TRACING A TECHNOLOGICAL GOD: A PSYCHOANALYTIC STUDY OF

GOOGLE AND THE GLOBAL RAMIFICATIONS OF ITS MEDIA PROLIFERATION

By

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This dissertation was prepared under the direction of the candidate's dissertation advisor, Dr. Frédéric Conrod, Department of Comparative Studies, and has been approved by the members of his supervisory committee. It was submitted to the faculty of the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters and was accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

Author: Benton Fazzolari

Title: Tracing a Technological God: A Psychoanalytic Study of Google
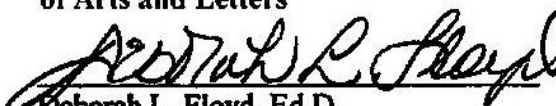   and the Global Ramifications of its Media Proliferation

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This dissertation makes the connection between the human drive, as described by

psychoanalysis, to construct God and the construction of the technological entity, Google.

Google constitutes the extension of the early Christian period God to the twenty-first

century. From the examination of significant religious and theological texts by significant

theologians (Augustine, Thomas, Luther, Calvin, etc.) that explain the nature of God, the

analogous relationship of God to Google will open a psychoanalytic discourse that

answers questions on the current state of human mediation with the world. Freud and,

more significantly, Lacan's work connects the human creation of God, *ex nihilio*, to

Google's godly qualities and behaviors (omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, and

omnibenevolence). This illustrates the powerful motivation behind the creation of an all-

encompassing physical / earthly entity that includes the immaterial properties of God.

Essentially, Google operates as the extension or replacement of the long reigning God in Western culture. Furthermore, the advent of science and technology through rationalism (as outlined by Nietzsche) results in the death of the metaphysical God and the ascension of the technological God. Google offers an appropriate example for study. Moreover, the work of Jean Baudrillard and Marshall McLuhan will further comment on Google as the technological manifestation of God, particularly in its media formulations. Finally, this dissertation concludes with a review that highlights future research with an exploration that foresees the death of Google from the same rational method of inquiry by which the death of God occurred at the end of the nineteenth century.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Carolyn; my mother, Mary; my sister, Lisa; and my grandparents Benny and Carmella. I truly appreciate all of the love and support you gave me over the years.

TRACING A TECHNOLOGICAL GOD: A PSYCHOANALYTIC STUDY OF

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I. INTRODUCTION

Google is a Technological God

Google is a technological God whose media arbitrates virtually all forms of

human activity. The same can be said for the metaphysical God previous to German

Philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche's declaration of His death. Formerly, He served as the

ultimate mediator of human interaction and being. Obviously, the existence and nature of

God remains under continuous debate. Therefore, this study relies on the idea that God is

a purely human creation and that humans design God with several characteristics, such as

omnipotence, omnipresence, omnibenevolence, and omniscience; and most importantly

that humans design God as a psychologically motivated enterprise. Moreover, humans

are psychologically driven to create a higher being and the theologians specifically

describe that higher being. The assertion that Google is a technological God includes a

theoretical analysis of why God has been created from a psychoanalytic standpoint, and

that the specific nature of God aligns with another powerful human creation, Google.

Since this study asserts that Google is a technological God, and the eventual

outcome of scientific rationalism, it requires a discussion of the God, of which Google is

the logical extension: The Christian monotheistic (metaphysical) God. Hence, this study

will chronicle the commentary on the conceptions and attributes of God from several of

the central Western theologians and religious philosophers. The works of Saint

Augustine, Saint Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Jonathan

Edwards serve to lay a foundation to define God from the Christian perspective and for

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the foundation of this study. All of these writers shape the current conceptualization of the metaphysical God in the Western world.

After the psychological origin and the theologian nature of God is established, this study will trace the development of God within the framework of philosophical metaphysics and, later, scientific rationalism. It will illustrate that the very method employed by the Scholastic (and other) theologians (rationalism or the use of reason) to understand the nature and attributes of God, actually resulted in what Nietzsche describes as the death of God. By examining the continuum of thought concerning God from French Philosopher René Descartes through German Philosopher Georg Hegel, God eventually becomes impossible to explain as a metaphysical being and eventually ascends to the level of an entirely contradictory concept displaced by the scientific method, altogether. The new God becomes science and is manifested by technological advancement, which is epitomized by the contemporary entity, Google.

Austrian Psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud's discussion of God explains the human drive to create God, and also serves as a bridge to French Psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan's God who is created *ex nihilio*. Therefore, the shift of the metaphysical God, which morphs into the God of the Enlightenment, finally shifts, through Freud, to the God of modernity. The God of modernity loses its metaphysical power and becomes science and technology (the postmodern God). The works of German Philosopher Martin Heidegger and American Historian Lewis Mumford explain the advent of the technological God as the extension (and replacement) of the metaphysical God. Finally, Canadian Media Theorist Marshall McLuhan and French Sociologist Jean Baudrillard provide the foundation for the analysis of Google's media and the eventual logical outcome of the technological God, which mirrors that of the metaphysical God: Death. The rest of this

introduction serves to outline the various pieces that will guide the overall development and logical order of this study.

<p style="text-align:center">The Psychological Drive to Create God</p>

This study begins by answering the question: Why are humans psychologically driven to create God? Freud's psychoanalytic theory carries an appropriate method of interpretation to answer this question. In simple terms, Freud posits God as our Father. He writes, "Now that God was a single person, man's relations to him could recover the intimacy and intensity of the child's relation to his father" (*Future Illusion* 19). This father and son relationship involves a rivalry, but also love and admiration, as Freud notes that the son "loved and admired" (*Totem Taboo* 166), his father, too. The rivalry manifests in the worship and slaughter of the totem animal (representation of God and father) in primeval culture. Essentially, the guilt from the murder of the totem animal resides in the unconscious and ultimately results in the desire "for the father" and "the root of the need for religion" (*Future Illusion* 22). Of course, a short explanation of the Oedipus complex reveals pre-Lacanian aspects of God's creation, as well.

Along with unconscious guilt, unconscious fear penetrates the human psyche through the symbolic threat of castration. Therefore, the necessity to create a God that forgives and protects underlies the ethical monotheistic God's attributes of benevolence and power. The presence of the totem animal remains fixed within the horde as does the image of the omniscient father in childhood. Also, the powerlessness humans feel in the face of nature inspired humans to create a God who controls nature, including death. In the end, this God also carries a list of prohibitions as a father who watches over his son to ensure he behaves accordingly as not to transgress sexual and social rules. During the

study of Google as a technological God, Lacan's advancement of Freud will emphasize the human drive toward the creation of the omnipotent, omnipresent, omnibenevolent, and omniscient God.

<div align="center">Lacan's Extension of Freud</div>

Lacan's central contribution to this discussion revolves around his mirror stage of development and his concept of (God's) *creatio ex nihilio*. The mirror stage of development adds to Freud's conception that concerns psychosexual development and its relationship to the creation of God. Essentially, the mirror stage represents the moment a child recognizes its own subjectivity, which ignites the desire for the ideal ego. The ideal ego represents the unattainable attributes found in the descriptions of God. Further, Lacan's mirror stage correlates to the moment one discovers the fragmentation of the self. An attempt to reconnect the fragments informs the desire toward the unreachable ideal.

The mirror stage correlates with Lacan's registers of human subjectivity, "the Symbolic," the "Real," and the "Imaginary." His approach involves identifying the Real as what exists infinitely. The only access to the Real enters through the Symbolic register. Lacan connects this to *creatio ex nihilio* with the "Word." He refers to the Biblical utterance when he references John 1:1 and states, "In the beginning was the Word, which is to say, the signifier" (*Seminar VII* 213). The term signifier relates to Swiss Linguist Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic assertions on language. In brief, language enters as a symbolic representation of something to be signified. Therefore, the Real exists and then enters the register of the Symbolic through language (the word) to describe the Real. Incidentally, the Real can never be fully accessed because the word is only a symbol of the Real. Henceforth, the Imaginary register contains the appearance of meaning attached

to a chain of signifiers. In relation to God and creation, God exists as the Real, enters the world as the Symbolic through the word (*creatio ex nihilio*), and His meaning (or lack thereof) resides in the Imaginary register.

Obviously, there lies a connection of the Father and Son with the Real and the Symbolic. God the Father exists for all time and His entrance into the Imaginary realm comes through His Word, the Son. Although the connection of Lacan to the Christian Trinity to Google can be argued, this discussion will focus solely on the attributes of the monotheistic God. Regardless, Lacan's extension of Freud will be discussed at great length in terms of God as the being who creates from nothing by utilizing ideas of the mirror stage of psychosexual development and his semiotic interpretation of human subjectivity. This will further clarify, beyond Freud, why humans create God.

God According to the Theologians

The focus of this section revolves around the rational based articulation of God as omnipotent, omnipresent, omnibenevolent, and omniscient. The analysis from the central theologians provides an overlapping conception of an ever evolving God that parallels the ascension of rational thought to its decline in terms of theology. For instance, Thomas gives the Aristotelian based explanation for God's nature fueled by rationalism, whereas Edwards, an eighteenth century Protestant Theologian, supplies a conception of God that represents the decline of rationality in theological circles. While this shift occurs, philosophical rationalization (from Descartes, for example) answers questions on the nature and attributes of God that results in the death of God.

In terms of God's attributes, all of them overlap with each other. For example, God's omniscience involves His knowledge or wisdom as well as His goodness or

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omnibenevolence. Free will illustrates this principle because God's knowledge of His creation also includes His creation as an act of love. He carries the knowledge to create while He creates out of love. Similarly, Google as a technological God carries these overlapping attributes. These attributes will be discussed at great length in terms of the metaphysical God and the technological God, Google.

<div align="center">God's Evolution in Philosophy</div>

Through a discussion of the rationales of and for God during the Enlightenment period, He becomes a being of contradictions unable to be logically rationalized. So without altering rationalism, itself, to the point where the metaphysical God becomes logically incoherent and absurd; God had to be replaced by something rationally valid. In a sense, the method of rationalization eventually overshadows the object of rationalization (the metaphysical God). Therefore, God slowly becomes replaced by a method, which, in turn, results in a God based in science (Google). While God's attributes remain fixed in place, His existence in metaphysical terms, dissolves. After the discussion of God's nature and attributes from the Theological perspective, a discussion ensues outlining the steps toward the metaphysical God's death from philosophical believers of the metaphysical God, such as Descartes, German Philosopher Immanuel Kant, and Hegel. Although God's central attributes remain in place, a new technological God ascends. Nietzsche's analysis of the death of God to the advent of science (and later the technological God) will follow. Finally, the technological God under discussion will be Google.

From God to Science

The advent of science follows the pattern of rational metaphysics, which Nietzsche identifies. The theologians employed their extensive reasoning capabilities to explicate and promote, with as much exactitude as possible, the nature of God. Therefore, the method remains in place for Descartes, Kant, and Hegel to retain the metaphysical God, yet reason Him out of existence. During this time, science develops its method with Galileo, Kepler, Bacon, and Newton, all of whom were theists. In fact, Oxford Scholar Alan Padgett observes, "There was no conflict in principle, between . . . science and religion before the enlightenment" (579). The Enlightenment period signals the beginning of the major rift between science and theology. Again, though, rationality itself set this process in motion.

