

At an Angle: Presence, Trace, and Unending Analysis in Derrida's "Resistances"

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Abstract

Jacques Derrida's essay *Résistances*, a reading of Freud's "Dream of Irma's Injection," serves as both an interrogation of psychoanalytic methodology and a broader reflection on the nature of interpretation. This paper examines Derrida's exploration of "resistance" as a structural condition of analysis. By focusing on Derrida's concepts of "trace" and "presence," I demonstrate how resistance, which exemplifies the aporia at the heart of analytic discourse, is a crystallization of much of Derrida's work. Derrida critiques psychoanalysis for uncritically inheriting Enlightenment metaphysics, which demand unity and closure in interpretation. Yet, through deconstruction, he offers a productive rethinking of these limitations. This paper situates deconstruction as both an extension and critique of analytic reasoning, revealing how the "axiom of interminability" resists any final interpretive closure. By tracing Derrida's engagement with Freud's text, I show how deconstruction challenges the epistemological and hermeneutic imperatives underpinning contemporary critical discourse. Ultimately, this reading highlights the misjudgment and disregard of the post-structuralist project and suggests an enduring relevance of Derrida's work to current intellectual and cultural contexts. Far from undermining meaning, deconstruction reveals the infinite possibilities inherent in resistance, offering a vital intervention in the ongoing "interminable drama" of analysis and interpretation.

Some texts very quickly attain a certain status of critical or interpretive afterlife in which they become the basis for much work which by volume and perhaps reputation comes to far exceed the original text.¹ The criteria by which a text may achieve this status are innumerable and inconsistent. The text may present what feels like an openness to interpretation, it may have puzzle-like qualities that arouse an analytic impulse, it may have prescriptive qualities and so behaviors of the reader may vary greatly by interpretation.

I'll be taking you through an essay by Jacques Derrida today as a means to reflect on how we read. The essay is entitled *Résistances*² and it performs a reading of Freud's "Dream of Irma's Injection," an early model of psychoanalysis from the work *The Interpretation of Dreams*³ which finds Freud applying the method to a dream of his own and conceiving of dreams as wish fulfillment. Resistance, for Freud, what he also calls the "navel" is let us say simply for now, the point in the psychoanalytic method that eludes analysis. And let us say, to not exhaustively cover what it is Freud does, that important for us at least is the notion that he is first narrating his dream, rendering into language, into a text, and then reading it. This important preamble serves the double intention of initiating you to the claims which spill out of the scope of the practice of psychoanalysis which likely none of us practice.

Derrida says as much if not more about the phenomenon of "endless analyzability" and our methods of reading as he does the Freud text itself, identifying it straight away as one of these artifacts, the type of which I've alluded to. He tackles the work "at an angle" (*de biais*, R 5). He builds his argument on analysis and resistance obliquely and in so doing takes up claims about metaphysics, hermeneutics, and the work of deconstruction. Derrida finds the concept of resistance to be not an obstacle to psychoanalysis but rather an immanent structural condition of analytic discourse. Analysis inherited uncritically from the tradition of the Enlightenment positions its method of reading as an exercise in power that is always already complicit in its own dissolution. I'm going to focus on what he identifies as a "rupture" and where this rupture is concerned with the concepts of "trace" and "presence." I'll attempt to reveal the mechanism of his dialogue with Freud and how that mechanism expounds a theory of deconstruction which Derrida presents as a way forward and perhaps a way out. I'm going to suggest today that this way has largely remained untaken.⁴ I'd like to suggest this in part to ask if contemporary discourse represents a reconstitution of the frameworks, the questions, and the "navel" or the point of resistance left unresolved by Sigmund Freud, and whether the tensions therein might be better tended to via a renewed consideration of the apparatus of deconstruction and the whole of the post-structuralist project.

