

Baudrillard's Philosophy Of Seduction: an overview.

To appreciate Baudrillard's philosophy of Seduction – what is at stake in it and why it is important today - we should remember the historical situation from which it evolves, viz., the postmodern context, in which it appears that rational theory has autodestructed and “truth is dead”. This autodestruction is said to occur for several reasons, eg: 1) The first principles of any rational system or theory, or the first rules of any language game, cannot prove themselves without logical *circularity*, or else falling into an *infinite regress* of first principles. But if the first principle is dubious and unproven, then the whole system derived from it is also dubious and unproven. Therefore all systems are questionable and truth cannot be established. 2) Theoretical systems or language games contain within themselves their own criteria for deciding such central issues as: good evidence, proper test, right method, authority, reliability, validity, and value. The criteria differ with the system. Therefore, there is no independent position from which one could judge between the systems to ascertain which one is correct, if any. Therefore the systems are said to be *incommensurable*, ie, they can't be measured or judged against one another. Therefore, the correct system or the real truth cannot be established. 3) The question may be posed: *Why be rational?* If the modern rationalist uses reason to provide rational arguments for being rational then he or she is simply begging the question. For he or she is assuming the validity of reason to argue toward the validity of reason. 4) Epistemology (the study of knowledge) has been at the heart of the philosophical enterprise from the beginning; for it was assumed that, before we can hope to say whether this or that worldview or theory constitutes true knowledge we need to know what knowledge is. Therefore, we must study what knowledge is first. But to know what knowledge is presumes we already have knowledge in knowing what knowledge is. So an assumption about knowledge is always made at the start. But, once again, this initial assumption cannot be validated without circularity. Therefore, there is no proven knowledge or truth. 5) Can we now draw the sceptic's conclusion, then, ie, that the truth is that there is no truth? Obviously not, because that statement itself claims to be a truth, so it undermines itself. Hence: epistemology, rationalism, critical theory, philosophical scepticism, even deconstruction, all now appear aporetic. Rational theory in all its forms autodestructs. Therefore - modernity is dead. (May it rest in peace.)

Now, it is not clear that all of those theorists who get called *postmodern* are properly so called; because it is not clear that they have in fact all left modernity behind. For example, Foucault, Lyotard & Derrida, insofar as they privilege empirical methods or arguments based on critical rational analysis, thereby arriving what they propose as this or that truth – such as a truth of *genealogy and history* (Foucault), or a truth about the *postmodern condition or justice* (Lyotard), or a truth about *language and deconstruction* (Derrida) - are still to that extent entangled in the modern. If so, they are not fully postmodern. The question, then, needs to be posed anew: What is the properly postmodern? What would be genuinely different to the modern? Surely, *fully* postmodern theory would have to be something post-rationalist, therefore, not limited to reason, empiricism, or intellectual criteria – hence, something which makes an appeal to something more than the rational, such as, emotions, feelings, imagination, or, broadly speaking, the aesthetic dimension of taste and preference. Seduction, as we'll see, is a philosophy which does just that.

Let's start with the word 'seduction'. Its root meaning suggests three things. 1st) Deriving from the Latin, *seducere*, it means: leading astray from an initial, normal, or straight path or conduct. 2nd) This leading astray, this lure, involves some degree of appeal to emotion and imagination or aesthetic taste - therefore, to something non-rational, something more of the heart, as it were, than just the head. 3rd) There is an strange allure in seduction, which works in a mysterious way - ie, it cannot be fully analysed or explained in concepts - eg, the immediate seduction of a gaze between two strangers. There's an enigmatic aura to seduction, which is part of its charm and power: even if it could be analysed, we wouldn't want it analysed, as that would rob us of this charm. 4th) In addition to these three root meanings, in some religions the word 'seduction' has been traditionally associated with temptation, ie, the 'leading astray' is into evil. Surprisingly enough, Baudrillard wants to retain this association - although, strictly speaking, it is not one logically necessary to the word. 5th) To these root and traditional meanings Baudrillard adds a new twist. When he first introduces the term, it is to contrast it with what he calls 'production'. Seduction is not exactly the opposite of production, but it is meant as a contrary process.