To briefly elaborate, science contra theology starts with the mechanistic concept of the world. Lewis Mumford looks at the period of astronomical discoveries as the central time period when the mechanistic scientific worldview becomes a new religion. He writes, "The period between Copernicus and Newton [contributed to] a new outlook . . . while the Christian Heaven shrank, the astronomical heaven expanded . . . [which created] a profound religious reorientation . . . [that] accounts for the immense authority that the astronomical and mechanical world picture exerted" (*Myth Machine* 34). Hence, Galileo ushers in the near negation of subjective experience in favor of the attempt at a complete and total understanding of the objective world.

This eliminates *human* experience from the scientific method. In simple terms, this privileges the quantitative over the qualitative. In simpler terms, the planet lives as a giant machine and everything in it also lives as a machine within a mechanical universe.

Mumford continues, "The new cult . . . promoted an immense concentration on the mastery of earthly life: exploration, invention, conquest, colonization, all centered on immediate fulfillment. Now, not the hereafter, was what counted" (34). Consequently, the path to certainty and truth as it pertains to objective reality no longer resides in the metaphysical realm where the human lives as a subjective and moral being. Rather, all subjectivity belongs to those who employ the scientific method and reason to apprehend objective truth of human objects and everything else in the natural world on earth and in the universe. Again, this shift will be discussed at great length.

Freud's Perspective of Science

Despite his problematic methodological form, Freud supported the progress of science. Freud himself claims, "We believe that it is possible for scientific work to gain some knowledge about the reality of the world . . . Science has given us evidence by its numerous and important successes that it is no illusion" (*Future Illusion* 55). Freud firmly believes psychoanalysis to be a scientific enterprise. Freud was not alone in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to place a significant amount of faith in the scientific method. He was part of a rising tide of intellectuals and industrialists whose viewpoint upheld the movement toward a domination of nature, a dismantling of religious institutions, and the building of modernist utopias. This paves the way for the advent of the technological God to come.

Nietzsche's Viewpoint

Nietzsche proves to be far more critical of the scientific project, but explains its ascension over the metaphysical. Professor of Philosophy Charles Pence comments, "Nietzsche's critique of Darwinian evolution argues not that it leaves too much to

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randomness, chance, or disorder, but that it places an over-intellectualized view of life"

(167). Nietzsche's standpoint parallels that of Mumford. Although they articulate it

differently, both feel that the power of the scientific method to ascertain mechanical-like

order neglects a paradoxical form of human truth found within human expression and

creativity. Nietzsche makes this distinction with the comparison of two complementary

aspects of human aesthetic practice, the Apollonian and the Dionysian. Nietzsche words

it like this:

> [The Apollonian] combats Dionysian wisdom and art, it seeks to dissolve
>
> myth, it substitutes for a metaphysical comfort an earthly consonance . . .
>
> the god of machines . . . the powers of the forces of nature recognized and
>
> employed in the service of the higher egoism; it believes that it can correct
>
> the world of knowledge, guide life by science, and actually confine the
>
> individual within a limited sphere of solvable problems (*Birth Tragedy*
>
> 64).

Like Mumford, Nietzsche does not call for the entire wholesale removal of the scientific

outlook of life, but both see the dismantling of the ability of the human to create and

express culturally and aesthetically without the dictates of the mechanical science based

society. So when the Apollonian overpowers the Dionysian, the rules of the mechanical

hold sway in society. In a sense, the scientific viewpoint of the cosmos and the earth take

power over the human mind and results in a singular outlook from humanity. As the

theological perspective from the Scholastics and others created a singular point of view

of life mediated by God, the scientific project replaces theology as the new dogma of

mediation for the human subject (object). Mumford reinforces this idea when he writes,

"Thus in time, specialized knowledge, knowing more and more about less and less, finally turns into secret knowledge, accessible only to an inner priesthood, whose sense of power is in turn inflated by their privileged command of trade secrets" (*Myth Machine* 113). Eventually, human scientific rationalism manifested in technology creates a technological God that extends and mirrors the metaphysical monotheistic God.

McLuhan, Foucault, Baudrillard, and the Technological God

McLuhan asserts in his book, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, that human mediums or, more precisely, media exist in the technological realm and, more significantly, that human technology extends human empiricism and rationalism. He claims:

> Rapidly, we approach the final phase of the extension of man, the technological simulation of consciousness, when the creative process of knowing will be collectively and corporately extended to the whole of human society, much as we have already extended our senses and nerves by the various media (3-4).

This technological simulation of consciousness absorbs the conceptualization of God as an immediate extension through the connected interface. Google is the technological God extension of the human and the ultimate extension of everything humans can conceive in overcoming the guilt, fear, and prohibitions of humanness. God died in metaphysical spirit, but remains alive in a technological entity.

This occurs through the daily mediation of human function with and within the circuit of Google's ecosystem. Its daily reinforcement relates to Foucault's concept of microphysics of power. Foucault claims that power operates at the micro-level. At the

micro-level the human participates in the operation of functional power. In the most

obvious analysis, Google's power or the power of the technological God is reinforced

with each physical use. Furthermore, Foucault states that there is an "apex" of a

"pyramidical" order of power. But that apex is not simply an entity that imposes its will

from the top down (*Power / Knowledge* 159). Foucault continues, "The summit and the

lower elements of the hierarchy stand in a relationship of mutual support and

conditioning, a mutual 'hold'" (159). This implies a bottom to top arrangement of power

that operates simultaneously with the top to bottom arrangement. Essentially, this is how

Google becomes and remains a technological God.

Furthermore, Foucault notes, "In spite of the coherence of its results, it is

generally no more than a multiform instrumentation" (26). The mechanization of human

expression through scientific rationalism creates and reinforces a human instrument who

serves as part of an entire network of pure function. McLuhan implies this same assertion

in relation to technological media when he writes, "Our conventional response to all

media, namely that it is how they are used that counts, is the numb stance of the

technological idiot" (19). To bridge Foucault with McLuhan, the operation of discipline

over the body occurs through a normalization process that involves residing in a

particular space (physically and mentally) with a regulation upon the senses (constant

engagement with technology). In the case of Google, *what the human searches* using

Google's search engine is irrelevant in comparison to *the act of searching* itself. So when

the human stares into the screen, pushes buttons, and remains located in a single spot,

Google's apex position is reinforced while the human becomes mechanical mentally and

physically. Baudrillard claims that the human object mass operates within the technology.

Summary

As the chapter outline denotes, this project aims to trace the conceptions of God from the Christian monotheistic tradition to the death of God as proclaimed by Nietzsche. With a psychoanalytic lens, through Freud and Lacan, one can establish the motivation for the creation of this God. After the death of God, applied science moves into God's position as the ultimate mediator of human activity. The new technological God, Google, epitomizes this mediation and power. This project stands as an extension to the previous claims of God and technology by interpreting the global entity, Google through several examples of its media objects and advertisements.

Organization of Argument

This study begins by answering the question: Why did humans create God? This question is answered through the theories of Freud and Lacan. Then a review of the metaphysical Christian God will answer the question: What God did humans create? Then follows a discussion of Nietzsche's death of God, which answers the question: What God died? How did this God die? Why did this God die? And what God replaces this God? After that, a short summary of the origins of Google followed by an analysis that answers the questions: Why is Google a technological God? What are the ramifications of this reality? This includes a look at various Google media and advertisements. Finally, the conclusion will review the main arguments as well as offer potential extensions to this research, which includes the eventual death of Google.

II. FREUD- WHY HUMANS CREATED GOD

"God did not, as the Bible says, make man in His image; on the contrary man . . . made

God in his image" (Feuerbach 187).

Freud grew up in the small Catholic town of Freiberg, which housed a tiny

percentage of Jewish residents. Swiss Theologian Hans Küng describes the anti-Semitism

Freud faced as a child (*Freud and God* 10). Freud learned of Judaism from his mother

and attended Catholic Mass with his nanny (10). Hence, he was extremely familiar with

the monotheistic God who he critically examines in his book *The Future of an Illusion.*

Freud denies the existence of God and explains why humans believe in Him. In addition,

he makes specific claims that relate to the psychological reasons that pertain to the human

creation of the ethical monotheistic God.

To understand Freud's notions of God requires a brief outline that relates to the

evolution of the father from earlier times. Freud, who viewed English Naturalist Charles

Darwin as a hero (Ogden 179), looks to Darwin's natural history to analyze the conflict

between the son and the father. According to Darwin, "[Man] aboriginally lived in small

communities, each with a single wife, or if powerful with several, whom he jealously

guarded against all other men" (591). The "other men" include his sons. American Freud

Scholar C. G. Schoenfeld explains, "When the growing sons excited the jealousy of their

savage and brutal sire, they were killed, castrated, or driven from the primal horde . . .

Ultimately one of these sons succeeded to his father's position" (215). Also, Freud offers

the support of myths and fairy tales to illustrate his point. In *Moses and Monotheism*, he

refers to Austrian Psychoanalyst Otto Rank's *The Myth and the Birth of the Hero* and concludes that a "Hero is a man who stands up manfully against his father and in the end victoriously overcomes him" (18). Therefore, the rival between the father and son began in primeval times. Despite the rivalry, Freud notes that the sons "loved and admired him too" (*Totem Taboo* 166). He continues, "After they [murdered] him . . . a sense of guilt made its appearance . . . felt by the whole group . . . [thus] the dead father became stronger" (166).

The sense of guilt remains within the unconscious. This remorse provides the initial drive to appease the dead father and to quell the feelings of guilt that linger. In his essay "Death and Us" Freud constructs an uncomfortable representation of man that supports his theory. He writes, "The history of the world learned . . . [by] children is . . . a series of murders of peoples. The vague sense of guilt [remains] . . . which in some religions [is] primal guilt or original sin . . . [from] the men of prehistory" (qtd. in Meghnagi and Solms 22). Freud explains the rise of the totemic religion. The origin of this religion "arose from the filial sense of guilt, in an attempt to allay that feeling . . . [and] all later religions are seen to be attempts at solving the same problem" (*Totem Taboo* 168). Totemism is "the first religion in the history of mankind" (133). Essentially, a group selects a totem animal to worship and revere as well as sacrifice and kill. This represents the ambivalent feelings for the murdered primeval father.