1. The Journey to Trace

Derrida opens *Resistances* with a single question: "Must one resist?" (R 1) Taking him at his word, we see how the term "resistance" had entered and fallen out of psychoanalytic fashion, having been criticized as a catchall. He responds with a resistance of his own by reviving the term and interrogating its conceptual unity, plurality, and even its very existence. He questions the "one musts" and "there is's" foundational to psychoanalytic reasoning, framing his essay as itself a resistance: an analysis of resistance, its limits, and its implications.

Derrida exposes an idiosyncratic and personal interest in the word resistance, its many associations for him, for the political history of France, for his having liked "not to have missed blowing up trains, tanks, and headquarters between 1940 and 1945," (R 2) for his desire to save it from translation and from analysis which we will come to understand as sense or reason. What he tells us is that this concept of resistance is not trivial. He reflects: "At stake, in sum, is that which in me could learn to say 'me' only by cultivating an idiom where the word 'resistance' does not play just any role," (R 2). That which in him could learn to say "me," to assert or construct a self, a subject, "only by cultivating an idiom" which is to say, by using language and a language in which "resistance" doesn't play simply any role. Which is to say

not any simple role. But a complex one. The way he comes to conceive of himself, if you'll let me dwell on this a second longer, is through a discursive process which importantly involves one or many resistances.

In the very term "analysis," Derrida reveals an etymological duality: the ancient Greek *analuein* signifies both untying and dissolving. It bears underscoring that Freud's method is a dialectic. Dream signifiers point equally to their opposites. His dream's apparent fear—that he might have missed diagnosing a physical illness—reveals its opposite: a wish for precisely that outcome. If Irma's illness is physiological and beyond the reach of psychoanalytic treatment, Freud is absolved of professional fault. The ultimate wish he identifies is, then, to be free of responsibility and guilt. So ultimately, for Freud, dreams are "far from the expression of a fragmentary activity of the brain," (F 121). They aren't senseless, Freud situates dreams as deeply meaningful. Implicit in his epistemology is the rational concern, which is "to render reason of sense as sense, even if it is hidden," (R 5) where it then merges with a "hermeneutic drive," (R 4).

Here is where Derrida finds his first "one must" in the principle of reason. One must render sense. These foundational axioms play out in two of Freud's remarks which, as deconstructed by Derrida, constitute a rupture that problematizes the entire psychoanalytic enterprise. By the end of our talk, we will hopefully have an exciting understanding of deconstruction, but let us say now, to borrow some words from Manfred Frank,⁵ "it consists in adapting the classical terminology... but then wearing it out through use, and thus distorting and deforming it in such a way that the Western-metaphysical implications are avoided," (MF 74).

The first remark regards Irma's refusal to accept Freud's "solution." The very notion inscribes a law of resistance within analysis and betrays, in the very methods of proposing this solution, a contradiction to the façade of the neutral, objective clinician. Derrida identifies this dynamic as a duel between the analyst's necessarily impassioned truth claims and the patient's disavowal, disavowal as the only mode available to her. The second remark is in Freud's concept of the dream's navel—the point at which analysis halts, where the knowable meets the unknowable. Satisfied in his analytic solution, Freud suspends his work at a place of provisional sense. He has found in Irma the substitution of two other women, two more obedient patients, and notes, but stops short of pursuing, the implication of a third substitution (and so fourth person in one), his own wife. Derrida reads this moment as a paradox: Freud simultaneously declares he will not go further and also that he cannot. The *navel* becomes the locus of what Derrida calls a rupture: the place where analysis must stop because to proceed would collapse its interpretive framework. The navel, paradoxically, is both the birth of the meaning (the dream-wish) and its irreducible limit.