So now we have to ask: What is production? By production is meant: a creating and making manifest, a making real; therefore, a *realising* - in that sense. Production, then, is associated with: 1st) Modern political economies, ie, all social systems of materialistic production and consumption orientated toward creating and making manifest goods and services, ie, realising them: hence GDP, etc. 2nd) Rational libidinal economies, ie, all systems which aim at the realisation of so-called natural desires and their ends, including those systems which try to find and liberate so-called repressed desires and realise them. 3rd) Information technologies, ie, all systems geared to production and dissemination of data, information, images, texts: hence, the mass media, electronic communications, etc. 4th) Theory, ie, the production of meanings and representations of reality, ie, versions of the real, or what Baudrillard calls 'simulations', evolving in accordance with this or that cultural or semiotic code of interpretation: the attempt, then, to make manifest this real, to make it real, to make it stick, to realise it - thus: *to settle and confirm that meaning as real*.

What all such systems have in common is that they all tend to escalate in a spiral of increasing production - a process which Baudrillard calls 'ecstasy' - not in the sense of having a good time, but in the sense of spiralling eccentrically out of control (rather like a whirling Dervish) toward a self-absorbed excessive form. So, eg, there is the escalating production and consumption of commodities under capitalism; the escalating production of psychological desires and the endless attempt to realise them; the escalating production of information and images to the point of overdose; and the escalating production of theory, thoughts, words, signs, about everything and anything. The trajectory, then, is toward *hyper-realisation*: ie, modern representational thought, in conjunction with the so-called liberation of desires, the proliferation of information and images via the media, and the commodification of everything under capitalism as product for consumption and realisation of desires - this whole interconnected modern system of production then - generates the escalating simulation called modern reality: a hyper-realism, ie, an attempt to make this real more and more real, to realise it more, to make it realer-than-the-real, as it were, hence: *hyperreal*.

However, ironically enough, despite all this energy and escalation of the system, it doesn't work. For there is, according to Baudrillard, another principle operating in the world, one which is more elusive, but more all-encompassing – viz., Seduction. Even production is subsumed under this more dominant, though more obscure, principle. It becomes, then, Baudrillard's key term.

The idea is that we believe what we do, and consequently think and do what we do, because we have been seduced: in the first instance by parents - charismatic figures of authority for the child - and then by various other people significant in our lives: the whole series of teachers and mediators of all types, eg, schoolmasters, priests, friends, colleagues, politicians, media personalities, writers, lecturers, etc. They all work their magic on us. So we get seduced more-or-less in accordance with our local cultural norms. The final or ultimate source of Seduction, however, cannot be known. For to claim to know it presupposes a seduction, ie, a theory of reality on the basis of which one might then decide that the source is, eg, natural, empirical, merely cultural or psychological, or that the source is supernatural or metaphysical, perhaps karmic or theistic, etc. Since the ultimate truth cannot be known, "*the rule of the game remains secret*", as Baudrillard says. Life remains enigmatic - but that's okay, because the enigmatic is also seductive: it retains a certain uncanny mystery or sublime charm.

But now, let us begin to edge toward answering the question of what is the *status* of this theory of Seduction in a postmodern age where apparently theory is dead in the water.

According to Seduction, we arrive today at a consciousness of the *autodestruction* of theory because we have first been seduced into privileging and using reason in an increasingly critical and self-critical way - that being our postmodern heritage. Another culture, such as a pre-modern one, which might regard reason as indifferent, or as "the devil's whore", might not arrive at autodestruction - or what Baudrillard also variously calls: silence, the suspension of thought, the state of grace, the blip in the circuitry of mediation, the abyss of theory, the void or voidance, or the superficial abyss. This groundlessness, this nothing, this abyssal state of awareness where thought is undermined and stopped dead in its tracks, arises for us today in a context of self-critical reason. If once you are seduced into using reason, the internal logic will lead you inevitably to the abyss. The abyss gets called *superficial* here, not in the derogatory sense, ie, of it being shallow relative to something taken to be more true or deep, but in the sense of it being an appearance: an appearance which appears for us relative to or within our seduction, ie, our critical context of thought. It is, therefore, not to be considered a deep truth, or ultimate truth, or the essential truth of our being, or the most authentic experience, or the deep hidden reality behind appearances. For we can no longer speak of any such deep truths or realities when truth is dead. They don't exist any more for us. We only ever encounter appearances: how things *appear* to us - and also *disappear*. Appearances and disappearances is all we know, and any attempt to access some so-called deeper and truer reality "behind the veil" of appearances would just be - *another* appearance. So the abyss is superficial, but it is not superficial in a context where something is *not* superficial, but in a context where *everything* is superficial, ie, is appearance. Therefore, the word 'superficial' loses the derogatory sense it had in modernity. Baudrillard, rather, celebrates the superficial, ie, the seductive play of appearances.