Consequently, the entire system of religion becomes a necessary human construction or a compulsion toward conceiving a conception of the cosmos that removes this primeval guilt. Eventually the solution evolves from Totemism to monotheism, which "enthroned the father in a Kingdom of Heaven, thereby symbolically nullifying the

unconscious guilt over the killing of the primal father" (Brunner 161). Freud elucidates it in this way, "Paul, a Roman Jew . . . seized upon this feeling of guilt and correctly traced it back to its primeval source. This he called original sin . . . [Then] a Son of God . . . sacrificed himself and had thereby taken over the guilt of the world" (*Moses Monotheism* 139). Furthermore, in Christianity, the primal father becomes divine or worshiped as a spiritual entity well after His murder. Freud concludes that the death of Christ demonstrates this historical fact (*Civilization Discontents* 107). In this fashion, Freud draws the timeline of the development from the father / son rival in primal hordes to the advent of the totemic religions and, finally, to Judeo-Christian monotheism. Accordingly, Freud declares, "God was the exalted father, and the longing for the father was the root of the need for religion" (*Future Illusion* 22).

The primeval rivalry also serves as the foundation for Freud's Oedipus complex. Before a return to Freud's thoughts on God and religion, this moment will offer a brief explanation of his chief psychoanalytical theory. During a period of self-analysis, Freud mentions the underlying precept of the complex, "I have found, in my own case, [the phenomenon] of being in love with my mother and jealous of my father, and I now consider it a universal event in early childhood" (qtd. in Churchman 272). Freud makes his own feelings a unanimous experience for all. He reinforces this in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, "The hypothesis I have put forward in regard to the psychology of children has an equally universal validity" (278). Therefore, to Freud, all humans potentially live through the Oedipus drama in early childhood.

Freud's identification of the central drama in the life of a child coincides with his ideas about God. At the center of the drama lies conflict. The conflict with the father

from the primeval period resides within the psyche of the child. *The Ego and the Id* offers

a rich explanation of Freud's theory. It reads, "[When] the boy's sexual wishes in regard

to his mother become more intense and his father is perceived as an obstacle to them:

from this the Oedipus complex originates" (*Freud Reader* 640). The primary aspect of

the complex revolves around the "love and hate for the father, rather than between love

for the mother and fear of the father" (Blass 1112). Freud continues, "An ambivalent

attitude to his father . . . [makes up] the content of the . . . Oedipus complex" (*Freud

Reader* 640). Freud's connects his history and origin of God and religion to the personal

development of the child. The young boy identifies with his father, but finds a growing

desire for his mother. This narrative retains its psychological meaning through the girl, as

well. Although some of the variables change, particularly with castration, the young girl

enters a similar period of desire. Freud claims this in both positive and negative terms.

Positive Oedipus complex in a boy bears the standard conflict and reverses for the girl.

Negative Oedipus complex reverses the conflict in both boys and girls (Boy desires father

and carries ambivalence for mother, etc.). In fact, Freud writes in *The Ego and the Id*,

"Closer study usually discloses the Oedipus complex is . . . due to the bisexuality

originally present in children" (*Freud Reader* 641).

The boy must repress the feelings in order to "internalize" him as "an inner source

of strength" (Blass 1112). This serves as a requirement for a future healthy libido. Early

in the boy's life (about the age of three), he must resolve this issue. In British Professor

Rachel Blass's words, "He gives up on an external beloved object [his mother] and

attains an alternative internal one" (1113). Even if resolved in early childhood, problems

still potentially arise because, as Schoenfeld mentions, "The unconscious does not grow

up . . . the fears that enter it during early childhood remain in their original infantile form" (228). As in the case of Oedipus the King, only later in life one may acquire the knowledge of the unconscious drives in one's own history. In other words, "The analysand must recreate his or her past and claim it arduously and painfully" (Morgenstern 780), evidently through psychoanalysis.

Castration functions as the other key element of the Oedipus complex. Again, conflict contributes to the psychical relationship with the father. This time it manifests in psychical fear. This fear enters the child when he first sees the female genitalia and discovers that she lacks a penis. Freud notes, "[A boy attributes] to everyone, including females, the possession of a penis . . . [until] he sees his little sister's genitals" (*Complete Works* 1971).[1] At this point, he experiences anxiety, which becomes the "source of the oedipal conflict" (Blass 1114). Principally, the boy fears the punishment of castration by his father if he acts upon his desire for his mother. The boy has an opportunity to resolve the Oedipus complex as long as he "keeps the incest wishes well buried" (Kahn 87). The boy does not act upon his sexual desire in exchange for the possibility of future sexual activity. Thus, he retains his penis and may resolve the desire for his mother. Incidentally, according to Oxford Scholar Naomi Morgenstern, "The girl . . . discovers her castrated state . . . [and] becomes an Oedipal subject, desiring what her father can give her, or so she thinks. She thus never successfully moves beyond the Oedipal moment" (783). American Professor Emeritus Michael Kahn reinforces this. He writes, "The girl is apt to relinquish the Oedipus complex more slowly and less completely . . . [as] girls are not as

[1] From *On the Sexual Theories of Children*.

motivated to destroy [it because] they are not under the threat of castration . . . [and] the mother does not seem as dangerous as father" (86-87).

Overall, the Oedipus complex, with its emphasis on childhood ambivalent conflict with the father, supports Freud's entire perspective on God and religion. To paraphrase Freud: when the boy grows up, he knows that he is stronger, but his understanding of the dangers in life have also grown. Therefore, he feels just as helpless and unprotected as he was in his childhood. He recognizes, too, that his father is helpless. He therefore remembers the image of the father of his childhood that he loved and feared. He exalts the image into a deity. The power of this image and the persistence of his need for protection both sustain his belief in God (*Complete Works* 4762).[2] Certainly, these ideas existed before Freud. For example, Scottish Philosopher David Hume writes in 1757 in *The Natural History of Religion*, "No wonder, then, that mankind, being placed in such absolute ignorance . . . should immediately acknowledge a dependence on invisible powers . . . [that] we ascribe . . . thought, and reason . . . and the figures of men, in order to bring them nearer to a resemblance with ourselves" (30). Finally, Schoenfeld summarizes, "Men form God, not only of the master of the primal horde, but also . . . in the image of the father of childhood" (222). Therefore, the connection to primal religious drives in the creation of God and the contemporary clinging to God run consistently through Freud's conception of the Oedipal complex and God.

Freud's perspective of God and religion involves more. He defines God as an illusion. In terms of illusion, British Psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott describes God as existing in a "transitional space" of "illusion, where our, culture, and religion belong"

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[2] From *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*.

(qtd. in Rizzuto 209). Whereas, Argentinian Psychoanalyst Ana-Marie Rizzuto points out

that Freud considers "God and religion a wishful childish illusion" (209). Freud clarifies,

"Men cannot remain children forever; they must in the end go out into 'hostile life' . . .

We may call this 'education to reality'" (*Future Illusion* 49). To Freud, illusions are not

the same as errors (*Future Illusion* 30), since they are "derived from human wishes" (31).

Humans want to believe something to be true and that certain something may not be

false. Freud offers the example when he writes, "One may describe as an illusion the

assertion made by certain nationalists that the Indo-Germanic race is the only one capable

of civilization" (30-31). Therefore, at the center of an illusion lies a wish. By comparison,

Freud distinguishes its difference to the delusion. The delusion is in "contradiction to

reality" (31). For example, when one believes that the earth is flat, that person is

delusional because the flat earth contradicts objective reality. God's status as an illusion

means that He may exist. Freud mentions, "That the Messiah will come and found a

golden age is [very unlikely]" (31). Therefore, Freud's enterprise encompasses the

reasons why humans believe and not necessarily to disprove the existence of God.

Humans create God to take away the terror of nature. Freud claims that human

confrontation with nature led to the creation of Gods who controlled nature, such as the

mythical Gods of ancient Greece. He writes, "A man makes the forces of nature not

simply into persons . . . [He] gives them the character of the father . . . [and] he turns

them into gods" (17). Death supplies one major element embedded within the terror of

nature. Freud calls this the "cruelty of fate" (18). In order to overcome or at least cope

with the overwhelming realization of the inevitability of death, humans create the illusion

of life after death. Freud observes, "Death itself is not extinction, is not a return to

inorganic lifelessness, but the beginning of a new kind of existence which on the path of development to something higher" (19). Immortality offers a way to share intimacy with God as the Father like the child and his father. This gave rise to the monotheistic God and further, the personal monotheistic God because one wants to be "his only beloved child" (19). This expands to entire "chosen peoples" and chosen "countries" (19). Of course, if one does not find favor with the father, one can be condemned to infinite punishment in hell.

Freud's concept of religion and God ties with the rise and creation of civilization. With this advancement, humans prohibit certain instinctual wishes in return for certain protections and securities. Freud offers incest, cannibalism, and murder as examples (10). In Totemism, which has "intimate connections with the later god-religions," (23) the totem animals become "the sacred animals of the gods; and the earliest, but most fundamental moral restrictions, the prohibitions against murder and incest" (23). Again, the shift from the animal god to the human one relates to the "father-complex and man's helplessness and need for protection . . . [and] consist in the relation of the child's helplessness to the helplessness of the adult which continues it" (23). Consequently, the thousands of prohibitions and statutes in the Mosaic Law and other religious law set up a system of prohibitions and legalities that impinge on the basic intrinsic wishes of humankind, but in compromise offer the humans the safety and fortification against the anxiety associated with the threats of murder, incest, and cannibalism.

Freud's assertions illustrate that God comes from our unconscious drive to overcome fear, guilt, and the natural world as well as to project the existence of an ideal transcendent being who humans can both love and fear. The metaphysical God served as

a being who could help to resolve these human issues. The technological God comes from the same psychological drives to deal with the same ordeals from both the unconscious and the natural world. As a technological expression of human creativity, it overwhelms the natural world completely. Lacan theorizes the period called the mirror stage as a means to explain the moment during Freud's stages of psychosexual development to ignite the ego that informs human fear and guilt, which contributes to the creation of God.

<div align="center">Lacan and Creatio Ex Nihilio</div>

While Freud's theory of the human creation of God focuses on a psycho-anthropological analysis, Lacan utilizes Sausseurian linguistics to extend Freud's ideas about God. Therefore, with Lacan, the creation of God is still driven by the father and son relationship with fear and guilt in the unconscious, but he adds a psycho-philosophical explanation by altering the vocabulary to include terms that relate to human subjectivity and objectivity. Nonetheless this section explains in great detail Lacan's ideas on the creation of God as well as the goodness of creation. It will also incorporate a few basic ideas from the Christian theologians in order to grasp the connections of Lacan to God.

As will be fully discussed later, the central theologians regard the center points of God's power as His ability to create from nothing (*creatio ex nihilio*) and the goodness of His creation. Lacan supports the idea of creation out of nothing. Lorenzo Chiesa and Alberto Toscano explain, "Lacan believes that there must logically be a 'moment' of creation *ex nihilo*, a point at which the symbolic emerges as an immanent consequence of the primordial real" (12). The "primordial real" or the pre-Symbolic "Real" proves inconceivable without the entrance of the signifying chain of the Symbolic. Essentially,

the big Other or the transcendent signifier cannot manifest without the *structure* of

language, and, henceforth, the primordial "Real" is (can be) God. Lacan uses the

Sausseurian semiotic structural linguistic model as means to access *creatio ex nihilio*.

