future, we are compelled to look for something that will help us recognize and follow new opportunities. We begin looking for analyses that will bring forth a politics and a struggle that will allow that future to be ushered in, we ask each other "what gives you hope?" Books and articles offering paths to hope attend its absence: *Hope in Dark Times: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities* (Solnit 2016), *Hope: New philosophies for Change* (Zournazi 2003), *Realizing Hope: Life Beyond Capitalism* (Albert 2006).

Striving for hope in this way binds bodies to how they are subjectified: if we are without hope we become useless in terms of social change – the social and the change necessarily predefined in order to be recognizable as such and thus rendered impotent. That is, what is defined as political becomes related to whether that thing fulfills its role in participating in the change that will bring about that future.

Striving for hope requires an attunement to possibilities that might help open to particular hoped-for futures. Through this process, the body becomes attuned to hopeful opportunities enabled by the operative logic. Those forces or movements that are *not* sensible as opportunities—those that exist outside hope—are unintelligible and forced out of politics. At best these forces outside of hope are understood as extraneous forces of unintelligible potential; at worst they are made intelligible as tendencies of

counterrevolution or despair: impediments or threats to the search for opportunities and the hope they engender.

From the perspective of the operative logic of hope and fear, hope is what creates movement. To be without movement is to be stagnant, hopeless, and thus outside of politics. What I suggest here is from the perspective of the virtual, everything is always already moving, but some of that movement is captured into particular regularities via hope and fear. The movements outside of those of hope and fear are unintelligible and chaotic, or simply just lacking, from the perspective of the organized BwO.

Overall, hope, like fear in response to threat, requires a future-oriented subject who is oriented towards fending off those threats that would get in the way of a desired future. Put quite simply, the future-oriented subject is produced by the hopeful operative logic of opportunity, its situation back-forms around to capture it in what Massumi calls gridlock (2002, 3, 8). This gridlock freezes movement, organizing the BwO. This is a subject of lack, necessarily threatened and fearful, anxious for the removal of doubt. Hopelessness in this light is not lack, then, what it is too often asserted to be, but perhaps a source of joy.

The potential of hopelessness

Not being animated by hope or striving for it, given such a context would result in the dissolution of the subject, which would be sad for the subject, clearly, though concomitantly joyful for the body. I argue that hopelessness emerges as important here. The question of how the potential sadness of hopelessness is navigated will be unpacked in detail in the next chapter, but for now I just wish to outline what hopelessness does in the face of imperatives for hope

To be present with hopelessness is not to mourn in the Freudian sense, but rather entails a capacity to attend to the affective forces that are, in the constant future-oriented search for hope, otherwise relegated to the potential. These potentials are unactualizable via the opportunity-filled operative logics of hope. To lose the orienting and subjectifying forces of hope is sad, decreasing certain capacities to affect and be affected. And it opens up new potentials that were otherwise incapacitated by hope. The ability to attend to these forces is something that is, in itself, a capacity. And perhaps this capacity is where a different understanding of the political lies: the capacity to turn the sadness of the loss of hope into the joy of new capacities to affect and be affected. For Deleuze and Guattari and Masumi this is becoming active or becoming other (Masumi 1992, 93-106). Given the pervasiveness of the imperative of hope, I argue that the capacity to sit in hopelessness, to let it take you and move you, to find the texture and movements outside of those forces oriented to an intelligible future which is in doubt, can enable becoming active, a movement from affection-ideas to what Spinoza calls notion-ideas.

Chapter Two: Hopelessness and Becoming Active

Given an understanding of hope as passive, this chapter explores how becoming active can take place in situations curtailed by sadness, as I suggest hope does. I start by overviewing the concepts of activity and becoming active, and then parse out the Ruddick-inspired reading of Deleuze's concepts of cramped space, scream, and thought. This provides a framework to understand how I see hopelessness relating to becoming active, which I then proceed to make the case for.

Activity

It is important not to interpret the Spinozan notion of 'activity' as conventionally understood in Western political thought, as it is not inflected by notions of sovereign agency that activity are often associated with it. Given this – and the pervasive misreadings of Deleuze – I will first give an overview of this process in a straightforward way, and then get into the nuances of activity given bodies' ever-changing desires and essences, their multiplicities, and their embeddedness in and emergence from the Plane of Consistency of Desire.

As we saw in the previous chapter, activity can be contrasted with passivity: the condition of bodies undergoing sad and joyful encounters, without being capable of modulating the process that patterns or composes these encounters. Here the body only has access to affection-ideas: ideas associated with the joyful or sad transitions it undergoes. Simply, then, in moving from passivity to activity, the body moves from affection-ideas to the formation of a notion-idea such that it comes to understand (in an embodied sense) what in an encounter 'causes' joy, allowing desire to flow. It becomes capable of participating in this cause. As Deleuze explains in his lectures on Spinoza,

"the body which affects you[r body] is indicated as combining its relation with your own and not as its relation decomposing your own. At that point, something induces you to form a notion of what is common to the body which affects you and to your own body, to the soul which affects you and to your own soul. In this sense, joy makes you intelligent." (Deleuze n.d., 21) The development of a notion-idea is the development of intelligence which leads to active joy (Deleuze 1988, 56). As one would only ever seek to increase one's capacities, all active encounters are joyful ones. In this sense, a body would never be active in an encounter that would cause its own sadness.

What is this "something" that induces a body to form this common notion? Deleuze (2003), Massumi (1992), and Ruddick (2010) call this thought, or thought-in-becoming. For now, suffice it to say, a Spinozan understanding of thought is different from what is intuitively understood by thought, which we will address more significantly later. For now, we can understand thought as that 'something' through which a body actively increases capacities that allows for intelligence. In summary, then, a body becomes active through its formation of a notion-idea of how to ensure an encounter is joyful, to be able to actively participate in the encounter such that desire can continue to flow. This process is joyful, by definition, and is brought about via thought.

An active body, then, is active to the extent that it is able to participate – thoughtfully – in the encounters it engages in. It is passive to the extent that it is not able to participate in this process. In becoming active, the body does not come to *control* encounters, *guaranteeing* a particular result of the encounter; rather, bodies are able to *participate* in the encounter such that it is joyful for both bodies. This is an important and often misunderstood nuance of becoming active. Whereas activity and thought are often

associated with goals and planning for the future, this kind of future-oriented thinking might render a body passive in the Spinozan sense, incapable of participating actively in the forces that compose the present.

Further, recall that as encounters fold back onto bodies, the essence of the bodies themselves, their desires, are changed to a certain degree. As such, the notion-ideas that had been formed between those bodies previously must continually be renegotiated and thought through in order for the notion-ideas to remain common to both bodies in the encounter. That is, the moment that any shifts and changes of the forces of the bodies involved in an encounter are no longer joyful, the associated notion-ideas cease to be immanent to the encounter, and thus – by definition – cease to be notion-ideas. Notion-ideas are not preformed, habitual or coded responses so much as an ever-changing heuristic that enables the body to enter into an encounter in a participatory way, not guided by the operative logic, to enable joy and the transformation of potentially sad encounters into joyful ones.

It becomes clear in this that thought is continual and ongoing, allowing the bodies to continuously reflect and respond to the situations in which they emerge, hence Massumi's language of thought-in-becoming, and the focus on becoming-active and becoming-other rather than the fetishization of attaining activity itself: it is always a becoming, always a navigation toward the unknown, toward otherness. The process of thought in becoming-active is really an ongoing navigation of change in change. This is important to keep in mind as we work through these concepts in more detail.

In this constant navigation, a key question for my thesis – and key controversy in the literature – is how bodies navigate sadness while becoming-active. Bodies are, as

worked through in the previous chapter, multiplicities, assembled into larger, nested and overlapping bodies of forces at infinitely large and small levels. Given this, we come to understand that there are many forces in the potential/virtual that mean that the essence of a body in multiplicities of assemblages expressing joy will change, and thus will the joys and sadnesses for other elements of the assembled bodies. Additionally, by definition, there is nothing joyful about sadness; "in sadness one is wretched" (Deleuze n.d., 20). The question of how bodies navigate sadness in becoming-active is key to my argument around the importance of hopelessness.

Before getting into the nuances of becoming-active in the face of sadness, though, it is helpful to understand becoming-active through the concepts introduced in the previous chapter, specifically in terms of organization of the BwO on the PoCoD, thought through in terms of the possible and potential in the virtual. This will help us understand the tenuous nature of becoming-active, which allows us to open space for a later understanding of the politics of this process, itself.

Becoming Active: Destruction and sadness

Part of becoming-active, in this reading, is assessing how, in Spinoza's terms, to destroy or avoid the ways that the encounter is sad. Deleuze states this clearly: "We are always determined to seek the destruction of an object that makes us sad" (1990a, 244). Remember, there is no joy immanent to the sad encounter, no notion-ideas can form through it (Deleuze n.d., 20). Sadness is simply "wretched," in itself (20). So what can a body do in the circumstance of a sad encounter, then? How does one go about destroying the other body if there is nothing redeeming about the encounter with it, no capacities formed? How is a body able to do anything in such an encounter, to form a notion-idea,

or to have it not be sad any longer – if to do so would suggest an increase in capacities, joy?