As origin and end, *archi, telos*, it is indivisible and so immune to analysis. But as it is immune by way of meaning and presents therefore a meaningful resistance, then as resistance, belongs to the order of reason and is reasonable and so is required to be analyzed. The desire for origin is the "anagogic principle." The desire for breaking down is the "philolytic principle." This paradox or rupture, as Derrida calls it, destabilizes the coherence of analytic reasoning. Let us dwell on this paradox for a moment. On the one hand, resistance is a play of differences, of defenses to be conquered when a representation is repressed out of consciousness. In the works *De la Grammatologie*⁶ and *Archive Fever*, Derrida foregrounds the structural aspect of difference which, "not more sensible than intelligible," (G 62) makes speech and writing possible by the necessarily infinite play of the finite system of signs whose "psychic images" are therefore a *trace*—as a trace of all that which is absent—and so an origin of sense which is also always no origin and therefore neither a matter of *lived experience* nor *the supernatural*. If, as he explains, "the play of differences supposes... syntheses and referrals which forbid... that a simple element be present in and of itself, referring only to itself" and "no element can function as a sign without referring to another element which itself is not

simply present,” then where each element is “constituted on the basis of the trace within it of other elements of the chain or system,” “nothing... is anywhere ever simply present or absent,” (K 246). Resistance, as a function of a semiotic play of differences and deferral and as a propositional origin of sense, is then a psychical trace. Thus, it is trace that eludes analysis.

2. The Return of Presence

Herein lies the problems for Derrida. Freud had no choice, if he wished to make himself understood, but to inherit from tradition, from the Enlightenment, to keep the two motifs that are constitutive for every concept of analysis. In retaining this axiomatics, Freud was “neither able nor willing” (R 20) to evolve the concept and so was forced to justify his discourse to the tradition therefore remaining answerable to our epistemological inquiry. The entanglement of these exigencies would seem then to necessitate a unified concept of resistance that is yet to be found because, Derrida says, there is no unified concept of analysis. Psychoanalysis will never unify itself being determined only by what resists it. What he wants to talk about “under the title of resistance... is a passage, through the untangling of a knot, *between the three and the four*” (R 8) where again, as the four dream-women, three is the arrested analysis, the solution, and four is the beyond. A peculiar statement.

I will pause here to acknowledge that while Derrida 1. critiques metaphysics in so far as metaphysics grants an indivisible one element of and outside the system which guarantees meaning as semantic identity and is immediately present to itself and 2. assigns the tradition of analysis to the metaphysical, he also admits that the work of deconstruction, here a deconstruction of analysis, “undeniably obeys an analytic exigency,” (R 27) It is an analysis of analysis. If what I claimed is true which is first an endorsement of Derrida’s claim that the work of deconstruction is a productive way forward and out and second that the way has not been taken, it is surely important to understand not only the claim against analysis, if that is what it is, but also what it is that makes deconstruction different.

In “Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences,”⁷ Derrida speaks of another rupture. In this case, the rupture is an event in the history of the concept of structure. It is also, we are told, a redoubling. It follows from the idea that the word structure, the concept of structure, and the structurality of structure are as old as and deeply rooted in Western thought. Before the rupture, structure was given a center which is the organizing principle of the system, a metaphor, as Derrida takes it, which both makes possible and also limits the possibility of play. It is however as center, as orienting and organizing, itself immune to that structural play, it escapes structurality. This should sound very familiar. And so, before the rupture was a series of substitutions of center for center. We can comfortably kill God when we know something equally organizing, invariably present, and pregnant with meaning will immediately take His place. The history of metaphysics is the history of these metaphors, the determination of capital B Being as presence. So, the resistance as the omphalos is yet another substitution of center. The navel as presence is a transcendental signified in which particular shape, I’d like to suggest, remains, problematically, our provisional center.