So, Seduction here is that which lures us away from the path of production, ie, of the production of truth, meaning, mediation, simulation, the real, the hyperreal, etc - thus: that which lures us to the abyss: the *voidance* or *emptying out* of truth, meaning, mediation, simulation, the real. Thus we arrive at the emptiness of the real, “the desert of the real”: *the nothing*. Hence, Baudrillard takes an ancient philosophical question: *Why is there something rather than nothing?* and turns it upside down, asking instead: *Why is there nothing rather than something?* (see *Paroxysm*). There is nothing because, ironically enough, Seduction works even within production to undermine production by producing the counter-production of autodestruction - the superficial abyss.

It is not that production ceases once and for all at this point. No. The principle of production continues to operate, ie, we continue to produce: we create and manifest things, thoughts, desires, discourses, meanings, theories, the real, etc. However, having passed through autodestruction and the abyss, everything is now produced and seen differently - with new eyes, as it were: the eyes of Seduction. That means we see everything now as our seductions played out in the uncanny light of the nothing - or, put another way, we see that our production of meanings and values, our realisation of reality, is quintessentially empty and superficial. We see that our life is a kind of ongoing empty play with meanings where whatever meanings we produce and realise in things can be taken back or dissolved again in the nothing from whence they came. Hence: they have no determinate reality as such, no real truth.

What, then, of the theory of Seduction itself? Well, it too can no longer claim to be a theory, properly speaking, ie, something which seeks to produce and manifest a real truth, the true meaning of reality. We are tempted, then, to let philosophy dissolve completely into art or literature and say that all we can ever produce now is merely a story or a fiction. However, just as we can no longer call a philosophy a *truth* or a *theory*, we can no longer call it *false* or a *fiction*. For to call a philosophy a story or a fiction is to presume we *know for a truth* that it is untrue. But the so-called fiction might actually be *the truth*, for all we know, therefore, *not* a fiction. Hence, we can no longer call philosophy either a truth and a theory, or false and a fiction. Follow Baudrillard then, who calls it: *theory-fiction* - ie, *not a theory or a fiction because it could be either*: its status is necessarily *indeterminate* between true and false, theory and fiction. It plays on this crucial indeterminacy.

The philosophy of Seduction, then, is a theory-fiction. Moreover, if the philosophy of Seduction catches on, it will do so, not because it can establish its truth, but because it is itself seductive in a context of current seductions. Seduction operates by its own seductive qualities. This, then, goes a long way toward explaining and justifying Baudrillard's notoriously poetic and elusive writing style: the *form* of the writing reflects its *content*. That it is enigmatic is essential, because the enigmatic is a quality of the seductive.

Baudrillard also sometimes puts it that what he is doing is *pataphysics*. Pataphysics is defined as *a science of imaginary solutions*: it is weighted on the side of parody and fiction. However, Baudrillard also sometimes puts it that what he is doing is *metaphysics of morality*, which is weighted on the side of serious truth and theory. In fact, what he is really doing is both - hence, a new thing: *pataphysical metaphysics* - which is another way of saying *theory-fiction* - ie, philosophy which is indeterminate with regard to its truth or

falsity because it could be either. Philosophy is no longer a matter of conviction, probability, validity, knowledge, belief, or faith. On the contrary, all these terms are *outmoded* and belong to pre-modernity or modernity. It is a matter now of producing and entertaining *aesthetically interesting hypotheses*: Baudrillard's writing is exactly that. It turns on the aesthetic intrigue or aesthetic seduction, also called re-enchantment effects, it generates. The aim, then, is to produce a philosophy *serious enough* for *sustained* aesthetic interest yet *playful enough* for irony, parody, wit and autodestruction. It expresses a consistent aesthetic preference, but it is not a matter of old-style faith or fanaticism.

The philosophy of Seduction thus operates with *aesthetic criteria*, not with outmoded *validity* criteria. However, this is not to say it is reducible to irrationalism or romanticism, as has often been claimed. It cannot be called *irrationalism* because we have been contextually seduced into being rational, and so we preference or find some attraction in critical logical arguments. But on the other hand, it cannot be called *rationalism* either, because we can no longer blithely assume reason is undeceived, and the rationalist does assume this. It was indeed the very premise of modernity. Against this, Baudrillard takes into account the pre-modern idea that reason is not necessarily reliable, that it may be the devil's whore, or that we may be, for all we know, radically deceived by an Evil demon - as Descartes temporarily suggested. Moreover, since this is possible, we cannot presume to explain away Seduction as merely a matter of the contingent and empirical, such as cultural conditioning or psychological bias. For it could rather be a function of something metaphysical, necessary, objective and fatal, ie, *a matter of destiny*. Indeed, as we'll see Baudrillard has a provocative preference for the latter hypothesis.