The question of what ‘destroy’ here means is at the heart of this paradox. Deleuze suggests that "to destroy [that which makes you sad] is to give the parts of the object a new relation that agrees with our own; we then experience a joy which increases our power of action" (1990a, 244). It is clear here that to destroy something does not mean to explode it to smithereens, or to kill it in the conventional sense. Remember that a body is simply its (multiple) forces, and beyond that, as we’re learning here, how the forces engage and are engaged with other bodies, its capacities. Thus, to destroy something that makes you sad is to encounter it in a particular way such that those forces do not affect you in sad ways. Deleuze describes this elsewhere: "As determined by sadness, conatus [what we are calling desire] is still the quest for what is useful or good for us: we endeavour to triumph, that is, to act so as to make the parts of the body that affects us with sadness take on a new relation that may be reconciled with our own" (Deleuze 1990a, 243). To destroy something, then, is to learn to encounter it in a way that is joyful, to renegotiate the encounter – destroying the previous, sad, iteration of the encounter. It, then, is not about an attack on the other body in the encounter so much as the destruction of – via active engagement in – the operative logic that allowed for the sad encounter in the first place. In this, it is the encountered object that is destroyed, not the encountered body.

Along with this comes a paradox: to destroy something requires a capacity to engage with it, initially, which would itself be joyful; something that is inherently not part of a sad encounter. How can joy emerge from a sad encounter?

Deleuze (n.d.) proposes one way of working through this:

One tries to diminish the respective share of sadnesses in relation to the respective share of a joy, and one attempts the following tremendous coup: one is sufficiently assured of common notions which refer to relations of agreement between such and such a body and my own, one will attempt then to apply the same method to sadness, but one cannot do it on the basis of sadness, that is to say one will attempt to form common notions by which one will arrive at a comprehension of the vital manner in which such and such a body disagrees and no longer agrees. (23)

That is, while there is no notion-idea possible if an encounter is simply one of sadness, if there are other joys in the encounter that allow for notions-ideas, other ways of a body to know to reliably have increased capacities, then the body must form a notion-idea not only based in the ways that another body augments that body's capacities, but moreover an understanding of the ways that the bodies best relate, to minimize sadness and maximize joy rather than a continuous unpredictable variation of passive encounters at the level of affection-ideas. This is an understanding of how the operative logic helps organize the bodies into having particular encounters, and understanding of 'causes.' The formation of a new notion-idea allows for participation in and modulation of the operative logic, the operative logic that organizes not only the encounter, but the bodies themselves. These changes happen at the level of the plane of consistency of desire.

In a sense, it is through experimentation and the formation of notions-ideas based in joy that a body can get to know the ways that that other body moves, its conatus, its essence or vital desire, such that it learns the thresholds at which joy is no longer expressed in encounters, and thus where sadness would prevail in them, as animated by the operative logic that organizes the bodies to express their vital desires in such ways. In this way the body is no longer passive in those encounters, and is actively learning about

the way that not only that other body moves, learns about its vital essence, but how the plane itself organizes the bodies to encounter each other, and beyond that to the ways that the operative logic enables and prevents various forces to be possibilized. Through experimenting with other forces available in the virtual, with the other body in the encounter, the organization of the plane itself changes, the operative logic is modulated. In developing a notion-idea as to how the forces of the virtual are organized, the body has a chance to engage those forces at the level of the virtual; this is intelligence, and is joyful. In other words, the intelligence acquired in the joyful encounters allows for a notion-idea of how the two bodies will best interact for the pursuit of their common desires, a notion common to those bodies (Deleuze 1990a). The sad is still sad: there is no joy immanent to it, though any joy of the overall encounter between those bodies allows for an overall increase in intelligence of how they should encounter each other to ensure the most joy.

Put another way, Deleuze describes this in terms of moving from the passions to notion-ideas: the joy of an encounter "propels us somehow beyond the continuous variation [of the passions], it makes us acquire at least the potentiality of a common notion [what we have been calling notion-ideas]" (n.d., 21). If a common notion is formed here, it "strengthen[s] our ability to avoid bad encounters" (1990a, 287); the joy of understanding "puts us in possession of our power of action and understanding" (287), such that we can "cope with bad encounters which we cannot avoid, and reduce the sadness that necessarily remains with us" (287). In other words, the more active a body is, the more capable it is of dealing with sadness.

To be clear, according to Deleuze (n.d.):

you make use of [joyful encounters] to form common notions of a first type, the notion of what there was in common between the body which affected me with joy and my own body, you open up to a maximum your living common notions and you descend once again toward sadness, this time with common notions that you form in order to comprehend in what ways such a body disagrees with your own, such a soul disagrees with your own (23-24).

To be clear, it is not sadness here that increases intelligence, but the element of joy that allows for this. That is, an understanding of what makes you sad is a joyful one; perhaps even just an understanding that you are sad can be joyful.

This, again, is not the avoidance of sad encounters in a way that allows for a simple pursuit of joy. It is an engagement with those encounters that could cause sadness that opens up ways to grapple more fully with more forces that could potentially be a part of that encounter. In this, the body begins to get to know the other body, not simply in terms of how the operative logic animates or selects for a particular subset of its forces of its vital essence, but how to form notions that open up new potentials to be engaged with, experimented with, and to enable new and different operative logics.

Becoming active: Cramped space, scream, thought

How can we think through this process of actively engaging sadness, such that we become capable of undertaking this “tremendous coup” (n.d., 23) as Deleuze puts it? And how does this process relate to hope and fear? In this section, I undertake a reading of Susan Ruddick (2010) and Nicholas Thoburn (2003) to unpack the work “that fear and joy do in mobilizing political subjectivities” (Ruddick 2010, 22). I argue that Ruddick’s reading of Deleuze – which relies heavily on Thoburn – clarifies how bodies navigate encounters that are vitally disabling. I will be picking up on her work to think through what hope does, alongside and in addition to fear, in mobilizing political subjectivities,

and thus what her important work helps us see in terms of what hopelessness can do in terms of undoing political subjectivities such that a different type of politics can emerge.

Drawing heavily on the work of Thoburn (2003), Ruddick highlights Deleuze's conception of spaces as 'cramped,' resulting in the 'scream,' which allows for 'thought,' or what others call 'thought-in-becoming:' becoming active. She argues that these concepts are essential for understanding Deleuze in terms of having a politics (2010). This is crucial to understanding the role of sadness in becoming active. Ruddick argues that whereas some theorists emphasize the pursuit of joy and the evasion of sadness in Deleuze and Spinoza, the concept of cramped space helps to grasp the way in which thought emerges from sadness. In Ruddick's reading, Deleuze insists that a body does not simply avoid sad encounters so much as engage desire's "long-standing affair with experimentation," not to "overcome error" of the bad encounter so much as a "refusal of the inadequate idea" (36), which invites a reencounter with that same other body anew, to figure out how to find joy through a new encounter with that body. As the operative logic enables only certain ways for bodies to be assembled, and have particular encounters, it is the PoCoD itself that is the object of this experimentation. Dealing with sadness in this way is not a conscious choice, but is, as Ruddick argues, the nature of desire itself. Thinking is that process of figuring, animated by desire.

Thought therefore emerges in a cramped space, which is at the same time an affirmation, its "dark precursor" (37). Thought for Deleuze, according to Ruddick, "does not originate from an act of good will, but conatus under constraint, and the refusal of unendurable forces that bear down upon it, that construct it in unbearable ways. For Deleuze it begins with the scream" (37).

Cramped Space¹⁵

When passive, a body feels cramped when it finds itself in sad encounters, as it attempts to engage and reengage the encountered body differently, as there is no way that the body can participate in the operative logic to enable other encounters.

That is, it is not that this ‘cramped space’ curtails *all* movement of the body; it is that the possibilities of movement that the BwO offers is within a *particular parameter* of movement. The possible encounters only allow the body to become active in a particular subset of ways that allow certain elements of desire of the body to flow, and others are not able to flow and be assembled at all. Those that only experience sadness come to be ‘cramped.’ It is in the ways that these bodies encounter each other, through movement, as movement, that the cramped space emerges for Deleuze. A space is cramped when a body finds its movement—its characteristic and essential desire—being not resonant with the movement of the plane. That is, given the operative logic of the BwO, the possible encounters will not be joyful. In all possibilities, the body undergoes sadness, and is unable to increase its capacities, to be able to follow desire.

Even upon finding itself ‘in’ such a ‘space,’ then, a body still continues to move with its own (ever-changing) desire, “a whole other story ... vibrating within it” (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, 17), in dissonance with the operative logic. That is, even though the essence of a body changes in response to the encounters that it has, in order to find joyful encounters, the body’s characteristic essence is not able change in a way that would allow for joy, for its desire to flow, without significant changes in how it is subjectified. That

¹⁵ My reading of cramped space is heavily indebted to Thoburn’s reading of this Deleuzean concept in his *Deleuze, Marx, and Politics* (2003).

said, the body continues moving with the BwO to enough of a degree to sustain itself as immanent to the plane.

As mentioned previously, a body in its multiplicity "may both love and hate the same object, not only by virtue of these relations, but also by virtue of the complexity of the relations of which we are ourselves intrinsically composed" (Deleuze 1990a, 243). This is that 'whole other story vibrating' within the body. This way of moving, insofar as it is essential to that body is a characteristic essence. Were that 'story,' that way of moving to change – to adapt to the BwO, or simply to wear out and disappear – the body itself would undergo enough qualitative change to "warrant a new name" (Massumi 2002, 9). It is in the ways that those forces of desire only experience sadness in encounters that the body is cramped.

This crampedness happens and is 'experienced,' then, at the level of the subject – it is the tension between the potentials of the body and the limitations of what is possible for the subject. Deleuze describes bodies in cramped spaces as "victims of invisible and insensible forces that scrambled every spectacle, and that even lie beyond pain and feeling" (2003, 60). Ruddick describes this as a "discord" of the senses, "conatus under constraint" (2010, 37), creating the conditions for "an overwhelming visceral refusal, [...] the refusal of unendurable forces that bear down upon it, that construct it in unbearable ways" (37). It does not necessarily register at the level of emotion as sadness, or frustration, or failure, though it does at the level of the viscera, this dissonance between elements of a body's desire and what is possible on the PoCoD given its operative logic. This constraint is an interesting one in the sense that it both constitutes the body in certain ways – in terms of the ways that the body is able to have some joyful encounters and be

assembled into larger bodies, and is thus emergent from and materialized by the PoCoD – as well as, simultaneously, constrained by it.