Derrida is very careful, perhaps more careful than most, perhaps absurdly, hyperbolically careful to some. This earlier essay is also a considerate sort of warning against infinite rebuke of one philosopher by another based on the former’s discourse. If you are finding hypocrisy in deconstruction so far, let me pose a solution in the concept he derives from Lévi-Strauss, a metaphor of *bricolage* or *le bricoleur* as contrasted with that of *the engineer*.⁸ The engineer constructs the whole of his language, syntax, and lexicon. He is the absolute origin of his own discourse and therefore he does not and cannot exist. Bricolage is using the means at hand, is to derive concepts from a heritage, but since it denotes as well an adaptive quality, the bricoleur, exemplified by Lévi-Strauss, bears a double intention: “to preserve as an instrument something whose truth value he criticizes,” (S 359). Why does Derrida more forgiving of Lévi-Strauss

than Freud? Why can he criticize Freud while being indebted to analysis? Because as bricoleur, Levi-Strauss retains the old concepts as tools *knowing* they contain already the necessity of their own critique. He attempts to separate *method* from *truth* with the very capacity for “the language of the social sciences to critique itself,” (S 359). This is precisely what Derrida does and is how we find the decentering of which I spoke a minute ago. In this discourse on myth, we find that there is a violence in centering a language which describes an acentric structure and which will “shortchange the form and movement of myth” (S 363) and so, I’ll continue, dreams, literature, ethics, institutions, human consciousness. Freud’s error lies in his having inherited his concepts uncritically.

3. The Double-Bind and Bad Drama

And now returning to the final stretch of Resistances, Derrida finds in the Freud a double-bind and takes the opportunity for deconstruction to articulate itself. Deconstruction is driven by a relentless, hyperbolic commitment to analyzing the presuppositions of analytic and dialectical thought, a commitment that operates within and preserves this double bind. On one hand, inherits and draws from Enlightenment traditions. On the other hand, tirelessly critiques the residual attachment to notions of a simple, indivisible origin and oppositional logic. Thus, a two-fold “one must”: it must account for the hermeneutic and rational demands that structure meaning, resistance, and conflict and it must analyze that very desire for foundational simplicity. The double-bind does not resolve into a single logic but instead proliferates into an infinite network of aporias, knots of passion, and irreducible tensions, which, rather than obstacles, are what allow for decisions, responsibilities, and events—including analysis itself—to take place. Without this condition of infinite divisibility and tension, thought would collapse into mere causal programs, stripping it of the possibility for agency or meaning. In this way, deconstruction reveals an “interminable drama of analysis” (R 29) as an essential and constitutive feature of responsible interpretation.

Derrida then finally gives name to the phenomenon with which I opened this talk today, with the “anagogical principle,” doomed to fail always, the “philolytic principle” takes priority in the endless, unfinishable nature of analysis—what he calls the “axiom of interminability” or interminable drama. It seems to me that Derrida is frustrating to many people and I mean especially people with the faculties to understand him well.⁹ Perhaps the frustration felt is in no way ameliorated by either Derrida’s awareness of his frustrating you or his rather earnest justification for why these frustrations are valuable. But one can’t deny that both things are true, that is, his argument for deconstruction is sound, and also, it’s very funny and very frustrating:

Here I must cut things off and conclude somewhat abruptly. I conclude with the cut, precisely, and the paradox of decision concerning analysis. What we have just approached is both a hyperanalytic necessity—the law of a “one must analyze endlessly,” what is more, “it is analyzing itself indefinitely,” “it is indefinitely analyzable,” therefore it must be analyzed hyperbolically, (*hyperbolythiquement*, a bricolage of a word, in fact) there remains always to be analyzed-and... what is more or less than a resistance to analysis, a remaining of this “there remains to” that makes of every analytic telos, the simple element, the originary, or the archi, another resistance to analysis, (R 34)

Imploring us to endure this double bind, he continues:

To analyze such a desire does not mean to renounce its law and to suspend the order of reason, of meaning, of the question of the origin, of the social bond. One must equally take into account, so as to render an account of, the archeo-logical, anagogical, and also hermeneutic demand of reason

and the principle of reason: as concerns meaning, resistance, repression, conflict of forces, and so forth. (R 36)¹⁰