Semiology attempts to "study the role of signs as part of social life" (Horrocks and Jevtic

21). French Theorist Roland Barthes employs a semiotic approach to fashion in his book

Mythologies and Baudrillard, as well, in *The Consumer Society*. Therefore, semiology, a

linguistic endeavor, serves as a method or framework to analyze or interpret a broad

range of phenomena critically. Lacan uses it to clarify or expand Freud's psychoanalysis

(ego, id, superego, or human subjectivity) and the concept of God.

To explain, the complete sign requires something to be signified by a signifier. It

may include or refer to a referent, an actual object. This basic example serves as a model:

Signifier	A word	Example: Star
Referent	The specific thing that a word refers to	
Signified	What a word means in a given symbol system	A fixed luminous point in the night sky that is a large, remote incandescent body like the sun

Figure 1- Misiewicz's Basic Picture of Semiology.

For Lacan, the role of the signifier bears the most significance. The signifier is the word.

Creatio ex nihilio requires the word. Lacan Scholar Tad Delay notes, "The doctrine

creatio ex nihilio holds such a prominent place in psychoanalysis, because at some point

signifiers enter the world and make an irrevocable change in the subject" (31). Lacan

explains by referencing John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, which is to say, the

signifier" (*Seminar VII* 213). Therefore, Lacan's Real exists before the Symbolic world

that requires the Word to enter as the signifier. American Professor Clayton Crockett

identifies where God comes from and how He is produced as "the region where the

[Lacan's] Real and Imaginary intersect" (260) and by paraphrasing Lacan, continues,

"God is unconscious, and must be written into being" (260). Furthermore, to paraphrase

Lacan, the unconscious does not exist; it insists (*Seminar II* 61). Therefore, in terms of

human subjectivity, the unconscious insists upon the emergence of God through the

Symbolic register.

Lacan's Real exists regardless of human subjectivity, but also because of human

subjectivity. He expounds, "Reality faces man, and that is what interests him in it, both as

having already been structured and as being that which presents itself in his experience as

something that always returns to the same place" (*Seminar VII* 74-75). This demonstrates

why, according to Slovenian Philosopher Slavoj Žižek, "only an atheist can believe"

(*Why Believe*). Lacan first asserts the inversion. He states, "In the end, only theologians

can be truly atheistic" (*Seminar XX* 45). British Scholar Michael Lewis offers this

succinct explanation when he writes, "Creation is a way to indicate the absolute novelty

of the signifier's functioning in the case of man, which is then precisely what needs to be

explained or at least acknowledged to be insusceptible of explanation" (52). In response

to the anti-creationism of Darwinism, Lacan clarifies that "[Evolution] merely assimilates

culture to nature and thus denies the explanandum" (qtd. in Lewis 51). The connection of

Lacan's Real to Augustine's central assertion that "God is *is*" bears the mark of Lacan's

Real as a signifier whose state of being is simply His indescribable state of being without

the word from the Symbolic order. Crockett confirms, "We never have access to the Real

as Real, even in Lacan's late work, but only as already symbolized and imagined" (258).

Freud posits the Ego, Id, and Superego, while Lacan, posits the Imaginary, Real, and Symbolic. Augustine and the like posit the Trinity of the Father, Son (Word), and Holy Spirit. Of course, Augustine admits, "Among all these things that I have said about that supreme trinity… I dare not claim that any of them is worthy of this unimaginable mystery" (*On The Trinity* 441). Obviously, Augustine carefully engages this difficult topic and "at least acknowledged [it] to be insusceptible of explanation." Regardless, Boethius, refers to the Word as "His [the Father's] Word" when he writes, "By His Word He . . . created the earth" (*The Theological Tractates* 57). This confirms God's *creatio ex nihilio*. Also, this relates to the central requirement or the necessity of the Word in order for God the Father to create. Further, American Scholar Mary T. Clark provides an analogy for clarity, she asserts, "Just as in human communication the spoken word follows the mental word conceived by thinking, so Christ as the Word of God took flesh to communicate with human persons" (93). The act of thinking to produce a mental word (signifier) presents the essence of the unconscious insistence to articulate the nature of being with the presence of desire and subjective uncertainty. When Clark postulates Christ as the Word with the function to communicate with humans, Christ becomes a master-signifier.

To explain, the signifier does not need a referent and is necessarily replaced by other signifiers, but a master-signifier cannot be replaced by any other signifier. Misiewicz explains, "There is no essential connection between a word (signifier), the specific thing it is referring to (referent), and what the word means in a given symbol system (signified) . . . [therefore,] language is arbitrary" (1). Basically, signifiers can be replaced by other signifiers and carry nothing inherently eternal in meaning. In fact, the

signifier does not even require an actual object (noun) in order to serve as a signifier. This makes the concept of meaning problematic. Simply stated, the signifier only bears meaning within a society that conceives of specific signifiers in a similar way. Otherwise, when one uses a dictionary to look up a signifier, one finds other signifiers to explain the meaning of that signifier. Then one must look up those signifiers in an endless chain of words. Therefore, the Symbolic exists as an undefined state of connections which holds society together and makes existence intelligible. The master-signifiers serve as a socially constructed exception because it only refers to itself. The famous example comes from Žižek, who extends Marx's commodity fetishism, to identify "money" as a master-signifier because "money as a commodity becomes self-referential, money is worth (signifies) money" (Kotsko 30). Obviously, money bears no meaning at all without the society that confirms its meaning. Similarly, the Christ who took flesh to communicate with humankind functions as a clear model of a master-signifier. In Lacanian terms, the Symbolic emerged from the Real to create the Imaginary.

Essentially, Lacan understands the presence of the signifier as the absence of another signifier. This coincides with the unconscious that underlies the entire Symbolic order of representation through the endless chain of signifiers. He asserts, "It is presence in absence and absence in presence" (*Seminar II* 38). Therefore, a signifier which does not appear, appears as a pseudo-language of the unconscious. In semiology, the concept of the paradigm and the syntagm enunciates this difference.
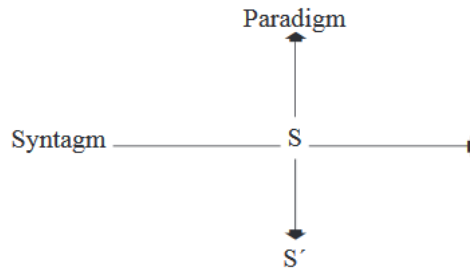
Figure 2- From Canadian Professor Dan Collins's article "On Metaphor."

The diagram shows the endless options of paradigmatic signifiers. The "S" represents the manifest signifier, while the "S'" represents the latent signifier from the unconscious. The syntagmatic arrow flows in one direction as a universal pattern of language structure. The master-signifier cannot simply be substituted from the syntagm unlike all other signifiers. Thus, Christ, Jehovah, or Google serve as master-signifiers. Regardless, the presence of one signifier implies the absolute absence of another. The Symbolic register is that of the latent signifier in the unconscious. Hence, when Lacan asserts that "God is unconscious," he means that God, as a representation of the Real, cannot be grasped through the appearance of the Symbolic absence. Essentially, nothing can.

Žižek Scholar Rex Butler provides an example through interpreting Žižek's discussion on the Apostle Paul. He writes, "For what [Paul] brings about is a situation in which the arguments used against Christ (the failure of His mission, His miserable death on the cross) are now reasons for Him (the sign of His love and sacrifice for use) . . . Paul doubles what is through the empty signifier, Christ's worthy mission, so that the very lack of success is success." Simply, the absence of success becomes the presence of success. The term empty signifier (floating signifier) is a signifier without a referent. For instance, the signifier "bowl" shares a social meaning, which provides a solid denotation as a concrete object with essence, substance, and universal characteristics. Christ's

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mission does not. It means whatever it is supposed to mean in a circular fashion of explanation.

Finally, to reiterate Lacan's triad of human subjectivity, British Professor Julian Wolfreys summarizes, "Every time I speak, I draw on the signifier's constitution, the Symbolic, and seek to convey meaning, thereby constituting the Imaginary. In doing so, I draw on the 'historically' constituted discourse . . . of the Real . . . to which I have no direct access" (108). American Professor Richard Boothby adds, "The Real is not simply a designation of something unknown *external* to the individual. It inhabits the secret interior as well" (19). Lacan uses the example of the Borromean Knot:
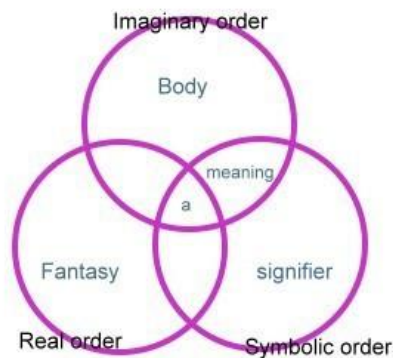
Figure 3- Lacan's Borromean Knot.

Wolfreys continues, "[The Borromean Knot] . . . is a way of linking three rings together in such as fashion that you remove one, the other two fall apart" (108). In Lacan's words, "Within the phenomenon of speech we can integrate the three planes of the symbolic, represented by the signifier, the imaginary, represented by meaning, and the real, which is discourse that has actually taken place in a diachronic dimension" (*Seminar III* 63). Therefore, all three elements require the other for explanation. The main point of the above graphic is the overlap of the Imaginary and the Symbolic, which

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results in meaning of the fantasy of God. This fantasy is not simply something articulated in public discourse; it is also swirling in the unconscious. An apt explanation of the Imaginary expressing the body comes from the communion of the body of Christ; thus, an imaginary manifestation of the body when merged with the Symbolic provides meaning to the signifier and further moves to the fantasy of Christ's sacrifice.

To briefly apply this to Google, it is significant to note that God as a human creation aligns with Google as a human creation. The former as the creator of the universe, as proposed by theologians and the latter in the realm of the contemporary God of science and technology through, literally, Sergei Brin and Larry Page. Both constitute human creations (*ex nihilio*) and both exit the axis of something with direct entry and sublime clarity into something that is Real in the Lacanian sense of the term. Moreover, the Scholastics' God became complicated over time and became a being whose explanation rationally eliminated the being, itself. Moreover, the Real was overwhelmed by the intersection of the Imaginary and the Symbolic, in other words, by meaning. The next chapter will elaborate on the attributes of the metaphysical God humans created.

III. THE THEOLOGIANS- THE GOD HUMAN'S CREATED

This chapter provides a thorough examination of the nature and attributes of God one might find in a strictly theological review. In order to claim Google as the technological extension of the metaphysical God, it is pertinent to offer a general description of the God who will be referenced throughout this discussion. During this study, this particular God will be referred to as the "metaphysical God," the "Christian God," the "ethical monotheistic God," or some similar variation. Essentially, the Christian monotheistic God of "Classical theism" is the most appropriate God. To clarify, American Professor Emeritus Robert F. Brown states that "'Classical theism' refers to the tradition of philosophical theology centering on such mainstream authors as Augustine, Anselm, and Aquinas" (285). The qualities attached to this God are widely known. Thus, this explanation will briefly present these qualities from the main Christian thinkers in chronological order, each surveying the omnipotence, omnipresence, omnibenevolence, and omniscience of God.