As ontologically sad as crampedness is, it can be joyfully informative if it is able to be understood at all; to understand the cause of sadness – the operative logic – is to be able to become active in destroying it, and experimenting with new ways of encountering, remember. That there is such vital dissonance between elements of the body and the BwO means that the body can begin to know the movements of the BwO very well – how the operative logic organizes it – with relation to its own desire. We can now understand how cramped spaces are profoundly ambivalent. The operative logic is not only vitally sad for the body involved but also constitutes the body to degrees that it can move; this puts the body in a bind in terms of getting out of the cramped space: what is possible on the BwO will only continue to cramp the space it finds itself in/assembled by. But in this space, the ways the body is saddened can come to be a vast knowledge of the ways that BwO moves, if it is able to find joy to transform the encounters into joyful ones.

It is important to insist here that this ‘constraint’ is not a shackling of the body imposed from the outside. On the contrary, the BwO works immanently to bodies, constraining their capacities to affect and be affected by eliciting their participation in the cramped space of possibilities. In the case of hope, this participation takes the shape of affective opportunities that keep bodies stuck in passive, hopeful striving that can feel like the only way ‘forward.’ The challenge here is thus not to recognize the contours of an external constraint, but to feel out the contours of a cramped space that is immanent to bodies and their capacities. These possibilities engender their own spatio-temporalities. This is why ‘space’ is an apt term here: it allows access to an important element of the ontologies that

cramped spaces engender: the binary of 'possible' and 'impossible' is based in a finite ontology of lack. It is not a mere illusion, but rather a product of the ontogenetic operative logic of the BwO itself, maintained through passivity. This is an ontological reality at the level of possibility, but does not attend to the forces of potential in the virtual; those forces of desire of the cramped body that cannot be actualized.

There is something important in the conceptualization of space as cramped and finite. In order to feel cramped, in order to come to palpate a cramped space, a body must be somewhat emergent from and participating in—subjectified by—the operative logic at play and the possibilities it sets out. Sensing crampedness comes from the body knowing that there are other ways of moving, but not being able to figure out how to get there. It comes from feeling out the ways that one's own desires and ways of moving are foreclosing something.

A knowledge of cramped spaces and how they work, then, is at the level of notion-ideas: knowledge of the body, not of the rational mind – it happens above and below sensation. This is, I argue, what Deleuze and Guattari are referring to when they say, "it is through meticulous relations with the strata that one succeeds in freeing lines of flight" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 161), a line of flight being the release of the possible into the potential for experimentation.

In this context, potential has been so curtailed by the striated BwO that one no longer has to put effort to "lodge oneself on a stratum" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 161), as Deleuze and Guattari instruct is key to be able to experiment, to escape: you are already there, bound to it, formed by it. This breaking, this recourse to thought in the context of

cramped space is not something voluntarily 'experimented with' so much as a last-resort experimentation, given the circumstances.

In summary, a body is cramped and rendered passive when what is possible on the BwO both animates a body as a subject while also leading to a sadness such that, were it to continue to follow only that operative logic, the vital essence of the body would be destroyed. Deleuze and Guattari suggest that it is through becoming active that a body escapes from this, destroys that which makes it sad – the operative logic itself. In this, it becomes possible to "trac[e] a path between impossibilities" (Deleuze 1990, 133, as cited in Thoburn 2003, 19).

Given that, it is not what is possible that is of interest to us, but rather, what is impossible yet still present: the potential and the virtual comes to be an important element of resolving this 'problem' that the body finds itself in. One way of doing this, of shifting from the possible into the potential and virtual, is to 'visibilize' the constraining forces – what Deleuze and Guattari call "tip[ping] the assemblage, making it pass over to the side of the plane of consistency." (1987, 161). This allows for the BwO to be revealed "for what it is: connection of desires, conjunction of flows, continuum of intensities" (161), such that they can be engaged with. Ruddick outlines one way that Deleuze theorizes this revealing of potential is possible: through the 'scream.' This is what we will be working through in the next section.

Scream

The scream can be understood as a body's identification and visibilization of the forces organized via the operative logic that allows for particular possible encounters, such that

something else can be done with those forces. Deleuze (2003) suggests that it is through this 'visibilization' that the forces of the cramped space can be grappled with:

when... the visible body confronts the powers of the invisible, it gives them no other visibility than its own. It is within this visibility that the body actively struggles, affirming the possibility of triumphing, which was beyond its reach as long as these powers remained invisible, hidden in a spectacle that sapped our strength and diverted us. It is as if combat had now become possible. (62)

The scream visibilizes these forces that had helped create, via encounters, the cramped space, such that they move from being inadequate possibilities to forces that can be experimented with, in the potential of the virtual.

This scream is joyful in that it expresses affective sadness itself, bringing it into a realm such that its forces can be grappled with. Ruddick suggests that the scream is the body's "recognition of a limit condition: a horizon, and threshold of thought, of becoming active" (2010, 38). This recognition is joyful: it is the joy that could begin in some ways to undermine the sadness that is otherwise inherent in the cramped space. The scream enables attending to forces at the level of potential rather than the possible. This scream does not lead to a straightforward enlightenment, or an end to the cramped space; on the contrary, the scream makes struggle possible.

It "expresses a para-sense, something the body 'knows' or somehow knows it cannot know, but which forces it, in its own way, to 'pose a problem' which it cannot solve" (38). The problem is the question of how to get out of this situation, how the forces at play can offer a way out.

Deleuze suggests that the scream is the visibilization of these forces such that they can be grappled with: "when... the visible body confronts the powers of the invisible, it gives

them no other visibility than its own. It is within this visibility that the body actively struggles, affirming the possibility of triumphing, which was beyond its reach as long as these powers remained invisible, hidden in a spectacle that sapped our strength and diverted us. It is as if combat had now become possible." (2003, 62). That is, when forces are invisible, abstract, they cannot be struggled with. Cramped spaces are made tangible not by getting distance from them or perceiving them objectively, but by becoming capable—through the scream—of grappling with the ways they always already move us and animate our bodies. It is in this way that our desires wrestle with the joys and sadness that compose us materially. Far from being a sadness that the body seeks to avoid, Ruddick suggests that this moment is key for understanding how Deleuze grapples with difference, and how both creativity and thought emerge in becoming active. "It is not the harmony of the senses that marks the possibility for thought," she writes, "but their discord" (2010, 37).

Before the scream, in cramped space, the body found itself passive in encounters, and did not perceive its involvement in them. Bodies, it must be noted, are always engaged in this way in the world, always being organized passively by the operative logic of PoCoD. The scream, I argue, is not only just the recognition of this limit, but also, in some way, a recognition of how bound up, how constituted it is by the forces that are destroying it, how it is passively participating in its own attenuation, thanks to the operative logic which necessarily is always already engaging it without its knowledge. This scream is a scream of joy, then – which is pain. It is an unravelling that might be painful or terrifying from the perspective of the subject, but joyful from the perspective of the body. This is because the scream unravels subjectifying desires—the hopes and fears particular to the

cramped space—that simultaneously lend constitutive coherence to the subject and close bodies off from certain potentials.

The scream is the body's visceral refusal, according to Ruddick, to "be hailed as such" (2010, 39); while a clear reference to interpellation, it is far more constitutive than that. This point marks the difference between context and situation: whereas a context involves a subject existing in a social milieu that serves as a background (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 17; as cited in Ruddick 2010, 39) the Deleuzian scream evokes a body that is composed by and through its encounters as the social field itself, such that "everything becomes political and the individual is connected immediately to politics" (Ruddick 2010, 40). Importantly, this resistance to interpellation comes from the body itself, from its vital desire. The scream helps the body express the texture of those constraints that both compose and bind.

In Deleuze's words, what is expressed in the scream is "the relationship not of form and matter, but of materials and forces – making these forces visible through their effects on the flesh." (2003, x). Those forces that had been binding, had created the body as a "victi[m] of the invisible and insensible forces that ... lie beyond pain and feeling" (61); the forces that had been rendering the body passive are finally expressed materially via what their effects on the flesh are. This is not a pre-meditated, however; by definition it emerges from the situation at hand.

The scream, "poses the problem at hand at the level of sensation rather than resolving it — triggering an unhinging of faculties, a shock wave that reverberates through the system from sensibility to imagination to memory to thought." (Ruddick 2010, 38) This problem posed by the scream is the problem of desire needing to create assemblages in a

space that won't allow it, the cramped space, but that there are potentials that are inaccessible due to the ways they are captured into the possible.

The body poses these problems by visibilizing these forces, releasing them into the potential, not capturing them into a new and different narrative, back into the possible. Deleuze emphasizes that to do so would be to "botch" the scream (2003, 38), prevent the problem from being posed. It would no longer have "direct action on the nervous system" (39), and would instead enter the realm of representation and feeling. Rather, the scream, in its expression, implicates the body in thought. The body, then, composes the terrain of struggle itself, combat becoming possible (61).

Deleuze calls the scream the "source of extraordinary vitality" (61) – what I read as joy in the midst of this otherwise profound sadness. The capacity to engage with the realm of potential previously captured by the possible is, itself, an increase in capacities; it is attuning to the essential nature of the body itself, expressing its unique desire. It is becoming active in the face of passivity. It re-engages the body as the source of movement, disengaging from its investments in the possible.