Where exhaustive in its wearing out of the signs, deconstruction is also therefore poetic. The way forward and out is mythopoetic and literary but unfortunately literacy is on the decline. I floated allusions in my introduction to a vague idea of contemporary discourse or the tensions of post-modern life. I'm going to leave it as a vague allusion. Google told me this is acceptable to do in a conference paper.¹¹ What we're experiencing in the 21st century is a profound fragmentation and decentering. Those sensitive to a decay often accuse thinkers like Derrida of fostering nihilism or making ethical and political action seem arbitrary; undermining the pursuit of knowledge by casting doubt on objectivity and scientific truth; contributing to this fragmentation and the erosion of shared values or cohesive cultural frameworks; and even being deliberately inaccessible whose language games create a vacuum where coherent and useful theories of social organization might otherwise emerge. But where psychoanalysis is never the simple unveiling or revelation of truth, I hope I've shown deconstruction is not simply revealing its absence.¹²

This work is certainly *in* conflict with interpretation. With its goals and presuppositions. However, it is also a reverence *of* interpretation in whose reverence is the antithesis to the sense of senselessly discarding the post-structuralist project. So, regarding our current predicament where uncritical modes attack from opposite sides a phantasmic straw man by reproducing rigid binaries, hierarchical categorizations, and metanarratives, trying and failing to forcibly substitute a new center, new moral and epistemological absolutes, from which arise only new conflicts of interpretation, it can be most frustrating to hear something like, "we don't have the tools to deal with this."¹³ Deconstruction may not be the most productive way to read, but if we're going to move forward, to contest it and to adapt, we must go between the three and four.

Annotated Bibliography

Derrida, Jacques. *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*. Translated by Eric Prenowitz, University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Here Derrida elaborates on the concepts of memory, the archive, and trace in ways that resonate with his critique of Freud in *Résistances*. By framing the archive as a site of both preservation and repression, Derrida underscores the tensions between presence and absence that are foundational to psychoanalysis and deconstruction alike. More than anything, *Archive Fever* helped me understand Derrida's career spanning engagement with Freud's work, where he aligns himself with the practice of psychoanalytic criticism and where he does not, and ultimately helped me situate the tone and perspective *Résistances* thrusts us into. I thought initially that it might be necessary to draw specific textual evidence from this work, in particular, to bolster my argument where it emphasizes his use of *trace*—and for his not expounding the concept much within *Résistances*—but for time and efficiency, I ultimately did not refer directly to this work.

Derrida, Jacques. "Freud and the Scene of Writing", "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences." *Writing and Difference*. Translated by Alan Bass, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1978.

These essays extend and contextualize Derrida's critique of psychoanalysis, emphasizing the broader stakes of deconstruction. In "Freud and the Scene of Writing," Derrida situates Freud's analytic method within a metaphysical tradition, one that privileges presence while repressing the trace. "Structure, Sign, and Play" introduces a rupture within structuralism, marking the decentering of metaphysical guarantees that Derrida would expand into the notion of interminable analysis. Invoking the latter text is important in my talk in so far as it gathers up the arguments I'm making and with them gestures back to the overarching theme of the conference, *conflicts of interpretation*, which features multiple talks focused on a discursive chain of often contentious intertextuality, in asking, *how am I engaging with a tradition when I read and interpret meaning from what I read? and what would it mean for me to criticize this tradition or any other on the basis of their methods or discourse?* The metaphor of the *bricoleur* subsequently developed is then instructive in this inquiry as well as distilling and clarifying Derrida's problem with Freud and his approach to *resistance*.

Derrida, Jacques, and Kristeva, Julia. "Grammatology and Semiology." In *The Routledge Language and Cultural Theory Reader*, edited by Lucy Burke, Tony Crowley, and Alan Girvin, 241-248. Routledge, 2000.