Obviously, much of what many have proposed about the Christian God will be left out along with any conversation of gods from traditions other than Christianity. Moreover, all of the philosophical and psychological ideas employed during this study are rooted in the Judeo-Christian monotheistic tradition, which further makes this particular God the most appropriate. Finally, to repeat, this section will review the attributes of the metaphysical God according to the central Christian theologians. So mentions of Google and other elements of this study are not discussed in detail, during

this section. The significant connections between the metaphysical God and the technological God will be analyzed at great length later in the study.

There are three main functions of this chapter. The first is to concisely, but comprehensively show that God's attributes are omnipotence, omnipresence, omnibenevolence, and omniscience as explicitly described by the central Christian theologians. The second is to emphasize the two other significant points that surround God's attributes, which include God's gift of free will and His existence as a contradictory being. The third function is to illustrate the subtle shift in theological thought that devalued human reason in favor of faith; this shift correlates to the movement from theological rationalism to scientific or philosophical rationalism as the method to explain God.

Augustine of Hippo

Born in 354 AD, Augustine of Hippo merged the Greek philosophical tradition with the Judeo-Christian religious and scriptural traditions. His range of discourses includes commentary on original sin and the Trinity. He describes a God similar to other famous Church Fathers, Scholastics, and theologians. To him, God is a perfect being in every possible way whose central attributes include omnipotence, omnipresence, omnibenevolence, and omniscience. These qualities work together and reinforce each other to the point where, in rational terms, God must exist above, apart, and beyond all other creatures in the universe as the supreme almighty being.

In *The City of God, Volume 2*, Augustine directly mentions God's omnipotence. He writes, "He who by His . . . omnipotence distributes to everyone his own portion, is able to make good use not only of the good, but also of the wicked" (46). All of God's

qualities connect to His goodness or (omni)benevolence. His omnipotence supplies the energy to distribute good. According to Augustine, God's power serves to do miraculous things. For example, he notes that "even though the body has been all quite ground to powder . . . it shall not be beyond the omnipotence of the Creator; no, not a hair of its head shall perish" (517). The power that God exhibits correlates with His acts of creation and His ability to maintain life for His creation.

God's omnipotence also involves the creation of law, both eternal and temporal. Therefore, God holds the ultimate power in how objects of the universe, including humans operate. To paraphrase, Augustine claims that those who love eternal things live under eternal law, while those who love temporal things live under the temporal law (*On Free Choice* 25). So humans, through God's gift of free will, can choose what things to love, whether eternal or temporal. Therefore, free will fits into God's creation and offers humans the ability to choose right or wrong, but humans must choose correctly.

Also, Augustine explains the omnipresence of God. Hungarian Theologian Stanislaus Grabowski notes that to Augustine, God is clearly "Being unqualified: He simply is" (96). In his *Expositions on the Psalms*, Augustine claims that God "is *is*, even as the good of goods is good" (qtd. in Anderson 5). In the article, "St. Augustine's Concept of God as the All-Present Being," it explains what Augustine means by "God is *is*." It states, "It signifies to us God's eternal immutable existence or presence . . . [and] is completely independent of our chronological framework of time regarding the past, present, and future" (48). This concept of God's essence and nature repeats throughout the writings of the Church Elders and the Scholastics. God simply reigns as a separate entity entirely outside (*and inside*) of every part of the created universe. Human time

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lives on the outside of God because human conceptions, such as time, reflect human subjectivity which requires a state of being or action. God's nature encompasses all being, or He is being.

To continue this rationale, the article declares: "God is or exists everywhere in the totality of reality or immensity of space" (48). Grabowski adds, "Omnipresence is proper to God alone in relation to place. Eternity and omnipresence are attributes that deny limitations of time and space" (108). So to think of God in the realm of the human place (a home, Florida, a park, etc.), incorrectly identifies the nature of God's omnipresence at this point in the progression of God's nature. Augustine clarifies, "Let us not try to bring God to place [or space] . . . if He were in place, He would not be God. God is present in, and to the whole universe in such a manner as to be whole in the whole universe" (qtd in Grabowski 109). Hence, God's omnipresence distinctly detaches God's nature from that of the human. So Augustine explains that time and place for God means beyond time and place.

As it concerns omniscience, Augustine answers questions that pertain to God's (fore)knowledge and, again, human free will. He addresses this issue in *The City of God, Volume 1*. Basically, Augustine defends the compatibility of foreknowledge (an element of omniscience) and human free will against the likes of Cicero and the Stoics who assert that if God knows all, then human free will becomes impossible. Firstly, Augustine, like the future theologians, asserts that the essence of God involves knowledge of everything. He connects this to creation. He writes, "Of all visible things, the world is the greatest; of all invisible things, the greatest is God" (452). He then adds, "The [eternal] wisdom of

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God, by whom all things were made, was there [for the creation]" (452). So God's creation lends credence to the claim of His omniscience.

Additionally, Augustine affirms that the religious mind chooses both divine foreknowledge and human free will by the faith of piety (200). Those who believe properly in God believe that "God knows all things before they come to pass, and that we do by our free will whatsoever we know and feel to be done by us" (201). With that established, Augustine explains that God does not control the wills of people. He makes a distinction between the will of the good and of the evil. He proclaims, "[God] is the bestower of all powers, not of all wills; for wicked wills are not from Him, being contrary to [His] nature" (202). This includes the evil wills of wicked angels and of wicked humans. For instance, Satan the Devil chose of his own free will to defy God, but his will held limited power. God's foreknowledge allowed Him to foreknow that Satan would have the power to sin, and that he *would* sin (204). Regardless of specific choices, free will exists as a gift from God and does not conflict with His omniscience. Therefore, God's omniscience contains His goodness, His creation, and His foreknowledge as it originates within God's essential nature or natural essence.

God's omnibenevolence comingles and reinforces His other central attributes. Augustine announces, "His greatness is the same as His wisdom; for He is not great by bulk, but by power; and His goodness is the same as His wisdom and greatness, and His truth the same as all those things" (*Doctrinal Treatises Augustine* 336). All of these attributes coincide as God's essence, not necessarily as God's substance. Augustine's concept of God's goodness in relation to His other attributes represents a particular and vital idea on the nature of God. Augustine explains, "It is an impiety to say that God

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subsists, and is a subject to His own goodness, and that this goodness is not a substance or rather essence and that God Himself is not His own goodness, but that it is in Him as in a subject; . . . God alone should be called essence" (336). Basically, God is not a subject as humans are subjects, and to say that God is a subject that has goodness within is inaccurate because God is goodness. It is not in him. It is Him. In context, this assertion must be understood in terms of the perfect and separate God; thus, it makes discourse on God impossible without occasionally positing God as a subject in order to explain the particulars of His nature.

As mentioned earlier, God utilizes his power for good to the point that those who are evil are always still good. For instance, certain men who became prideful and commit evil deeds against God are given the free will to choose to be evil. Aside from the goodness God gives for offering his creation free will, His creation retains an element of goodness simply because God is goodness and anything God creates is through His goodness and, therefore, must also be good. Augustine emphasizes this point in *The Enchiridion* when he writes, "For this amounts to finding fault with God's work, because man is an entity of God's creation" (20). God did not create evil, and the evil that does exist did not come from God. So nobody should find fault with any of God's creation.

To further this idea, Augustine uses an analogy. He analogizes:

> Men do not gather grapes from thorns, since thorns cannot bear grapes. Nevertheless, from good soil we can see both vines and thorns spring up. Likewise, just as a bad tree does not grow good fruit, so also an evil will does not produce good deeds. From a human nature, which is good in itself, there can spring forth either a good or an evil will. (21)

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So, according to Augustine, God made everything good, whether plant life or human life. This pinpoints the central goodness of God. In simple terms, God only creates good, and so anything evil can be described as only being less good. Augustine uses the term greater good to provide a spectrum of goodness through God. He writes, "Every actual entity is therefore good; a greater good if it cannot be corrupted, a lesser good if it can be" (20). By positing God as perfectly good (omnibenevolent) above all else, Augustine comes to the challenge of evil and produces a cogent argument that defines evil as a "lesser good." Of course, Augustine also rationalizes a potential contradiction in God's nature of evil and punishment for evil.

<div align="center">Boethius</div>

Severinus Boethius penned the sixth century text, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, while imprisoned for treason. According to American Professor Seth Lerer, Boethius practiced Christianity while his life "straddled the worlds of classical antiquity and early Christian culture" (*Consolation Philosophy Introduction* XI). So this text offers an appropriate starting point to understanding the nature and essence of God in the ethical monotheistic tradition. In the text, Boethius discusses a variety of moral and ethical ideas that concern God and humanity with an imaginary character called Lady Philosophy. She extolls the virtues of God's sovereignty as she states, "He looks forth from the lofty watch-tower of His providence, perceives what is suited to each, and assigns what He knows to be suitable" (*Consolation Philosophy* 160). God is omnipotent and sits above all of His creation as "The Creator [who] presideth over His work" (27). She asks Boethius, "Since thou doubtest not that God governs the world, dost thou perceive by what means He rules it?" (27). One way He rules it is through providence.

Providence implies the omnibenevolence and omniscience of God because he knows things that are present and things that will eventually occur. This idea is paramount to Boethius because he finds himself imprisoned. Lady Philosophy consoles him when she explains that sometimes bad things happen to good people in the short term, but God's providence will preserve the good while punishing the bad (159). To be more precise, she says, "the whole course of development in things that change, every sort of thing that moves in any wise, receives its due cause, order, and form from the steadfastness of the Divine mind" (156). So providence consists of "all things" infinitely while fate consists of "individual things" in their proper time (156). Boethius also states it this way: "His knowledge surveys past and future in the timelessness of an eternal present. His foreseeing is seeing" (173).

God's eternal power resides within His total essence or universal nature. This illustrates His power and right to rule. He also rules with perfect goodness and love. Boethius through Lady Philosophy declares, "For universally nothing can be better in nature than the source from which it has come; therefore, on most true grounds of reason would I conclude that which is the source of all things to be in its own essence the highest good" (104). Boethius foregrounds his conception of God with the claim of God's perfect nature that exists within Him as the universal contingent of all. He is the source and the best and, so, is the highest good. Furthermore, he proclaims, "God, the creator of universal nature, likewise disposeth all things, and guides them to good" (163). This underpins God's omnibenevolence. It also implies His omnipresence because He resides within all of His creation.

Anselm of Canterbury

Anselm of Canterbury composed the extremely popular and influential

Ontological Argument for the existence of God between the years 1077-1078 AD. In his

Proslogion he posits that "God is that which nothing greater can be thought" (7). The

central characteristics of this entity, of which nothing can be greater, include

omnipotence, omniscience, etc. In fact, these characteristics form the essence of God. In

other words, only God can have these characteristics and that is what God is and what

everything else is not. Anselm even states that "everything that exists, except for you

alone, can be thought not to exist" (8). This further separates the unique and exclusive

attributes within the being of God.