The scream, then, is an act of creation, in itself. According to Deleuze, "creation takes place in bottlenecks.... A creator who isn't grabbed around the throat by a set of impossibilities is no creator" (1995, 133); indeed, the question emerges of whether creation can take place in any other way. This question is one that poses thought-in-becoming (which emerges with the scream) against normatively understood thought, which will be addressed briefly in the next section.

We must remember that this process is a dangerous and thus ambivalent one. It is one that disintegrates the subject, and can destabilize and dissolve assemblages. It is painful

for the subject as the passive capacities of the passively synthesized body are thrown into question; for those vital elements of the body that were being so cramped, however, it is joy in the face of ubiquitous sadness. Ultimately, though, it increases capacities for experimentation in potential resonance with the vital essences of the body, in a way entails a capacity to participate more actively in the operative logics at play on the BwO. The question is not whether screaming or enduring the cramped space is good or bad – the body is what it does in the flows of its desire, and it is not, regardless, a conscious choice. Rather, the question becomes one of how and in what way one screams, with what agility and capacity is a body able to navigate the resulting expression of potential, that becomes key to what happens here and key to the emerging politics.

The question of navigating the emergent forces of potential is a question of what Massumi (1992) calls "thought-in-becoming," and what I, following Ruddick (2010), will simply call 'thought.' It is through the scream that the body is able to think. Thinking in this sense is the navigation of that which the scream has expressed, the potential released from the capture of the possible, newly available for experimentation. I will develop this concept further in the next section.

Thought

Ruddick argues that the scream implicates the body in struggle, in order to think; two elements of this are important: that a body is needed in order to think, but also that the body is the very site of politics and struggle. She suggests that, prior to the scream, thought is both simultaneously present as well as out of reach (2010). What she means by this is that the forces were there, but the body was not yet able to struggle with them because the forces were inaccessible thanks to the operative logic.

"Thought," in Ruddick's reading of Deleuze, "emerges through the violence of the encounter – not a recognition of joy, but when one is forced to think" (2010, 36). One is "forced to think" in the case of passivity, upon the curtailment of potential, as a body expresses its desire. In encounters with other bodies, a sad encounter might provoke those bodies not simply to pursue joy elsewhere, but to think in order to transform the relation of forces such that encounters can be joyful.

The struggle with the forces visibilized by the scream is thought, it is the grappling with the problem posed by the scream, with the forces potentialized by it. It is the attunement to and discernment of potential. It is the perception of the ways that bodies are not only moved by those forces but created by them, in a way that enables new notion-ideas and experimentation until joy finds a way and desire is able to continue to flow.

As we saw with cramped space and the scream, the body is implicated in this struggle; thought takes place at the level of bodies, at the level of affect. We must remember, of course, that the object of thought is the very PoCoD from which bodies emerge, however. Thinking, then, is a somewhat paradoxical and challenging act: the subject must dissolve to be able to be undone and redone differently. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) warn of the dangers of this, and express the need for caution: "Caution is the art common to all three [the organism, signifiante, and subjection]; if in dismantling the organism there are times one courts death, in slipping away from signifiante and subjection one courts falsehood, illusion and hallucination and psychic death" (160).

How thought happens, how decisions happen, then, is at the level of affect, before and beyond consciousness of possibilities, as the body is navigating those very things that

compose it in thinking. I will detail a bit more about how this happens in this section, such that we can understand more about how politics emerges in this ontology.

While Ruddick points out the importance of the cramped space and the scream in order to come to thought, she does not say much about thought itself. I now (re)turn to Massumi's reading of Deleuze and Guattari to understand more about what we have been calling thought, and what Massumi calls thought-in-becoming. Massumi describes thought-in-becoming as "a less willful act than an undoing, the nonaction of suspending established stimulus-response circuits to create a zone where chance and change may intervene... suspending analysis just long enough to carry it over the threshold of habit." (1992, 99). In the terms I have developed above, thought allows for the forces of desire in the potential to be able to experiment without being organized by the operative logic sedimented into habit. It is a two-fold process: the suspension of analysis such that the forces can be freed from the gravity of habit, but also, implicitly, the experimentation of those forces on their own. This in itself can come together to be understood as the participation in and navigation of the forces of desire, from within them, a discernment of how a body is moved and created – at the level of the plane of consistency of desire – by that which not only makes it up but also simultaneously (and not disjunctively) makes up the plane from which it emerges. Thought, more fully, then, is using this attunement to be able to experiment at the level of affect, "from the perspective of the potential curtailed," (Massumi 1992, 99) to increase a body's capacities to affect and be affected, and from this to form notion-ideas.

Massumi, in his close reading of Deleuze and Deleuze & Guattari's works, *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1992), describes what we are calling thought as

"becoming," or "thought-in-becoming" (1992, 99, 98). "Becoming is bodily thought, beyond the realm of possibility, in the world of the virtual. At once superabstract and infraconcrete, it grasps the environment of molarity common to different bodies from the perspective of the potential curtailed" (1992, 99).

When Massumi says 'superabstract,' he is speaking of the virtual in the sense that the movements of becoming occur at the level of the potential in the virtual, more abstract than the realm of possibility which has already organized the virtual into comprehensible choices that can be consciously understood or felt in a discrete way. The possible exists at the level of the abstract, but potential in the virtual exists at a level of abstraction that bodies do not feel so much as are constituted by. This is 'infraconcrete' in the sense that it is material or embodied in a way that is at the level of affect: the very edge of what is detectable or sensible, at the level of perception. The importance of this is how it challenges what the subject and object of thought is, and undoing a conception of thinking that relies on an object or subject of thought at all.

At the same time, however, this centres the body as the site of struggle (Ruddick 2010). The virtual and potential are inaccessible to the subject; the body, however, is the medium through which the PoCoD can be participated in, before analogical conceptualization happens. To be able to analogically conceptualize something is to be able to attend to it at the abstract level of the possible. The importance of the body in all this is the idea that before the subject can conceptualize what is impacting it, there has already been an impact. What happens in cramped space-scream-thought is pre-conceptual, superabstract and infraconcrete.

At the level of bodies, Massumi describes thought as "the unhinging of habit" (1992, 99). This unhinging creates a "'zone of indeterminacy' ... between stimulus and response. Thought consists of widening that gap, filling it fuller and fuller with potential responses, to the point that, confronted with a particular stimulus, the body's reaction cannot be predicted" (99).

In this, a new body is created, as experiments are fuelled by its desire and, in turn, its desire changes as it finds itself both open to and engaging in new potentials. He writes, "The goal is ... to create a new body at ground level. [...] It is that plane of coexistence, or consistency, that is the ultimate object of the process. To become a new body, an old body needs a new milieu through which to move" (98). 'Milieu' here is a deceptive word if read carelessly; the body itself cannot be new in an old milieu, but that is because it is immanent to the milieu itself; new bodies are necessarily immanent to a new plane: as the "ultimate object" of thought (98), the operative logic of the PoCoD is transformed and modulated through thought, and a new operative logic emerges.

This type of transformation Massumi calls a "leap in place characteristic of incorporeal transformation," a new body created "at ground level," in the sense that a new plane emerges animated by a different operative logic, and bodies are thus transformed at the very level of the forces that materialize and animate them (98). That which makes up the new PoCoD had already been present in the old one, but it takes this "widening" of a "zone of indeterminacy" (98) in order to make it a potential capable of being experimented with.

Interestingly, the language Massumi uses here is telling; 'widening' this 'zone of indeterminacy' reflects the spatio-temporality that (passive) hope works in, the possible

of the current operative logic. Integral to this is linear cause and effect, and habitual stimulus-response that the scream breaks down. What emerges in the vast unknown pried open between cause and effect are the abundant and overflowing forces of potential that cannot be conceptualized analogically but only attended to and experimented with/by at the level of the body, allowing for a different mode of spatio-temporality to emerge.

Massumi (1992) is clear about the importance of thought being emergent. He states that,

becoming-other is directional ... but not directed (no one body or will can pilot it). It leaves a specific orbit but has no predesignated endpoint. For that reason, it cannot be exhaustively defined. If it could, it would already be what it is becoming, in which case it wouldn't be becoming at all, being instead the same. Again. A snapshot of the past. Utopian thinking that would assign a shape to the supermolecularity-to-come is a function of molarity, it belongs more to the constrictions of the past than to any expansive future. It is an apparatus for the capture of synthetic thinking and the desire for a new world that animates it.[...] Utopia is the gentle death of revolution. (103)

That is, there is no prescribed end-goal of the emergent thought and what thought allows for. Were that the case, it would already be captured and not attending to the emergent forces of potential at all: it would no longer be thought in the sense we have been using it.

It is important to note, then, any connotations of control or turning thought into a means towards an ends undermines the immanence of thought itself, and is reflected in the resulting patterning of hope and fear. To this end, Deleuze describes thought itself as "creativity." (Deleuze 1990b, 133)

What emerges here, then, is the realization that, along with the capacity to feel cramped and to scream, the capacity for embodied thought is a political capacity. This reading suggests that the most important sites of political struggle are not between opposing possibilities, but over the operative logics that engender these possibilities in the first place. This would be a paradoxical form of political agency – paradoxical in the sense that to have ‘agency,’ you have to give up on being an agent, and give up on the goal. Becoming active in participating in the plane of consistency of desire, as emphasized above, is to participate in a process of transformation without an end-goal. Politics here would be the participation in a process that cannot be piloted by any one body or will. Politics is thus a zone of indeterminacy between bodies over which there is no control, and thus no possibility of a future-oriented strategy, because this would arrest thought-in-becoming. Questions around how to enable these capacities: to feel cramped, to scream, to think, become key in terms of actually being able to attend to forces in the virtual, for becoming-other.