As Manfred Frank mentions in *What Is Neostructuralism?* Derrida gives some more concise, clarifying comments about the contents of *Of Grammatology* which are helpful considering that I've read it for the first time (and only the one time) this semester and can hardly say I understand it completely.

Derrida, Jacques. *Of Grammatology*. Translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974.

Of Grammatology introduces concepts like logocentrism and the arche-trace that are crucial for the theoretical underpinnings of *Resistances*. Derrida's interrogation of writing and presence provides a foundation for his analysis of resistance and its aporetic structure. This

text offers a way to understand Derrida's philosophical project as it challenges traditional notions of origin, presence, and interpretive closure. As in the case of *Archive Fever*, it became unnecessary to employ material or specific concepts from the text as I might have expected to when beginning my research. It became unnecessary to, for instance, involve directly the famous concept of *différance*—as, indeed, Derrida in *Résistances* doesn't either—in the argument; yet, the research necessarily supported my constructing it. Again, the concepts I do hinge my argument on, *trace* and *presence*, are developed, this time in the context of semiotics and writing itself which illustrates the versatility of Derrida's core ideas.

Derrida, Jacques. "Resistances." *Resistances of Psychoanalysis*, translated by Peggy Kamuf, Pascale-Anne Brault, and Michael Naas, Stanford University Press, 1998.

The essay or lecture in question; the primary focus of my talk which I discovered while digging through books looking for any record or scrap of Derrida commenting on Daniel Paul Schreber or the Sigmund Freud text on Schreber. I found this text to be an effective and succinct articulation of the complex and disperse method of deconstruction which doubly articulated what I sensed rudimentarily about the writings on Schreber and sensed I could rely on Derrida to crystalize which was the apparent nearsightedness of positing singular, reductive material, psychological or political truths through the narrative, creative remediation that is the *Memoirs*.

Frank, Manfred. *What Is Neostructuralism?* Translated by Sabine Wilke and Richard Gray, University of Minnesota Press, 1989.

Frank's text provides an external vantage point on Derrida's critique of metaphysics and interpretive traditions, grounding his work within broader philosophical discourse. As a hermeneutic scholar, Frank examines the implications of Derrida's thought, particularly the tensions between analytic and post-structuralist methodologies. Frank contextualizes in broad strokes the rational/antirational or metaphysical/antimetaphysical conflict. The book was valuable to my research for how it fills in gaps in understanding Derrida (providing the interesting interview between he and Julia Kristeva), how it sketches a comprehensive account of much of the post-structural work, and for how it demonstrates informed argumentation of the findings and implications of Jacques Derrida, working through his methods to critique him.

Freud, Sigmund. *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Translated and edited by James Strachey, Basic Books, inc., 1958.

The original text by Sigmund Freud on which Derrida builds his critique. *Interpretation of Dreams* is a foundational text of psychoanalysis and an important facet of Freud's work in defining a theory of the human subconscious.

Endnotes

¹ Our seminar has demonstrated perfect examples in *Les Mystère de Paris* and *The Memoirs of Judge Schreber* at least.

² From Derrida, Jacques. *Resistances of Psychoanalysis*. Hereafter cited as *R*.

³ Freud, Sigmund. *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Hereafter cited as *F*.

⁴ In the United States university system, pedagogies of literary studies certainly vary greatly from program to program or even professor to professor. However, it feels fair to claim Theory doesn't hold any privileged position.

Pedagogical literature indicates a shift from both strictly formalist and strictly theoretical approaches toward integrative (*disorganized) pedagogies that blend close reading, historical context, socio-political/identity-based lenses (feminist, queer, marxist, postcolonial, racial), and student-centered methods emphasizing emotional engagement and personal relevance where theoretical texts are seen as less practical in the classroom.