Okay, so we now have a general outline of the philosophy of Seduction and its status. It is time now to move on to consider five different forms of Seduction Baudrillard identifies and names.

First there is what he terms *Cold Seduction*. This includes: 1) Modern political economies, ie, the escalating production and consumption of commodities: both Marxist communism and capitalism, ie, *social materialism* as a way of life. This proposes an increasing production of goods and sees this as the route to the utopia of human happiness. And yet it seems to produce as much or more of its opposite: social inequalities, injustices, alienation, conflict, and misery for the majority of human beings on the planet. Thus, one can see a principle of Seduction operating in and around material production, ie, leading it astray from its promised goal and thwarting its utopian ambitions. 2) Rational libidinal economies, ie, the so-called liberation of desires and the endless pursuit of their satisfaction: hence, *the pleasure principle* - also modern psychotherapy and modern feminism. This proposes an increasing production of de-repressed libidinal desire and the realisation of its various ends (sex, power, wealth, etc) as the route to happiness. However, it too seems to produce as much or more of its opposite: psychological suffering, insecurity, anxiety, restless dissatisfaction (much as the Buddha also said). For desire cannot seem to find its secure satisfaction: its hopes are frequently dashed and suffering results. Thus, one can see a principle of Seduction operating in and around the production of desire, ie, leading it astray from its promised path and thwarting its aim of personal happiness. 3) *The reality principle*, ie, the aim of modern theory to produce fixed truths and meanings correctly *corresponding* to or *representing* reality - thus realising a secure and determinate

reality. Hence follows: simulation, cultural reinforcement, and replication by constant mediation, all tending to hyperrealism. However, simulation also seems to generate opposite effects, viz, postmodern cynicism, nihilism, and disenchantment. Thus, one can see a principle of Seduction operating in and around the production of theory and reality, leading it from its promised path and aims. In sum, for all these reasons and more, Baudrillard seeks a re-enchanted alternative to this modern Cold Seduction he calls *culture degree zero or Xerox*.

Secondly, there is what Baudrillard terms *Soft Ludic Seduction* - which is actually an outgrowth, an excrescence, from Cold Seduction. He has in mind here the *ecstasy of communication*, ie, the escalating spiral of the production and consumption of data and information via the mass media, modern electronic systems of digital communication, the general proliferation and profusion of words and images, and the fascination effects of electronic screens. It appears at first that information is good, so we think it would be good to have more of it: and so the spiral gets started. Like other modern production systems, it soon takes on its own momentum: it begins to escalate and spiral out of control toward excess and overload. We get *more and more information, less and less meaning*: a maximum diffusion and profusion of information with diminishing affect and import - ie, diminishing significance effects. This tends to result in a feeling of being lost and confused in the profusion: a sense of the impossibility of accessing the actual immediacy of events when they are so heavily encrusted with simulation, mediation, and interpretations building on other interpretations. So there arises an increasing cynicism, suspicion, and disaffection. At the same time, there is an increasing sense of the *ludic* quality of promiscuous mediation. He means *ludic* in the sense of a somewhat giddy, vertiginous, and frivolous play and interplay generating increasing *de-credibilization* effects: a interplay, for instance, where the ad for baked beans follows hot on the heels of the tragic news report. His use of *ludic* suggests a lack of motive to connect with or operate decisively on the social: rather, there's a preference for escape into the electronic and virtual. All up, then, one can see a principle of Seduction operating in and around the ecstasy of communication, ie, leading it astray from its promise to supply the good - such as information for the purpose of informed and decisive social action - towards rather its opposite: indecisiveness, confusion, disaffection, suspicion, ludic irresponsibility (non-response): the cynical apathy of the masses or the "shadow of the silent majorities" (as one title has it).