Summary: Cramped Space, Scream, Thought

To summarize, cramped spaces are those in which one finds oneself surrounded by horrors that one cannot change, while also being implicated and ultimately supported and created by them somehow, in some ways. Over and over the body finds itself exploring the different possible avenues for joy, yet these possibilities are the very means by which sadness—and the separation of bodies from their potential—is maintained. It is in this context that the scream emerges. The scream becomes an expression of the frustration at the limitation of the possible, and is an attunement to and expression of the movements in the virtual that make up the situation at hand: it is the disjunction between the potential

and the possible. The scream is the tearing away at the BwO by the PoCoD (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 159) via the forces of desire – the dissolution of the subject by the body, shifting from the level of what is possible to the less organized but equally as constitutive what is held in potential in that situation.

This dissolution of sense is expressed as the scream, the incapacity to deal with the lack of possibilities, and the giving up of hope that those possibilities will contain movement other than that already expressed. The dissolution of possibilities puts the body in touch with its potential. These potentials cannot be conceived analogically by the body (yet)—as thought-in-becoming, they have not yet become distinct possibilities. Thought, then, is the capacity to experiment at the level of affect, at the level of the potential in the virtual, to assess the forces that make up the PoCoD, and from there to create new and different encounters.

It is important to note that Massumi doesn't assert that thought-in-becoming, or becoming-other is something that must emerge from cramped space. I am simply interested about when it does and how it can, hence bringing his work together with the work of Ruddick, which focuses on cramped space as one way thought emerges.

Why don't all bodies scream, think? Because, as I have been arguing, capacities to feel cramped, scream and think are, in tension with capacities associated with conventional agency. In many ways bodies cannot confront the ways they are held passive without tearing themselves apart – decreasing capacities – and insofar as the body is destroyed, it is not able to be follow its desire. It is clear here that bodies emerge as key sites of politics, both in terms of encounters that take place at the level of affect, which they partake in as bodies with essential desires seeking to flow, and then also in terms of how

that very body is composed and decomposed in the creation of a new operative logic that materializes/realizes different capacities. In this section that follows, I will unpack the role of hope and hopelessness in this process.

Hopelessness and becoming active

How this all relates to hope and hopelessness becomes quite clear at this point. In this section I will overview how they are related to the specific concepts that we have developed thus far. From there I will address the implications of this, and how it relates to politics, will be addressed in the next chapter. It is important, for now, to remember that the subject experiences the cramped space (because of the body's potentials which overflow the subject) and is dissolved through the scream, which allows the body to think; it is the unravelling of the subject that is occurring here.

Hopelessness and Cramped Space

Hope creates a cramped space, but also helps that space feel bearable. In cramped space, passive hope does not 'open more space up' – to use the language reflective of that context's spatio-temporalization – so much as it provides a certain amount of joy that can make the crampedness feel temporary or bearable. Its future-oriented promises justify present sacrifices, keeping the body experimenting in that cramped space, despite the continued sadness of the encounters in the present. That is, the body's capacities continue to decrease, though the promise of desired possibilities keep the body from dissolving. When there is an opportunity that gives the body hope that it will usher in that promised 'different future,' the body in such circumstances finds itself objectifying that opportunity whilst subjectifying itself, attempting to reproduce its emergence such that hope can be sustained. Hope focuses our belief onto a different world, focusses our viscera on

controlling the forces in this one for the ends of creating that other one. This is how hope is passive: it acts to create what Deleuze and Guattari call a “cancerous BwO” (1987, 163).

As I have been arguing throughout this thesis, something else can take place in this cramped space. The other main option attended to in this thesis is attending to the sadness of the situation: hopelessness. In the context of Spinoza’s geometric method, it is the removal of doubt: to become confident in that which was previously hoped for, or to accept that what was feared will happen. Given Spinoza’s conception of desire, however, it would be impossible for a vital essence of a body to deliberately enter into a sad encounter. The task, then, becomes attending to the larger context of the encounter itself. It is not the other body in the encounter but how the plane is organized that produces the sad encounter. Such an insight, of course, would be becoming active, and would be joyful. We find ourselves in what otherwise appears as an aporia that Deleuze and Guattari help us attend to.

Cramped spaces are thus simultaneously both spaces of hope and of hopelessness. Given the operative logic, it is hope that allows for cramped spaces to be sustained, as well as the absence of hope, the striving *for* it. In this situation, I argue that it is hopelessness that allows, paradoxically, for a different world to emerge as always already within this one. To be able to feel hopeless is an immanent capacity which allows for participation in the reorganization of the relation of forces, engendering a different space-time. In this I have been arguing that the capacity to attend to the loss of hope is a capacity in itself. Specifically, attending to the ways one finds oneself hopeless can enable a more active engagement with the operative logics that create and condition the

body's hopes, fears, and movements. Hopelessness in these circumstances, while a feeling that is negative, difficult, and dangerous, is also joyful.

Hopelessness is to be able to feel a cramped space as cramped, to suspend the search for a promise of a future that might arise through the endurance of a sad present. In this, it is the capacity to attend to the forces present as sad. And in so doing, I argue, the body suspends its perpetuation of the operative logic requiring the operative logic of hope.

Before we attend to the scream in this circumstance, I first want to note that it is the capacity to feel the intensity of cramped spaces as cramped, to sense and know that hope is the thing that being striven for, the thing that keeps a body together, that is an important capacity for a body to have in order to not dissolve in hopelessness. As mentioned previously, Deleuze and Guattari attend to the precarity of this process; to give up hope is a dangerous, painful, violent thing.

Now, how does the scream emerge here as a key element of being able to see hopelessness as joyful?

Hopelessness and the Scream

As the body's joyful (and painful) realization of crampedness, I argue that the scream entails a loss of hope. There are no premeditated or strategic plans for the potential released by the scream – again, that would be to 'botch' the scream (Deleuze 2003, 38). This is not catharsis so much as the release of stagnancy through an expression of movement that is in itself potential. The scream is a hopeless thing, always only emerging in the present, allowing for that "leap in place characteristic of incorporeal transformation" (Massumi 1992, 98). The operative logic that depends on hope is no

longer participated in here, and thus the subject dissolves. The hopeless scream is a joyful, painful, violent thing if it is done right.

Again, this capacity to scream is reliant on the capacity to feel cramped, to give up hope, and to be able to feel hopeless without dissolving, becoming suicidal. In this, the capacity to navigate precarity is important, to know when and how much to dissolve. This all happens at the level of affect, being able to attend to the forces in the virtual in order to navigate them, know how much to unravel and how much stability is needed.

Hopelessness and Thought

Hopelessness, to be joyful, needs to also evoke the capacity to think, the capacity to attend to the potentials at hand, in ways that do not reproduce the previous operative logic's reliance on hope and fear, the tendencies with most pull. Warding off hope here, refusing to seek a transcendent saviour, is a dynamic at the heart of much social theory, and I have a quite simple but emergent response to it here: the capacity to attend to hopelessness as an embodied intensity is a key part of thought. The emergent joy of activity becomes something that can preclude hope.

The capacity to think without hope, then, is imperative in this process. Passive hope, remember, is the process of objectifying forces into opportunities that then go on to organize a body into the future. The capacity to stave off objectification is thus key in hopeless thought. Insofar as what would otherwise be considered 'hopeless' emergent operative logics come to be invested in a future outcome, they begin to play the role of hope, and thus are no longer hopeless.

Hopeless thought, then, means attending to the resonance of means and ends rather than having a prospected ends justify a means. It is to continually ward off hope, and the

separation of means and ends that comes with it. Hopelessness enables activity, whereas hope precludes it. I argue that this can be felt at the level of bodies, with the appropriate capacities. Part of the capacity to continue to be hopeless, then, is the capacity to (hopelessly) attend to the ways bodies fall back into hope.

Perhaps ironically the feeling that I argue emerges through thought here, as forces are experimented with, to attend to means and ends in resonance, is something that is also experienced as and described by Massumi as hope itself (Zournazi and Massumi 2003, 212). This I would like to call active hope, and is quite distinctive from passive hope, what I have been calling simply ‘hope’ up until now. Active hope is the becoming-active that hopelessness allows for, the emergence of an activity that enables the actualization of potentials outside of those given by any operative logic at play, which enables the other worlds always already present to be actualized not in the future, but in the present of a spatio-temporality that moves in a different way such that present and future do not lead to each other linearly, but rather are copresent, resonant. That is, for active hope to emerge, passive hope must be constantly warded off – through thought-in-becoming – and hence the intensity of hopelessness must constantly be grappled with in this warding off.

Overall, hopelessness is a process that isn’t about an object; it is not about finding an object. It may be about losing an object, but that would be to only describe it negatively. There is always movement at the level of the virtual associated with it.

Summary

I have argued that the capacity to feel hopeless is an important capacity to be able to allow for the dissolution of possibilities without completely disintegrating, and to then be

able to experiment with forces at the level of potential. In the next chapter I revisit in more depth what this looks like at the level of the body and the subject, affect and emotion, and how it relates to politics. I then go on to do a close reading of a text, 'Hello,' to work through practical nuances of this argument.

Chapter Three: Hopelessness in change

Having a more clear understanding of how hope holds bodies passive and the delicate and complex process of navigating hopelessness that I argue enables becoming active, in this final chapter I explore what this means at the levels of bodies and subjects, and in turn what that means about the body in social change. I then go on to closely read an essay coming out of the contemporary American anarchist milieu that deals with very similar themes to this thesis, to be able attend to questions of what it looks like to engage with this type of analysis as a part of radical political work. While a clear risk of working with hopelessness in this way is the tendency to objectify hopelessness itself, this text shows a compelling approach to ward off such a disposition; rather, the tendency that I argue the text does participate in is one up until now I have addressed less in this thesis: the potential of a *fear of hope* to emerge as an organizing force. I attend to this and go on to clarify my argument as to what a hopeless disposition with relation to politics would, in contrast, look like.