Popular opinion expressed in magazines like *The New Yorker* or *The Atlantic* capture the attitude toward Theory that seem either like an entirely wrong reading or at least as though they've cherry picked a few bad habits of a few cherry-picked theorists and thrown the baby out with the bathwater. "*The Atlantic's Scott Stossel wrote in 1996*, professors at the time were offering up just about 'any esotericism' you could think of to support reading a book not as a book, but as a coded text (always a text) dealing with the semester's most provocative social issues. Eventually, people graduated and could return to reading books like normal. It was all very silly, and by the end of 20th century, the backlash had begun against criticism 'disconnected from life' and academia's 'love affair with reducing literature to ideas, to the author's or reader's intention or ideology,' argued Lindsay Waters in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* back in 2005"

Academic literature (I found antipodal examples championing a return to proper criticism as well as a more accessible, fully socio-political/economic or identity driven methodology) similarly maligns Theory, post-structuralism in particular in similarly unfair ways, I feel, targeting its relativism, cynicism,

Richard A. Posner, "The Decline of Literary Criticism," *32 Philosophy and Literature* 385 (2008).

Grobman, Laurie. "Toward a Multicultural Pedagogy: Literary and Nonliterary Traditions." *MELUS*, vol. 26, no. 1, 2001, pp. 221–40. Ruitenberg, C.W. (2018).

Postmodernism and Poststructuralism. In: Smeyers, P. (eds) *International Handbook of Philosophy of Education*. Springer International Handbooks of Education. Springer, Cham.

⁵ From Frank, Manfred. *What Is Neostructuralism?* Hereafter cited as MF.

⁶ Derrida, Jacques. *Of Grammatology*. Hereafter cited as *G*. Also, Derrida, Jacques, and Kristeva, Julia. "Grammatology and Semiology." Hereafter cited as *K*.

⁷ From Derrida, Jacques. *Writing and Difference*. Hereafter cited as *S*.

⁸ Derived in "Structure, Sign and Play" from the Lévi-Strauss work, *The Savage Mind*.

⁹ Long the target of cries of obscurantism, propped up as a mastermind in commentary/criticism taking aim at the proliferation of irony, self-awareness, self-referential wit, and an apparent lack of earnest values, from literary/pop-culture writers/Don Delillo haters, to the likes of Jordan Peterson, for instance, who in his lecture series makes a cartoon villain of Derrida without ever citing him or saying anything at all that proves he has read him, and ultimately, developing a "philosophy" that is largely consistent with the Derrida texts I have read as well as the general thought under postmodernism with regard to value hierarchies and meta-narratives.

¹⁰ A potent justification of the later call to "reread" texts on deconstruction from *Limited, Inc.* and the only quote necessary to prove my claim that those who conflate the general state of apathy and decay in the postmodern condition with the poststructuralist project are committing a fatal misstep of *post-postmodernism* and would discover most productive tools (or at least coping mechanisms) in this very work and should therefore reconsider it.

¹¹ "Google" in this case, a resource sourced from a Google search, University of California, *Writing a Conference Paper in the Humanities* <https://gwc.ucr.edu/sites/default/files/2019-01/Writing-a-Conference-Paper-in-the-Humanities.pdf>

¹² Derrida, *Limited Inc* (1988): "[Let] it be said in passing how surprised I have often been, how amused or discouraged, depending on my humor, by the use or abuse of the following argument: Since the deconstructionist (which is to say, isn't it, the skep-tic-relativist-nihilist!) is supposed not to believe in truth, stability, or the unity of meaning, in intention or "meaning-to-say," how can he demand of us that we read him with pertinence, precision, rigor? How can he demand that his own text be interpreted correctly? How can he accuse anyone else of having misunderstood, simplified, deformed it, etc.? In other words, how can he discuss, and discuss the reading of what he writes? The answer is simple enough: this definition of the deconstructionist is false (that's right: false, not true) and feeble; it supposes a bad (that's right: bad, not good) and feeble reading of numerous texts, first of all mine, which therefore must finally be read or reread."

¹³ A sentiment echoed in all corners about everything from identity theory/politics to new media/culture theory.