To relay God's omnipotence, Anselm produces a basic piece of logic that hinges

upon God's perfection. If one starts with the idea that God is perfect, then to attach

"omni" qualities to God requires little argument. Anselm asks hypothetically, "But how

are you omnipotent if you cannot do everything?" (10). God's power manifests itself in

will, action, and creation. All of His power causes good to all. For example, Anselm

declares "O good God, good to the good and to the wicked . . . your goodness is

incomprehensible" (11). So God's omnibenevolence rests in His goodness to all people,

and His incapability to do anything evil.

Since God is a perfect being, so is his knowledge. He is omniscient. This pertains

to understanding all creation. Anselm writes, "If wisdom in the knowledge of created

things is desirable, how desirable is the wisdom that created all things from nothing"

(22). God's creation provides the evidence for his omniscience. This entails a universal

knowledge encompassing everything or as Brown describes it: "The eternal God knows

all events as a timeless observer of them" (285). Anselm wrestled with the potential

contradiction of divine foreknowledge and human free will. Yale Scholar Eileen Serene

offers an example to explain Anselm's reconciliation of the two conflicting ideas. He

writes:

> If it is true that Socrates is sitting at t_1, what God knows prior to t_1 is that
>
> Socrates will sit then, and what he knows afterwards is that he did sit then.
>
> Since the only moment when God knows the truth that Socrates is sitting
>
> at t_1 is t_1 itself, his knowledge is simultaneous with the act of sitting, and
>
> this knowledge cannot be a prior cause of it. (141)

So God's omniscience does not interfere with Socrates's decision to sit. Socrates freely

sits of his own will despite God's knowledge that Socrates will sit before Socrates

actually sits.

In another work of Anselm's, *Monologium*, he explicitly explains the nature of

God's omnipresence. He writes, "The supreme Nature cannot exist finitely, at some place

or time" (*Proslogium Monologium Appendix* 73). The law of space and time apply to the

"beings which so exist in space and time" (78). This includes humans. God is different.

Anselm reasons: "The Substance which creates and is supreme among all beings, which

must be alien to, and free from, the nature and law of all things which itself created from

nothing, is limited by no restraint of space or time" (79). Thus, God resides "in every

place at every time" (72). Moreover, to quote Hud Hudson, "Omnipresence for Anselm,

then, is ultimately reducible to a kind of knowledge, immediate and localized for every

region" (138). This assertion remains consistent with his central assertion that "God is

that which nothing greater can be thought" (*Proslogion* 7). Since none can be greater

thought in terms of time and space, God must be beyond or transcend time and space.

<center>St. Thomas Aquinas</center>

Simply known as Thomas, St. Thomas Aquinas was a thirteenth century friar who

wrote prolifically. In his sprawling volume concerning the nature of God, *Summa*

Theologica, Thomas works to defend the characteristics of God against various

objections. He offers replies to the assertion that God is not omnipotent (188). Thomas

claims that "God's omnipotence is particularly shown in sparing and having mercy . . .

[and] he freely forgives sins" (188). So to Thomas, power does not mean strength only,

but also the ability to do something or to make something happen. In this case, it is the

ability to manifest mercy to humans. This illustrates that God's omnipotence correlates to

God's omnibenevolence. Thomas also overlaps omnipotence with omniscience when he

writes, "Hence God's omnipotence includes, in a way, universal knowledge and

providence" (1562). The display of God's mercy when one confesses a sin offers an

example of forgiveness. Thomas mentions three types of confessions: of faith, of

thanksgiving or praise, and of sin (1579). All three forms of confession relate to the

subject's relationship to God as an omnipotent being.

Thomas then discusses omnipotence as to God's power in what is possible or

impossible. He writes, "Those things which it belongs to God alone to do immediately,

as, for example, to create . . . are said to be possible in reference to a higher cause" (188).

God's omnipotence makes it possible to create. However, Thomas carefully notes that it

is illogical to object to God's omnipotence with absolutely impossible ideas: "For such

cannot come under the divine omnipotence, not because of any defect in the power of

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God, but because it has not the nature of a feasible or possible thing" (186). God's power to create offers a significant claim. To create means to make something new or cause something to exist. According to Thomas, this requires the power of God, particularly when it involves a higher purpose. This higher purpose involves creation that encompasses all things, including humans.

Thomas presents God's omnipotence as God's power to show mercy and the power to create. He does not equate omnipotence with political power or the type of power a government or corporation imposes or uses in relation to humans. He declares that "[God] has the governance of the whole universe . . . [and] in place of power, He has omnipotence . . . [and] the government of all things" (195). This illustrates a slight distinction in Thomas's perception of God's omnipotence from the understanding of concentrated power as a force, so commonly proposed. To Thomas, God's omnipotence means the power to actively do something, like create or forgive, not necessarily, the power to enforce rules or dictate ways of being. But, nonetheless, God does have the ultimately understood role as the supreme governor of the entire universe. His governing of the universe is simply a fact related to his essence and a logical necessity based upon his creation of the universe.

Thomas also comments on God's omnipresence. He writes, "It belongs to God to be present everywhere, since He is the universal agent, His power reaches to all being, and hence He exists in all things" (729). Again, Thomas posits what lives within God's very nature. God can be nothing but omnipresent. No action by any other agent can exist without or separate from the agency[3] of God. God's omnipresence overlaps with His

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[3] This uses the philosophical and sociological meaning of the term, "Agency." See the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* under the heading: Action.

omnipotence because God has the power to create and without God's creation, there would be no "being." Furthermore, there would be no "things" in which to exist. Thomas emphasizes that beings, such as angels (who come from God), cannot be in "the same place at the same time" (356), like God. They can only be sent by God to one place through God's authority. So an angel "is 'here' in such a manner as not to be "'there'" (728). This distinction highlights the complete omnipresence of God as an exclusive attribute.

Another distinction which nuances Thomas's claim on God's omnipresence consists of His being in all things instead of around all things as an outside presence. Thomas mentions, "God is neither circumscriptive nor definitively there, because He is everywhere" (356). Circumscriptive serves as a key term because it implies that God does not enclose or set up boundaries around places, events, or people. In His nature he is in the place, event, or people. This presents a division in God's omnipresence and omniscience. God does not know all because he is everywhere (in everything). He knows everything because it is in his essence to know everything.

This brings the discussion to God's omniscience according to Thomas. He writes, "In God there exists the most perfect knowledge" (97). This makes it obvious that God cannot be wrong because what He knows is perfect. In contrast to human knowledge that merely manifests itself as a quality or attribute of the human who learns something. God's knowledge resides in His essence as He "knows all by one simple act of knowledge" (98). To be more specific, Thomas separates intellect, the object understood, the intelligible species, and God's understanding, to declare that to (or in) God, these are "one and the same" (101). So "His act of understanding must be His essence and His

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existence" (101). This central theme that concerns God in Thomas repeats throughout his writing. Basically, if God is God, then his knowledge is perfect, and He is omniscient.

Within this realm of perfect knowledge exists the knowledge of the universal and the particular. Thomas's logic goes as follows: "If therefore the knowledge of God regarding things other than Himself is only universal and not special, it would follow that His understanding would not be absolutely perfect . . . [and] to know a thing in general and not in particular, is to have imperfect knowledge" (103). Thus, God's perfection within His essence incorporates His perfection in His knowledge. Thomas offers an analogy: "For the knowledge of God is to all creatures what the knowledge of the artificer is to things made by his art" (106). This means that God, as the creator, knows all things universally, as in the entire human body, for example; and particularly, as in each part of the human body. This is so because of his power to create, his will, and his goodness, and his knowledge; all of which are perfect.

Additionally, Thomas makes it clear that God "knows all that is not" in two ways. The first way consists of God's knowledge of things that are not actual. This could be a product of the human mind. For example, a centaur exists only in the mind of the human, but not in actuality. God knows the centaur. Second, God knows what is not yet. Thomas argues that God is said to know what "may not be in act" now or what will be in the future (106). He does this with his eternal vision that sees into the future because "God extends over all time, and to all things which exist in any time" (106). In this way, God's knowledge is without limitation to actuality or time. God also knows evil by knowing good. Thomas writes, "therefore evil can neither be defined nor known except by good" (108).

According to Thomas, God's omnibenevolence strongly ties to God's will. He asserts that "God loves all existing things" (156). He loves all existing things because His "will is the cause of all things" (156). So God, through his power, willed the universe and all things in it with love. God's inspiration to create illustrates his love. He did not create all things and then love of things. He brought all things into existence motivated by love. Existence represents the criteria of God's love for the thing / object. The object's existence represents, in material and physical form, God's love or as Thomas describes it, "A thing has existence, or any kind of good, only inasmuch as it is willed by God. To every existing thing, then, God wills some good" (156). This makes God's love unique from human love.

Human love relies on the object's existence before the object can be loved. In fact, the human is also an object in relation to God. Thomas utilizes a reversal of God's love to understand human love as different. He claims that "[Human] will is not the cause of the goodness of things, but is moved by it as by its object, our love, whereby we will good to anything, is not the cause of its goodness; but conversely its goodness . . . calls forth our love" (156). Humans cannot infuse goodness into an object. Human loves adds nothing to the object itself. By God bringing the object into existence, through love, the object contains goodness, which then inspires humans to love the object. So, for example, a human may love their spouse, but that love does not infuse goodness into the spouse. The spouse is already infused with goodness because God brought her into existence out of love.

Finally, God carries essential goodness; his creation does not carry essential goodness. His creation is good because He created it, or goodness and being are the same

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(29). To elaborate, with God, there are no accidents, only what He has willed. Humans display an element of goodness, but goodness is not an essential quality of humanity. Human goodness only knows reality through God. Thomas mentions, "Whatever belongs to others accidentally belongs to Him essentially" (38). Accidentally, in this context, implies something that occurs outside of one's essential character or "essence" or something that is "superadded" (38). He emphasizes, "He Himself alone is essentially good" (38).

<center>Summary</center>

Religious thinkers like Augustine, Boethius, Anselm, and Thomas offer a specific depiction of God that includes elements of His nature or essence, which support the separate and perfect being found in the ontological argument for the existence of God. Omnipotence clearly functions as the central attribute that informs His other attributes. God's power to create manifests in the benevolence of creation. All things created share God's goodness. Through God's benevolent power, He knows everything, including the future, but because He loves his creation, He allows them to freely choose in conscious life. God's omniscience links to His omnipresence. The creation illustrates His power and love, which constitutes His knowledge, and finally, which establishes His universal presence. God is everywhere because He created everything and He is, therefore, in all (or part of) creation. As the separate deity, He resides outside of time and place and exists alone as the single contingent being (He is being) in the universe. To quote Augustine, "God is *is*" (qtd. in Anderson 5).

In terms of the technological God, Google. The essential points to grasp involve the theological claims that concern the metaphysical God's all-encompassing power,

presence, love, and knowledge. One complete God carries all of this attributes within its essential being. This God mediates all human activity. This God provides humans with free will and, yet, will offer consequences for the exercise of free will. Therefore, God represents a contradictory being. But His contradictions absorb into His being. Later, this discussion will demonstrate Google's all-encompassing Godly role in contemporary human life, which mirrors the role of the metaphysical God as described by the theologians.