The body, the subject, feelings and affect

Much of what I've been outlining in this thesis can be understood to happen at the level of what could be understood as the individual, but it is in reference to the forces of the possible and potential on the BwO and the PoCoD – at the level of what Massumi calls bodily dynamisms (1992, 98), or what we have been calling the body. The feeling of passive hope that a body has – associated with the passive increase in capacities to affect and be affected via a promise of a desirable future state in the context of sadness otherwise – is what the operative logic needs to continue to capture the vital essences of the composing bodies on the BwO, such that the BwO won't become disorganized by the

tearing away done by any dissonant vital essences otherwise. That is, the composing bodies' participation in the operative logic that organizes the BwO is enabled by the feeling of hope; even if the operative logic itself does not enable activity for that composing body, the promise of a desired future gives a joy – an increase in present-tense capacities that compensates for the otherwise decrease of participating in the operative logic – that maintains the body as part of the larger composed body, moving with the operative logic at hand. As outlined earlier in this thesis, this is a necessary component of an operative logic based on hope and fear, an operative logic which I argue is emblematic of contemporary society and – moreover – of the role of social theory and social change work including within contemporary anarchist milieux.

In a passive encounter that is sad in immediate ways, yet joyful in that it promises a desired future outcome, it is the operative logic that allows for that joy to make sense to the body as hope. This feeling of hope subjectifies the body by capturing it. Certainly it is the operative logic itself that ultimately captures the capacities of the body, but it is the *feeling* of hope that, I argue, works to subjectify the body. This capture is the selecting of a particular set of capacities of the body with the concomitant promise of an increase in capacities. In this, any potentials outside of the operative logic are precluded from possibilities, and possibilities themselves are captured into objective opportunities that will usher in the objectified hoped-for thing.

Passive hope is felt by the body as a joy in the context of sadness otherwise; it is a sense of a different way of relating to the possibilities present which otherwise feel sad. It is a respite from sadness, but not through becoming active. Rather, it is by definition via passivity. The body does not become better able to attend to experimentation for mutual

joy: the joy comes from a promise of a future desired state, requiring continued participation in the operative logic in order to get there. The operative logic becomes a sad means to a joyful ends – and the promise of the joyful end is what allows for the joy in the present that means that body will continue to participate in the otherwise sad operative logic. In this, the body is subjectified and the hoped-for thing objectified into an opportunity.

It is the body that feels, but the subject that is captured by the operative logic, and that passively allows for the capture of the intensity of the potential into a sacrificed present for a better future. The body, of course, extends beyond the subject: while the body may be subjectified, affect exceeds and escapes emotion. In this, potential forces of desire remain outside of the capture of the subject, and tear away at it.

The situation the body finds itself in is an interesting one: to remain passively joyful and enabled even somewhat by the possibilities at hand, and to avoid the sadness that would be associated with rejecting the operative logic (accepting the hoped for thing will not come, or that the feared event will, with no recourse for the flow of desire otherwise), the body must continue to be subjectified by the operative logic; however, the vital desires of the body continue to press for something else. This is the body held passive by hope.

When attended to at the level of the subject it *feels like* hope, but when tipped to the side of the body and its essential desire it creates a feeling of crampedness – hopelessness. Ontologically, it is both joyful and sad. To be able to feel hopeless, however, doesn't *have to be* sad: I argue that the capacity to feel hopeless is a joyful one that enables the body to attend to the impossible, the forces otherwise in the potentials.

To tip the plane to the side of the PoCoD is joyful; to undo a sadly subjectifying operative logic, and then to attend to the potential. This tipping is, I argue, to feel hopeless. The question becomes how to do this to allow for the subject to dissolve, but not the body.

This is where the importance of Ruddick's work on the cramped space, scream, and thought comes in. It is through this process that the subject is able to dissolve enough to allow for the body to escape the capture of emotion and attend to the joyful movement of affect.

My argument in the previous chapters is that the operative logic of hope (and fear) creates a context in which political theory will not be able to attend to the heart of where politics and change lies if it does not attend to the body and the ways that hope and fear create and organize bodies to continue to passively participate in that operative logic. That is, while change is always already happening, hope works to sustain what is understood by 'change' along the lines of what is allowed by the operative logic, which pre-empts bodies from being able to actively participate in the operative logic itself. I am arguing that key to being able to participate in change is the capacity to feel hopeless – cramped, and from there also to scream, and to think.

What emerges as key here for politics, then, is this transformation of the subject back to the body: the capacity to feel hopeless such that it allows for potentials in the virtual to emerge for experimentation, without the body itself also crumbling or being recaptured into the subject by hope. Thus, as mentioned earlier, important capacities that emerge are not only the capacity to feel cramped, but also to scream, and to think.

Beyond this, however, to be able to attend to this shift from the subject to the body is to not only be able to feel cramped, but to be able to scream and then think, capacities unto themselves. How are these capacities cultivated then, within hopelessness? As outlined in Chapter Two, I argue that the capacity to feel cramped, to scream, and to think are all capacities in themselves that must be cultivated, and which the operative logic of hope and fear work to attenuate the cultivation of. The capacity to feel cramped is the capacity to be present with feelings of hopelessness, themselves. The embodied feeling that there is no way out, no choice that will be joyful, save ones that dig you deeper into the thing that causes sadness is a feeling of crampedness.

Beyond the capacity to feel cramped without escaping it somehow, the capacity to instead scream given the context of the cramped space is also a capacity whose cultivation becomes central to warding off the operative logic of hope and fear. To be able to scream rather than search for something that will give hope is a key element of this. The scream is the texture of the forces of sadness, and their expression – the embodiment of them – is joyful. It is the dissolution of the subjectivation done through the operative logic of hope and fear, the coherence given to the body when participating – however passively – in the operative logic, on the organized plane.

This is one of the seemingly paradoxical moments in this lineage: the feeling of sorrow, loss, or despair here is palpable and real: the dissolution of the subjectivity is a painful thing – yet it is also joyful in its expression, and in doing so opens up potentials that were foreclosed by that very subjectivation process itself, and thus capacities to affect and be affected. If the body has the capacity to attend to the dissolution of the subject without itself as a body either dissolving or resubjectifying by grasping for hope,

it is “reveal[ed] for what it is: connection of desires, conjunction of flows, continuum of intensities” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 161). What it does. The body has been tipped towards the side of PoCoD.

In this it is avoiding recuperation by the operative logic, revealing hopelessness not as simple negativity but rather an opening to an abundance of forces previously unable to be encountered given the operative logic at play, organizing the BwO. This feeling of lack of hope comes through the texture of despair, certainly, but in that texture – and between and beyond that texture – when it can be held opened and sustained, when it doesn’t tip to the side of suicide and dissolution, it is joyful. It is joyful because it sustains itself at the level of the impossible, in the virtual.

In this, the capacity to scream can be seen as a buffer against suicide, against madness. The work that the operative logic does on the body is at the level of constitution, not simply expression; thus for a body to refuse to participate in an operative logic is dangerous. Here we can begin to understand how self-harm and death by suicide can be a body’s essence being destroyed by an operative logic that also (increasingly) animates parts of that body. Put simply, the scream is part of a body’s resistance to an operative logic that seeks its own destruction, as the operative logic increasingly animates the body and modulates its essence. To scream is the body reasserting its essence, and is a joyful buffer against this dissolution otherwise. To give this subject the care that it deserves is beyond the scope of this more bluntly theoretically focussed thesis, however.

After the dissolution of the possible into the potential of the scream, thought is the experimentation that allows for new encounters. The capacity to think is integral to change; the operative logic based in hope and fear must continue to be warded off in this.

Thought, however, is not simply the warding off of these forms of capture, but is also the warding off of the complete dissolution of the body. Thought is the experimentation with the released forces, at the level of the body. The thinking body is a feeling body, a body that perceives and attends to affects. To feel the intensities of experimentation without capturing those feelings into analogical conceptualization is thought, and is itself a capacity, to ward off analogical conceptualization into the subject, the organism. Again, this thought is not at the level of consciousness, "[t]hought-in-becoming is less a willful act than an undoing: the nonaction of suspending established stimulus-response circuits to create a zone where chance and change may intervene" (Massumi 1992, 99). Thought is allowing the desires of the body to experiment, themselves, undoing the conscious will of the body from interfering in the choices the body makes. Thought is necessarily hopelessly joyful, then, and is embodied in a sense that it is the body that must be freed to be able to think. It can be invited to do so, I argue, in the context of hopelessness through the process of cramped space, scream, thought. In this, however, the capacity needed to be able to allow for thought to emerge is a kind of paradoxical capacity: it is the capacity of the body to ward off signification, subjectivation, organismization (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 163). Warding this off is more of a non-action than an action, it is a capacity of the body to ward off tendencies to capture by suspension. This capacity that allows for thought is another key capacity to be honed as a part of a hopeless politics. Overall, the locus of change is at the level of bodies, but again, in a composite way as outlined above – not at the level of the subject. At the level of ‘humans,’ this all works on the nervous system of the human at hand, certainly, but this does not align with or reify the ‘subject’.