Disenchantment with modern Cold Seduction and Soft Ludic Seduction initially lured Baudrillard to try an alternative in a third form of Seduction, which he sometimes calls *High Seduction*. This refers to pre-modern cultures of ritual symbolic exchange. These cultures produce unique objects imbued with a richly symbolic content, ie, objects with an aura of the sacred. As such, they also produce powerful polarities, ie, irreconcilable oppositions and a vital and challenging clash between them, such as: sacred and profane, good and evil, male and female, etc. Thus, these pre-modern cultures produce high emotional intensities and rich enchantment effects: a style of life quite different to the modern. Accordingly, Baudrillard exhibits nostalgia for these ancient cultures of symbolic exchange and a sustained interest in them as a source of themes alternative to the themes of modernity. For example, he is nostalgic for a) the irreconcilable clash between good and evil as distinct principles of different origin, b) the possibility of cyclical rather than linear time, c) the values of ancient festivals of excess, sacrifice, and apparently imprudent

symbolic exchange or waste (imprudent, that is, to the modern mind) and d) the ancient ideal of the feminine as a strong locus for the play of appearance, artifice, mystique, and seduction - something he bemoans is being undervalued and lost in modern feminism.

However, in his mature philosophy Baudrillard is not advocating a simple return to the pre-modern. We get closer to what he *is* advocating when we come to the fourth category of Seduction: what he terms *Aesthetic Seduction*. Initially this refers us to 18th and 19th century cultures of aristocratic symbolic exchange or game play, ie, where a symbolic sphere is produced within which the ordinary laws of society and prudence are suspended in favour of playing out the rules and consequences of a wager or an agonistic game: *duels of honour*, for example. Again, Baudrillard exhibits some nostalgia for this culture of the past, as it has some re-enchantment potential and it runs contrary to the modern. However, he is not actually advocating any return to the past, either to the pre-modern or the aristocratic. Rather, his method is to adopt some themes from these cultures and re-introduce them into a postmodern context, thus giving them an up-to-date ironic twist in the process. What is retained in the idea of aristocratic Aesthetic Seduction is the general theme of producing and inscribing a symbolic and agonistic game sphere which runs contrary to the modern - thus setting up a *duel* with the modern. This is precisely the case with the theory-fiction of Seduction: it is a symbolic exchange; it inscribes a symbolic universe; it sets up a field of play; it generates an agonistic challenge to modernity and its values; it is a deliberate provocation; it suspends and destabilises the modern real. And yet it does not proclaim itself to be a truth, for to do that would be pre-modern or modern. It is a poetic and symbolic game - and yet it cannot be dismissed as merely a fiction as it might be true after all.

Theory-fiction is a form of *Aesthetic Seduction* in a *postmodern context*. This is what philosophy is now. One produces a Seduction, as a theory-fiction, according to *aesthetic preference*. So this brings us, finally, to a category of Seduction that most Baudrillard commentators simply ignore or fail to understand, viz, what he calls *Original Seduction* or *Manichaeian Seduction*. This is a pataphysical metaphysics, therefore, an Aesthetic Seduction, one which takes a Manichaeian form. (Brief history here: Manichaeism was a religion founded by Mani in Persia in the 3rd century AD. Mani was influenced by the Old Testament, by Buddha, by Zoroaster, and by Jesus. Manichaeism rapidly spread through the Roman Empire and by the 4th century it was a major competitor to Christianity. Accordingly, it was persecuted by the Church as a heresy. Manichaeism taught that life in this world is full of suffering and is fundamentally evil: shit happens. Where it differs most from Christianity is that it holds there is not one but two *co-eternal* principles or Gods: a good God and an Evil. The one is not created by the other. Hence, the good God is not responsible for Evil - and thus Mani provides an answer to the problem which plagues Christianity, viz., if God is a single Almighty good creator then how can evil come into existence? The fact of evil in the creation has served for many as a logical disproof of the existence of a good God. Mani posits two *separate* Gods and thus avoids the conclusion. This world, then, is a mix of both good and evil, though evil predominates. What we are to do is seek salvation through *nous* - Greek for spirit and intelligence. By renouncing desire for material things and focusing on *nous*, eg, in meditative states, we may achieve *gnosis* - Greek for spiritual knowledge, grace, inspiration, and salvation.)

Baudrillard's Manichaeic theory-fiction hypothesises that the world has been originally seduced from the beginning by an Evil demon, and is thereby led astray from the path of truth, goodness, or true being by a diabolical and enigmatic influence. This would explain why, despite our best efforts, reality thwarts and eludes us on every level. We produce and race down the path to modern globalisation, to a materialistic social utopia of equality and world peace, only to be led astray into renewed inequalities, social conflicts, wars, and the resurgence of pre-modern antagonisms. We produce and race down the path to the satisfaction of liberated desires in search of a promised happiness, only to be led astray into frustration, insecurity, and psychological suffering. We produce and race down the path of the information superhighway in pursuit of informed decision-making only to be led astray into confusion, profusion, suspicion, disaffection, and indecision. We produce and race down the path of theory and truth only to be led astray into nihilism.