This concept of God changes only slightly up to our contemporary moment. The fundamental change to God occurs in the method for understanding God. The previous theologians utilized a rational approach that combined Greek philosophy with the Bible (and other religious texts) to apprehend God's nature. Scholasticism represents the high point of this methodology. Thus, the change in method occurs during the Reformation. Martin Luther, one of the primary figures of the Protestant Reformation, "was concerned [because] . . . scholastic theologians formed a united front with the pope" (Brecht 7) that monopolized belief and hierarchized the church to the point where knowledge of God became the property of a specialized class. Martin Brecht notes that according to Luther, "the gospel had to be abandoned in favor of the Scholastics" (112). The change in method is important to consider in order to fully comprehend how scientific and philosophical rationalism ascended above the faith infused methodology employed by the Protestant Theologians.

<center>Protestant Theologians</center>

Although the Protestant conceptions of the nature and attributes of God differ slightly from the previously reviewed theologians, in general, they retain the most

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significant elements of God's "omni" attributes. If anything changes, it is in terms of the human and his inability to fully rationalize the nature of God. Also, a nuanced shift occurs in the decline of the use of total rational thought to apprehend God's nature, with an increase in emphasis on faith. In basic terms, these major Protestant theologians illustrate the movement toward the idea that God cannot be explained in rational terms alone and so faith is a requirement. Also, the concept of Predestination enters to undermine the Scholastics. Henceforth, this leaves the task of understanding God in purely rational terms to philosophers like Descartes, Kant, and Hegel. Ultimately, Hegel concludes that "Christian cosmology is rife with contradictions" (Hicks 47) and that "reason" must be altered to make it "combatable with contradiction" (47). Eventually, Nietzsche points to this use of reason as the cause for the death of God. Regardless, this section reviews the nature and attributes of God from the viewpoint of the major Protestant theologians and further reinforces the nature of the metaphysical for the forthcoming discussion on the technological God, Google. In addition, two significant points to notice, which surround God's attributes, include God's gift of free will and His existence as a contradictory being.

<div align="center">Martin Luther</div>

Luther's concept of God continues the previous assertions of God's nature, but he diminishes the goodness of the human in order to lessen the restrictions of rationalism. The previous thinkers position man as an extension of God's eternal goodness. Anything God creates must be good because God creates it. Humans can exercise free will, make bad choices, but are still a "lesser good." Luther disagrees with this concept and, thus, transforms humanity to a lower level of being, despite being a creation of God. For example, Luther scales back human free will. He writes, "I confess that mankind has a

free-will, but it is to milk kine, to build houses, and no further" (*Table Talk* 161). Humans lose much of their autonomy to choose, particularly in spiritual issues. Free will is simply physical. Although this alteration does not change significantly God's nature, they do alter how humans can understand God.

God's "omni" powers slightly alter because Luther emphasizes new categories of being, previously implicit, in order to reasonably maintain a perfect God. He accomplishes this by more explicitly separating the spiritual (heaven / invisible / soul) from the physical (earth / visible / body). For instance, concerning the conversion of St. Paul, he asks, "What could St. Paul have done to be freed from the devil, though all the people on earth had been present to help him? Truly, nothing at all; he was forced to do and suffer that which the devil, his lord and master, pleased" (163). Ultimately, human free will cannot choose salvation. The devil can ruin the chances for salvation, but the human sits powerless in the midst of the final decision. Human beings are also incapable of saving each other. Luther makes God's loving gift of free will purely physical. He simultaneously solves the problem of omniscience because free will no longer contains spirituality, and it cannot conflict with God's knowledge of the future, since human decision does not affect the immutable future of heaven or hell.

By extension, the power (omnipotence) of Luther's God begins to resemble the type of power that contemporary corporate and political entities carry. From Augustine to Thomas, God's omnipotence highlights the power to create, such as the creation of the earth and the people on it. God only uses His power for good; so all of creation is good. With Luther, it is up to God to choose to save a soul. God may or may not save any particular soul. For example, if a human wants to repent from sins and lives an outward

and inward clean and moral life, God may still choose to punish that human. This demonstrates that God's power represents the power to not save an individual human, regardless of the activity of the human.

Whereas the Scholastics attempt to reconcile God's attributes with philosophical rationality, Luther realizes the incompatibility of the two. This further separates God from His human creation by separating the earth from the heavens. Lutheran Theologian Paul Althaus describes Luther's opinion when he notes, "We must distinguish reason in the earthly realm from the reason in the area of man's relations to God" (64). In the earthly realm, Luther posits reason as a "gift from God" (64). But its value pertains to earthly affairs only. Luther claims, "All laws have been produced by the wisdom and reason of men . . . Human wisdom or reason produces laws and determines what is right, just as all the other arts which we have, have been born of human talent and reason" (qtd. in Althaus 64). Just as free will cannot save a human soul and is only useful for basic earthly matters, Human reason stays on earth, as well. Brecht remarks, "For Luther, however, reason was not the criterion by which to judge an article of faith" (168). By "article of faith," Brecht refers to the scriptures, thereby implying the fallibility of human reason.

Luther feels that the power of the Church surpasses that of scripture and, hence, the Scholastics have become the rulers of the people. Implicating the Church power apparatus, Althaus states, "Man after the fall did not lose his rational capacity to . . . shape the world . . . [Man] is so conscious that he possesses reason and can do great things with it that he forgets the God who has given him all his gifts" (66). Further, he writes, "The reason of the fallen man is fleshly . . . Flesh is possessed by the devil" (66-

67). One of the reasons for the Reformation is the fact that the Church and its scholars fell victim to the arrogance of flesh and elevated its own use of reason above the pure worship of God and the words in His scriptures.

So if Earthly reason does not pertain to human relations with God, what does? Faith does. Luther places faith above reason (the Scholastic method), he writes: "Reason is not able to apply itself to invisible things" (qtd. in Althaus 67). Simply put, certain elements of God and scripture can never be understood by human reason. Furthermore, humans should never even try to understand. Althaus words it in this way: "Reason can neither see nor hear, nor understand God's wonderful activity . . . This is beyond reason's ability to comprehend, and reason takes offense at it" (68). Luther writes, "Why do Christians make use of their natural wisdom . . . seeing it must be set aside in matters of faith, as not only not understanding them, but also striving against them" (*Table Talk* 195). So Luther's assertions elevate faith to the point where Christians will damage God and scripture by the mere attempt to conceive of God through reason. Rhetorically, faith eliminates any contradictions in God's being or in scripture with more pathos than Anselm's perfect God. God is still perfect, but with Luther, contradictions in perfection no longer necessitate the application of reason, and in some cases faith, to negotiate those contradictions.

<div align="center">John Calvin</div>

A reformer contemporary with Martin Luther who also challenges Scholasticism, John Calvin's influence over Christians undoubtedly matches that of Luther. Calvinism became an important religious movement in Europe and, especially, North America. Supporting such doctrines as predestination, anti-celibacy, and anti-auricular confession,

Calvin follows Luther with the focus on human sin, which devalues human reason. He writes, "We are all sinners by nature" (*Institutes Religion Volume 1* 236). Calvin speaks frequently of "original sin" and the separation of the flesh and the soul. By nature, he refers to the flesh. Sin resides in the fleshly body of the human through original sin. Without the omnibenevolence of God, man cannot overcome sin.

Predestination serves as a method to overcome God's contradictory nature. In context, Calvin saw the human works required by the Catholic Church as a method to exert power over humans. He also saw that human reason can be used to maintain this control and, thus, aims to devalue human reason, itself. Calvin claims, "The Romanists have a farther design in maintaining that councils possess the power of interpreting the scripture . . . Of purgatory, the intercession of saints, auricular confession, and similar fooleries, the scriptures contain not a single syllable" (322). Therefore, he formulates predestination. Predestination works to eliminate the idea that human works must be performed (or money donated) to make sure loved ones are saved.

Calvin explains predestination: "Predestination we call the eternal decree of God, by which he hath determined in himself, what he would have to become of every individual of mankind" (*Institutes Religion Volume 2* 125). Therefore, God's omnipotence expands to include the power to know in advance. Also, God's omniscience becomes completely apparent with predestination as God's power becomes absolute, since humans are entirely powerless over their salvation. The mention of predestination only serves to illustrate a shift in method and will not be used as part of the analysis of the technological God, Google.

Furthermore, Calvin shifts Scholastic methodology when he alters how theologians, and the like, handle scripture. Essentially, knowledge requires faith or that human reason can only produce knowledge with faith. T.A. Noble explains, "Calvin's fundamental concern is not that we should know scripture, but that we should through scripture know God" (2). Hence, Calvin desires a move away from interpretation through the power of human reason that rewrites scripture to a move toward scripture itself as the ultimate fund of knowledge. Noble continues, "Man's true life consists in the light of his understanding in so far as that is reflexive of the glory of God revealed through his Word" (7). Nonetheless, Calvin still concedes that the central attributes of God include his "omni" qualities.

<div align="center">Jonathan Edwards</div>

The Congregationalist theologian, Jonathan Edwards represents the general ideas that come from the Reformed theology in North America during the eighteenth century. Edward's ideas move the nature of God somewhat further away from Augustine, Boethius, and the Scholastics. First, God's name receives a definitive signifier. Thomas repeatedly describes God's name as "HE WHO IS" and follows Exodus 3:13, 14 when he uses all capital letters in the translation (94). Edwards' calls God by the name, Jehovah. He preaches about the "Fury and Fierceness of Jehovah" (20). Thomas did not support the use of a name that might determine the essence of God because it limits God's infiniteness. He writes, "Now by any other name some mode of substance is determined, whereas this name HE WHO IS, determines no mode of being, but is indeterminate to all; and therefore it denominates the 'infinite ocean of substance'" (94). In addition, Damascence supports Thomas when he mentions, "HE WHO IS, is the principal of all

names applied to God; for comprehending all in itself, it contains existence itself as an infinite and indeterminate sea of substance" (qtd. in Aquinas 94). Thus, Edwards provides a name that may determine God's essence. While this maintains the universality previous theologians attribute to the nature of God, it also opens up the possibility to align the metaphysical God with a linguistic signifier. Similarly, one can now align the technological God with the signifier, Google.