Active hope, then, while sharing the same *feeling* in the body as passive hope would in the subject, is a feeling of the body not an emotion of the subject. The feeling of active hope is the feeling of navigating potentials in a way that is reflective of the vital essence of the composite bodies, but without objectifying joyful encounters into possibilities, as that would be to turn it into passive hope. Rather, to remain as active hope, thinking attends to ensuring a sense of openness of potential, warding off hope, and attending to the paradox of hopelessness as it comes up as feeling. As the feelings of despairing hopelessness is a sign of the loss of hope for an ideal world which the body knows cannot come about through this one, it becomes an important indicator of hope, and something to attend to in its minutest of forms, to pry it open to release the potentials foreclosed by the hope it references.

At time same time, I suggest that to dwell on the question of the difference in the *feeling* of active and passive hope in order to root out passivity is to ask the wrong question. I would suggest that behind an attempt to differentiate between passive versus active affects/emotions is the need to capture and adequately assess passivity or activity, which would, in turn, capture the questioner as a hopeful subject. Rather, I suggest a more interesting political question becomes how to attend to all investments, attachments, and feelings hopelessly, without hoping to exorcise or ward off passivity completely. That is, how can we attend to situations hopelessly in order to open up *what they can do*, potentially, rather than what is or isn't possible.

What emerges here, then, is a very different conception of politics than conventional understandings. The locus of change in this understanding is not between different agents so much as within and through bodies, themselves, and how they experiment to

participate in the creation and proliferation of new operative logics. In this, we see feelings and emotions as central to bodies being able to navigate the field of affects.

Politics, then, comes to be the capacity to do what is outlined in this section: the capacity to move from the subject to the body, to be able to feel cramped, to be able to scream, to be able to think.

Doing a close reading of the essay, “Hello: A greeting from nowhere” (2014), will help me further nuance this approach to politics in comparison to their very similar yet vastly different one. The anonymous authors of this piece based the conception of politics less at the level of bodies as mine does, and more in a disposition they call ‘corrosive skepticism.’ “Hello” is an anonymous essay that came out of the contemporary American anarchist milieu in 2014. Not tied to academic commitments, it is a Deleuzean-oriented text that asks questions that resonate closely with the questions in this thesis, but with contemporary anarchism as its object. Specifically, the question of how hope comes to animate politics, including anarchist politics, is at the heart of this text. In grappling with this question, it goes on to unpack the complexities of hopelessness with relation to anarchist political commitments, and overarching social change work with anarchist tendencies. In so doing, it attends specifically to the tendency of falling back into hope in a context of hope and fear. In doing a close reading of this text, I am able to parse out some of nuances of approaching hope and hopelessness in hopeless ways which I then go on to develop, drawing on the work developed in the rest of my thesis.

“Hello: A greeting from nowhere”

The anonymous essay “Hello” is an exemplary text of a similar intervention around hope, fear, and hopelessness coming from a contemporary American anarchist milieu. I

refrain from calling the authors people who engage in anarchist ‘politics,’ as the authors clearly would distance themselves from such a label, as will become clear. Rather – to be generous – the text seeks to not make an intervention in those spaces so much as invite a consideration of the ways that those participating in such spaces – including themselves at times – find themselves disillusioned with them, in noticing the ways that those spaces reproduce what they call politics. They define politics as the capture and integration – "digestion" (2014, 18) – of what could otherwise be a radical creation of something otherwise. The text, then, serves as an invitation, their ‘hello’ is a greeting from nowhere which is (a Deleuzian) outside of politics that attends to the hopelessness of politics itself.

Their text revolves around their concept of ‘Everything,’ which is simply the organized BwO, reality that appears and is moved through as subjects and objects. Despite the ‘all-encompassing’ nature of Everything, however, the author suggests that bodies are constantly recognizing an outside to this Everything, and reach out into it with the open-ended greeting, ‘hello’ (4). This ‘outside’ they reach out into is "not the inside’s outside. It is another side" (18); it is outside of organization and thus outside of comprehension by Everything, thus experienced as an outside.

This ‘hello’ is not the daily greeting made in passing (which would serve to reproduce Everything) but rather is an invitation via the event that allows for a release from the operative logic, the possible into the potential an encounter in a different way outside of the way that the BwO is organized. There are times, they argue, that the ‘hello’ offered in the outside is responded to and friendship forms, that can (and must, for it to remain ‘friendship’) remain outside Everything, a new operative logic breaking from what I

understand to be the organized BwO: this friendship is a hopeless one, it must not promise anything. The key challenge, then, is the warding off of Everything in this process. This is accomplished, they argue, by being "skeptical about everything, even friendship, [which] is to invite a kind of hopelessness" (6). They insist that the type of this hopeless friendship is something to not be turned away from. In this they distinguish between a friendship that participates in Everything and that which is outside of it, based in the 'hello.'

They go on to deal with the activist tendencies that create teleologies in which the activist is integral to the functioning and fulfillment of history. The despair associated with the realization of that fallacy is something they suggest is far more common than people admit not only to each other, but also to themselves (8). They suggest that given such a realization it "seems at first as though there are only two paths open to us" from that point (7): the first is despair and madness – what I have described as the precarious dissolution of the subject; the second is a return to the seduction of hope, a resubmission to histories of hope and fear.

This allows for a differentiation between two senses of hopelessness and thus approaches to it. The first is reflective of what allows for these above two paths to emerge: a subject whose hopelessness must be resolved. The second approach, which they advocate, "is the relentlessness of finding the limitations of what we are capable of [sic] and pushing past them" (8). That is, hopelessness helps a body attend to limitations established via hope and fear; they write: "this means brushing aside what is impossible, hopeless in the first sense, and grasping, even enjoying, hopelessness in the second sense. This is our power" (8). This is done via "our pleasures, our bodies, and, if we are lucky,

our friendships" (8). A more detailed understanding of how this is to be done is not shared, but merely described as a "marvelous purgative," that will "cleanse you" (8).

This second approach is then defined in contrast to politics: as "transparently antipolitical" (11). The example they use here is the proliferation of occupations of town squares. They find such a "political moment ... surprising because it has alluded to a question rather than assuming a set of answers" (9). These moments came to be digested by Everything, trapped through their visibilization into protest politics, negotiations, the logic of recruiting. This digestion is what they call politics.

Being digestive, politics consumes the 'hellos' that people offer into the Outside via incorporation back into legibility and recognition. Politics, they argue, acts in two different ways. At its most compelling, it is what stifles the potential in events, exemplified for them in the rendering-intelligible of the occupations of squares over the past ten or so years. Politics of this sort is the ultimate "malady of the soul, an addiction" (10) that has even the authors finding themselves, over and over, "discovering that [they], too, are the usual suspects for others" (10); that is, even in their attempts to ward off being digested into intelligibility, even in their friendships in particular, they find themselves clichéd and captured by, digested into Everything. Beyond this, the second mode of politics, representative politics, does not even have to digest events as they happen, as this kind of politics merely serves to pre-empt events from even taking place.

Hopelessness must thus be outside of this, by definition; it is "transparently antipolitical" (11). In my reading of what is implied here, hopelessness would be to be able to pry open events without narrative, without teleology, to be able to ward off its incorporation into the operative logic of the organized BwO, the most difficult task.

They describe this process as commitment. In order to ward off hope and attend to commitment, they argue we must "do away with everything we believe about good and evil," (11) including belief in redemption by pain, or any other kind of salvation. All beliefs and tendencies or what they call "pathetic desires to do good for others" (13) are ordered by moralism (creating and then) blocking all exits out, resulting in "our endless repeated confusion about the connection between means and ends" (14) which must be attended to: "our game is to ... destroy the separation between means and ends every time we know how" (14), which is done via commitment. Commitment is "a way of selecting those passions and relations that are excluded in Everything. A way of knowing who and what is ours beyond the prejudices of moralism and politics" (14); it defines their task as "chain[ing] unbinding moments, hopeless moments together" (14-15). They go on, stating that "what we are calling for is in fact a commitment to commitment" (15).

They describe commitment to commitment as, "the will to make the next link, hopelessly" (18), without Everything justifying that linkage. They then describe what they are committed to as "true joy, the hopeless possibility of achieving an ecstatic bond between thought and life. Or, in another register, true friendship" (17). This type of friendship would render "you and yours ... illegible in Everything" (18), unintelligible from the perspective of Everything. This experience of such true friendship is something that leaves an indelible mark on the participants, and acts a guide for warding off the somewhat inevitable digestion by Everything, enabling their hopeless linkages to proliferate. This is, though not stated as such, an embodied knowledge, what they call "the psychic distance that our first awareness of separation, of everything brought us [sic]. We are familiar with impossibility" (18). Their task, then, is to form these true

friendships, these relationships of true joy – resonating with the Spinozan sense of this word – in ways that ward off the political digestion by Everything.

They clearly differentiate friendship as commitment from being kind, however. "Being nice" serves to "pacify our disposition to friendship and love, rendering them impossible" (15). Commitment, on the other hand, requires "attention and care on the one hand, and corrosive skepticism on the other" (16), in order to reintensify the link between what they call life and thought, "between what we say we do and we do, what we say we are, and what we are. Commitment is that link; the commitment to commitment is its intensification" (16). This suggestion that both attention and care as well as corrosive skepticism are needed to sustain this type of hopelessness is important to my reading of what constitutes their antipolitics, discussed below.

They clarify one final set of dispositions necessary for an antipolitics of hopelessness: not only a disposition of fearlessness and hopelessness, but also therein the acceptance of death (19). They are committed to the annihilation and end of the World. This depends on accepting that Everything is what makes up this World, and thus it is only in its annihilation that Everything would also be destroyed, allowing for an antipolitics of hopelessness to thrive: "True friendship is the end of the World, the beginning of our play together" (20).