It does indeed seem that “reality bites back”, that reality is playing something like an *ironic game* of hide-and-seek with us. Indeed, Baudrillard's theory-fiction of Original or Manichaeic Seduction declares it so: there *is*, he hypothesises, a principle of *Objective Irony* at work, a “fatal strategy” - ie, a *pre-destination* of events. If so, so-called “free subjectivity” is effaced and undermined by the power of the Object, the riddle of fate, the Evil demon of destiny that sets up the whole parade of appearances and disappearances we call the world. This world is now to be understood as a Matrix-like world, a world of Maya: a fateful shared illusion where we are all subject to ironic twists of fate, ironic reversals.

Remember though that this is not presented as religion, nor as modern rational dogmatism, but as postmodern theory-fiction. Nor can we dismiss the metaphysics here as bizarre, because in the context of the autodestruction of theory, *it is no more bizarre than any other metaphysics*, including Christian or scientific metaphysics or any metaphysics which appears more commonsensical to the modern mind-set. For arguably, it is the modern mind-set itself which is bizarre - and, very possibly, *radically deceived*.

In the reversal to silent emptiness there is a similarity with Zen. Baudrillard, however, gives this Zen-like move a Manichaeic slant - ie, the move is made, not just because we see that thought autodestructs and is empty, but because we consider the world to be seduced by Evil and because we retain the glimmer of a hope that a source of Good beyond this world may yet be challenged and seduced into responding to our counter-seduction against the Evil seduction of the world.

There is a twofold movement in Baudrillard's double game: first the production side, eg, producing Manichaeic thoughts, theory-fiction, or aesthetic seductions. He calls this *paroxysm* in his book of that title. The book contains the following explanation or pretext: "*In prosody (ie, the study of versification) the term 'paroxytone' ... refers to the syllable before last. The paroxysm might thus be said to be the penultimate moment...just before the end, just before there is nothing more to be said.*" However, if we look up paroxysm in the dictionary, we find it also means, 1) a sudden outburst, as of laughter or discourse, suggestive of an uncontrollable eruption; 2) in pathology: a sudden flare-up or recurrence of a disease: a convulsion or spasm. Overall then, we get the sense of a recurring and largely uncontrollable eruption of thought or discourse that is somewhat like a disease: the production of thoughts and meanings. But this production is penultimate, ie, occurs before

the return to silence and the abyss - what he also calls "the beautiful art of disappearance". Overall the double game amounts to this: *to produce seductive appearances and seduce oneself and others through them back to their beautiful disappearance.*

Perhaps this finally makes sense of Baudrillard's obscure statement that his double game has always been to make ideas appear, and then, when they have appeared, to make them disappear again. Manichaean theory-fiction is a particularly good way of doing this because it highlights and accounts for *the diabolically seductive and enthralling nature of our thoughts* - also media, mediation, communication, language, discourse, words, etc - *How easily we get caught up in them!* - as well as their diabolically deceptive, superficial, and vain nature - *How empty they are!* - thus prompting autodestruction and silence.

We are fascinated by the paroxysms of the media and mediation, perhaps more so today than ever before, and yet we also have an obscure sense of the emptiness of it all, to some degree highlighted by the excess. Baudrillard proposes a double game of re-enchantment in our postmodern mediascape: *play seductively with the paroxysm of produced meanings and seduce them back to the abyss.*

Reading:

Jean Baudrillard, *Seduction*, trans. By Brian Singer, St. Martin's Press, N.Y., 1990
The whole book, but especially: pp 1-2, 5-12, 34-35, 74-78, 83-97, 98-105, 115, 124, 129-144, 157-180.

Jean Baudrillard, *The Ecstasy Of Communication*, trans. by Bernard & Caroline Schutze, Semiotext(e), N.Y., 1988, whole book but especially pp 57-95.

Jean Baudrillard, *Forget Foucault*, semiotext(e), N.Y., 1987, pp 92-106, 123-135.

Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra & Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser, Michigan Uni. Press, 1994. - especially the first and last chapter.

Jean Baudrillard, *Paroxysm*, Interviews with Philippe Petit, trans. Chris Turner, Verso, London, 1998.

Grace Victoria, *Baudrillard's Challenge*, Routledge, London, 2000. Chapter 5: *The Inevitable Seduction*, pp 141-171.