In summary, this text describes a hopeless antipolitics that seeks to annihilate Everything: the World, and the politics therein that not only sustain it but act to pre-empt another world from emerging from it. In its place, a committed hopelessness will build links based in true joys and friendships illegible to yet nevertheless immanent to Everything. In the terms of my thesis, 'Everything' is the organized BwO; a hopeless

disposition enables the tipping of the plane away from its organization to be able to attend to forces of the virtual unable to be assembled on that BwO due to its operative logic. In that sense, the virtual is unintelligible to the BwO; it is 'outside' of Everything, Everything being that which is possible and realized on/as the BwO.

This piece outlines nicely the ways that falling into hope is not only "an addiction" (10), but a key part of navigating hopelessness, and asks what this means in terms of on-the-ground relations. Even in anarchist milieux it is clear that hope continues to play a role in animating analysis and organizing, including as specifically mentioned here in terms of the visibilization of the occupations of the squares into Everything. That is, the digestion of the Outside by politics into Everything is the process of separating means and ends, participation in a system of coherence in hopes that it will further the goals of 'a movement.' A transcendental theory of change is revealed here to not only be a part of such clearly teleological theories such as orthodox Marxism, but from any theoretical dispositions that disconnect theory from bodies, including even, as the authors argue here, anarchisms.

Beyond this, however, this piece helpfully exemplifies key ways that hope is inadvertently reproduced in attempts to ward it off, which helps me attend more explicitly to how hope can be warded off in hopeless ways. Belying the rest of their argument, their insistence that corrosive skepticism is a key disposition for a hopeless antipolitics is revealing in terms of their own slippage into reproducing that which they are ostensibly trying to undermine. I understand a skeptical disposition as the vigilant identification of a means-ends disjunction as it emerges, as it comes to animate the body. As I argue below, this type of disposition requires a coherent subject, in the sense that it is the capacity of

the subject to reflect on the ways that hope is present that allows for it then to be rooted out. This relies upon a particular rational disposition that is less of a Spinozan embodiment, but more reflective of a dualism between body and mind – which I go on to explain below.

Such a disposition itself acts as a way that the potential comes to be digested into the possible, into coherence, into a narrative that captures it as hopeful. In so doing, the subject also emerges as someone who identifies hope as lacking. I suggest that a more hopeless disposition would be to attend to feelings of (passive) hope via allowing the body to feel cramped by them, which comes to be an embodied knowledge of the forces at play associated with the operative logic that not only creates the plane and the associated cramped space, but is also what potentials emerge from – via the undoing of the possible into the potential of the scream. More simply: to seek to identify and root out hope from everything is to preclude potentials outside of coherence, to work only from coherence itself. Such a disposition works to subjectify the body rather than create an opportunity for that situation to undo the subject and related organization. This is essentially what the authors themselves would call politics, in opposition to their antipolitics of hopelessness.

In the terms used in this thesis, to take on a corrosively skeptical disposition would be to refuse hope before it even becomes cramped. Skepticism attends to the structure of means being sacrificed for an ends, but in this cannot attend to the embodied knowledge of being moved by those forces which causes space to feel cramped, as the feeling of being cramped is avoided by the vigilant skepticism that pre-empts hope before it can act on the body to cramp it. In this, the scream is forestalled – and the forces of movement

can only be known intellectually, not via a Spinozan embodiment. And in this, the site that I have identified via Massumi as ‘political’ is also pre-empted, as the subject is not able to be dissolved in such a disposition. Thus the space between stimulus and response – where affect would make its way through before its capture as emotion – is not widened, and thus the experimentation of bodies and their forces cannot happen. Instead, the body is captured as the subject through this corrosively skeptical disposition.

Instead, skepticism creates a different kind of cramped space: one in which any force is suspect of being hopeful. It is not hope that creates this cramped space that could then lead to the scream of hopelessness, however, but the *fear of hope* itself. As I have been arguing in my thesis, such a fear of hope evokes a new mode of hoping, in itself: hoping for the removal of hope, hoping for hopelessness – subjectivation in itself that turns hopelessness into its object. Thus, corrosive skepticism is a different form of passivity disguised as becoming active. Or, in their language, something that is supposed to be antipolitical, but that turns out to be political.

To be clear, I am not trying to argue that the ontology outlined in “Hello” turns hopelessness into a desired object itself, but rather the insistence on the disposition of corrosive skepticism that comes from a perspective of coherence and thus the subject does.

Hopeless dispositions

In this thesis I have argued that, as the anonymous authors of “Hello” also suggest in the rest of their essay, political work often participates in an operative logic based on hope and fear; despite hopeless experimentation, hopeful coherence continues to act on bodies. Rather than fend the inevitable off with corrosive skepticism, I argue that a more

hopeless disposition would attend to hope hopelessly, rather than objectifying the hopeless disposition through the fear of hope.

Given an operative logic based in hope and fear, to be able to become active through no longer hoping and fearing, via hopelessness, is not a goal so much as a way of participating in the operative logic, to be able to participate in it differently. To only feel hopeless and have that become the object of desire would not be becoming active, would not be participating in the operative logic. That is, the problem is not to get outside of the operative logic so much as learn to participate in it. In this, feeling hope and fear is an important element of remaining immanent to the ways the BwO is organized, in order to participate in its organization. Hope and fear – and feeling hopeless – understood in this way are not good or bad, but simply informative.

That said, while immanent to an organized BwO, a disposition resonant with hopelessness must come from experimentation in the virtual, from the potentials associated with the desire of the body that are not captured by the subject (and which a corrosive skepticism would pre-empt). Such a hopeless disposition would allow for feelings of hope to arise and then attend to the cramped space it creates, or the feeling of hopelessness should it be lost, and then attend to this precarity of hopelessness and its capacity to unravel and collapse the subject rather than re-subjectify it. Such a disposition would attend to capacities to feel hopeless and cramped – immanent to the desires of the body – to turn those impossibilities into knowledge of the organization of the BwO, to come to embodied understandings of how forces constitute them, to scream through the precarious dissolution of the subject into the body, possibilities into potentials, and to hold open room for embodied thought to create new ways of encountering.

That is, instead of skeptical dispositions that root out and fend off hope, I am interested in those dispositions that allow for bodies to attend to and be moved and constituted by whatever hope emerges in order to be able to know how it organizes all bodies – the organized BwO – such that those forces can be attended to joyfully in other ways of organizing, hopelessly. What dispositions allow us to feel the cramped space, scream, and think without being either dissolved completely or recaptured by hope? Moreover I am curious about how such dispositions cannot then come to be seen as obligatory, but rather attended to as an emergent necessity, something that allows for the flow of desire to experiment and continue to flow, rather than fending off particular ways of how that desire is captured.

Conclusion

Overall in this thesis I have argued that it is not only fear that serves to hold bodies passive, but also hope. A body experiences passive hope as a passive joy associated with a promised future as allowed by the operative logic associated with hope and fear, given a society, I argue, organized by such an operative logic. Included in this capture is a perspective that allows for the loss of hope to be seen as only debilitating and lacking, with an understanding that in such cases, it is hope that must be recovered in order for change to be possible.

In this light, the main object of the thesis is not hope but hopelessness. I have argued that it is not (only) that bodies are captured into passive hope, but that a key element of contemporary society, including approaches to political change, is a striving for hope in its absence. The second chapter of this thesis, then, was a meditation on and investigation of what hopelessness can do if it is attended to outside the imperative of hope.

Specifically I argue how, in situations of sadness that bodies may experience as crampedness, bodies can come to express the sadness of what is, I argue, sacrificed in the present for the passive joy of hope associated with a desired future, which is in itself joyful. This expression of those sadnessness in the scream allows for the dissolution of the subject, and of possibilities into potential, such that thinking can happen.

For this hopeless thought to emerge and take place at the level of bodies involves attention to the capacity for the scream to only dissolve the subject or organism, not the body itself, and for thought to not be recaptured by hope. Thought, I argue, enables participation in the operative logic – becoming active.

This capacity to ward off recapture by the operative logic of hope and fear is an important capacity to focus on, as exemplified by my reading of “Hello” (2014). An important element of this is not only warding off of hope, but also warding off what I call the *fear* of hope itself.

In this, sustaining these capacities becomes key to politics, and politics comes to be located at the level of the virtual, in the space of *thinking* between bodies as they come to participate in the ways they are organized. Importantly, however, this space of politics is by definition emergent.

What this points to is what a politics that takes into consideration the cultivation of these types of dispositions looks like, without hope.

Future Research

This narrow thesis has resonance in many different areas of contemporary social and political thought and movements. Further research could situate this work more experimentally within emerging research on complex understandings of energy and

matter, influenced by the important work of Prigogine and Stengers (1984). Less abstractly, I am interested in the resonances between this work and other works coming out of North American and European anarchist, ultra-Left communist, and post-Left milieux, such as The Invisible Committee's *Introduction to Civil War* (2010), the anonymous "Desert" (2011), Andrew X's "Given Up Activism" (1999). Beyond this, however, I am also interested in how this resonates with what are often called 'anti-social' queer and Black theory, including the queer nihilist initiative *Bæden 1: A Journal of Queer Nihilism* (2012), and those coming out of contemporary Black movements such as Stefano Harney and Fred Moten's *The Undercommons: Fugitive planning & black study* (2013), and related Afro-pessimism movements, such as Calvin Warren's *Black Nihilism and the Politics of Hope* (2015).

However, given the argument developed in this thesis, I would suggest that while seeking resonance with other movements may be joyful, this in itself does not constitute a politics, and may even foreclose important political work. In this sense, for future research, what is important for me, ethically, is not simply looking for resonance with other radical lineages, but attending to hopelessness as it emerges in unexpected and everyday places.

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