Edwards's ideas that concern the "omni" characteristics of God carry other elements that offer a paradoxical reading of God's essence and supports God as a contradictory being. For example, Edwards intimates God's omnibenevolence next to God's fury and wrath. He preaches, "God hath had it on his Heart to show to Angels and Men, both how excellent his Love is, and also how terrible his Wrath is" (*Angry God* 181). Augustine and Thomas also mention the controversial or even contradictory elements of God's nature. However, their assertions represent a proportionately small size of their writings. Edwards overtly accentuates the wrath of God and the helplessness of the parishioners in controlling their own salvation. Canadian academic Shadia Drury notes, "Augustine also takes it for granted that witnessing the torments of hell is integral to the pleasures of heaven" (26). In *Summa Theologica*, Thomas states, "Divine justice and their own deliverance will be the direct cause of the joy of the blessed: while the punishment of the damned will cause it indirectly" (4114). So those who are blessed and in heaven do rejoice at the sight of those in hell, but it is not a direct form of joy. Thomas explains God's position, "Although God rejoices not in punishments as such, He rejoices in them as being ordered by His justice" (4114). In essence, Edwards does not even attempt to rationalize this glaring contradiction of good and evil from the same source,

but rather emphasizes the doctrine of hellfire and the predestination of those who will enter. This allows for the nature of God to be contradictory in itself as an all-encompassing element of His nature. Thus, omnibenevolence includes punishment.

God's wrath becomes a means to show His omnipotence, as well. While the Scholastics highlight creation as the central motive for God's omnipotence, Edwards focuses on God's wrath. He writes, "If God should only withdraw his Hand from the Flood-Gate . . . the fiery Floods of Fierceness and Wrath of God would rush forth with inconceivable Fury, and would come upon you with omnipotent Power" (*Angry God* 177). Ultimately, God shows His love when He abstains from inflicting torture upon those in His grace, and shows His power when He restrains His fury from those in His grace. Therefore, His love (omnibenevolence) and power (omnipotence) includes refraining from punishment upon His creation. What was implicit in the earlier writers becomes explicit by the eighteenth century in North American Christianity.

God's omniscience likewise manifests in the realm of fear and punishment. As mentioned, predestination demonstrates God's knowledge. Conrad Cherry, author of *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards*, explains, "Edwards appeals to a doctrine of predestination . . . [that] God decreed from eternity to save certain men, apart from any consideration of the state of their lives" (56). Like Calvin, Edwards wants to dismiss human works or financial donations as a way to control one's destiny. God knows the destiny of each individual regardless of the work performed for the church by each individual. His omniscience allows for the total knowledge of human destiny. Cherry describes this as Edwards "elaborate scheme for the explanation of the mind of God" (56). As a rationale, Edwards cites predestination as the "sovereign will of a trustworthy

God" (57). This removes even the act of faith from the hands of humankind because "Saving faith is predestined . . . a free, undeserved gift of God" (57). God knows and humans will never know. To imply that humans could know their destinies in terms of heaven or hell (bliss or torture) results in the diminishment of God's nature and the elevation of human nature (reason). Nevertheless, regardless of predestined human fate, humans could manifest God's gift of freewill, paradoxically.

Edwards's depiction of God's omnipresence coincides with the previous theologians. American Professor of Theology Ross Inman explains that "A list of thinkers . . . who endorse an account of . . . Derivative Omnipresence include Anselm, Aquinas . . . and Jonathan Edwards (4). He continues, "The overwhelming majority of work on divine omnipresence . . . consists of Derivative Omnipresence" (4). Derivative Omnipresence means that "God, considered apart from his standing in some relation or relations to objects that are themselves located at place fundamentally, could nevertheless be located at place" (4). According to Edwards, God's omnipresence serves as part of His other main attributes. He claims, "By God's natural perfections, they mean those attributes wherein his greatness consists; such as his power; his knowledge, his being . . . [and] his omnipresence" (*Works* 279). The complete God, to Edwards, contains all the perfection of being.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

This establishes a thread of theological thought that gives God the central characteristics of omnipotence, omnibenevolence, omniscience, and omnipresence. Although theologians argue over the minute details that relate to these attributes of God, all of them agree that the ethical monotheistic God carries these traits within the most

perfect sense of being. Also, this discussion establishes that the metaphysical God offers the gift of free will to his creation. Furthermore, God's entire being incorporates any of the apparent contradictions logically ascertained through reason. God simple absorbs His own contradictions. Finally, this establishes the decline of reason in theological circles with the advent of reason, in terms of God, in philosophical circles. The next chapter discusses this shift more fully.

IV. NIETZSCHE- THE DEATH OF THE METAPHYSICAL GOD

This chapter will show the transformation of the metaphysical God, through reason, that results in Nietzsche's declaration that "God is Dead." Therefore, a brief examination of Nietzsche's ideas serves to pinpoint this transformation or shift. Furthermore, this chapter also examines the conception and progression of the metaphysical God from the perspectives of the philosophers, Descartes, Kant, and Hegel. To quote American Scholar Mark Wrathall, "The decline of the metaphysical God was perhaps first noted when Pascal declared that the God of the philosophers was not the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob" (1). Henceforth, this chapter outlines the decline and death of the metaphysical God.

In *The Gay Science* Nietzsche proclaims, "God is dead" (*Complete Works* 168). This statement receives a great share of misinterpretation in popular culture. It also bears ambivalence as a metaphor. For instance, American Philosopher Robert Pippin reasons, "If there had been a god, we could not have killed him. If we could have killed him, he could not have been a god" (8). In context, Nietzsche's claim rests on his own disbelief in the literal existence of the Christian God, and on the rising power of scientific rationalism. Despite this, his declaration was never meant to support the project of scientific rationalism. To confirm, South African Professors Andre Groenewald and Johan Buitendag claim that Nietzsche was "in actual fact looking for a concept of God that transcends modern atheism and theism" (146). Further, they note, "Nietzsche distanced himself from . . . theologians . . . and the superficial atheism of the natural

scientists" (147). Therefore, Nietzsche's claim involves more than simply the (un)believability of God through the failure of metaphysical reason. It involves a distinct loss for humanity and a potential slip into nihilism. This also informs his claim that "God is dead."

Nietzsche's claim rests upon the idea, to quote American Theologian Bernard Ramm, that "The Christian religion was no longer the presupposition of civilization" (86). Groenewald and Buitendag concur: "Theology was in crisis because humanity, rather than God, had become the center of attraction" (147). However, Nietzsche did not necessarily see the death of God with optimism like the scientific rationalists. British Scholar Adrian Samuel summarizes Nietzsche's feelings, "Nietzsche sees the death of God to lead to the problem of disenchantment that the ultimate significance of our lives (previously understood in terms of our relationship to God) has been replaced by an essentially insignificant world (of mere causal interaction)" (2). Thus, Nietzsche perceives God ambivalently as an idea under construction for millennia. Nevertheless, the developing idea, in the minds of humankind, dies.

Whereas, the Scholastics and, later, the reformers actually believe in the spiritual reality of God, Nietzsche does not. However, Nietzsche believes that ideas impose influence upon humanity in the form of values. Therefore, in this way, God was alive to Nietzsche; alive in the sense that He strongly informed the point-of-view of individuals in society. To elaborate, German Philosopher Martin Heidegger clarifies Nietzsche's position concerning God as an imposition of values. He explains, "The essence of value lies in the point-of-view. Value means that which is in view for a seeing that aims at something . . . The aim in view is value. Values as points-of-view are conditions of

preservation and enhancement" (71-72). Basically, one carries a particular point-of-view

embedded with specific values and aims to preserve and enhance the point-of-view

(values) in order to engage in "becoming," which is Nietzsche's "will to power" (74). In

Will to Power, Nietzsche says, "Values and their changes are related to the increase in

power of that which posits them" (qtd. in Heidegger 74). To explain this in simple terms,

the metaphysical Christian God informed the values in the point-of-view of the Church

who exerted energy to preserve and enhance its ideas (the Christian God). Hence, if the

idea of God infiltrates the vantage points of individuals (through force or otherwise) then

the virtual nature of God's existence maintains agency within the structure of society, and

God exists. Thus, God can die, and humans can kill God.

This alludes to human subjectivity and the mind's accessibility to knowledge

(epistemology). For instance, to Nietzsche, rational proof of the existence of God proves

worthless and unnecessary. Furthermore, Nietzsche realizes that "in the knowing subject

the idea of knowledge outside the borders of the subject was not possible; that no truth,

no certainty and no knowledge existed outside the knowing subject" (Groenewald and

Buitendag 151). Therefore, human subjectivity allows one to kill an idea and create new

ideas for "becoming" in the world. The new point-of-view (values) of one human subject

can transform the individual through a revaluing of transient human beliefs. American

Scholar Michael Lackey follows this idea when he writes, "For in killing God . . .

[Nietzsche] has set into motion the creative self-overcoming of 'self' which will

empower individuals to expand the borders of what was once known as the human"

(754). Nietzsche's claims carry value for individual liberation against the oppressive

dictates of the Christian theologians, but there also exists an underside to his claims.

To read further in *The Gay Science*, the context becomes apparent. Nietzsche writes, "We have killed him! How shall we console ourselves, the most murderous of all murderers? . . . The holiest and the mightiest that the world had hitherto possessed, has bled to death under our knife" (168). Clearly, a murder takes place. How did Nietzsche or humans murder God? To clarify, Heidegger writes, "The terms 'God' and 'Christian God' in Nietzsche's thinking are used to designate the suprasensory world in general. The realm of the suprasensory has been considered since . . . the late Greek and Christian interpretation of Platonic philosophy, to be true and genuinely real" (61). Hence, a singular God does not die; rather the entire loss of confidence in the claims of Western metaphysics renders God meaningless (Behler 314). As support, *Sophia Project* contributor Kevin Cole relates that Nietzsche carries a "particular disdain for metaphysics," (3) which underlies his "overall project" (3).

So the more appropriate questions are: who killed the metaphysical God and how? In order to answer this question adequately, one must look at the progression of philosophical thought in relation to God from Descartes to Nietzsche. Cole describes this progression as a displacement of God. He writes, "In terms of the gradual displacement of God, it's a clear line from Descartes to Immanuel Kant to Nietzsche . . . [Nietzsche] simply makes the move that was written in the project from the beginning" (4). The philosophical project of reason, especially including metaphysics, killed God. Therefore, Nietzsche served as an endpoint to a long tradition that worked to explain the nature of existence and being that incorporated suprasensory ideas. With the spiritual or immaterial realm as a foundation and the advent of scientific means to access knowledge, the

believing philosopher found it necessary to expand the nature of God to the point where God becomes unbelievable.

When Nietzsche declares "God is Dead," he worries about a nihilistic world. He writes, "The highest values are devaluing themselves" (qtd. in Heidegger 66). Because the central theologians posit God as a perfect being (highest values) who could not maintain that illusion: *that* God dies. More precisely, the theologians and the believing rationalists could not maintain this illusion by the use of reason or with the shaky justification of faith. Heidegger asks, "Oh what are the highest values if they do not simultaneously render secure the warrant and the ways and means for a realization of the goals posited in them?" (66). So without the elevation of the ideal embedded in the metaphysical God, a form of passive nihilism could permeate the human values. Henceforth, some ideal had to replace the metaphysical God.

So the natural endpoint of utilizing reason to explain the ideal ("omni") God, eliminates God. In *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche asserts how reason "coils around itself and finally bites its own tail" (55). For instance, Descartes clings to the existence of the Christian God while he emphasizes the use of reason to access truth. In his monumental text, *A Discourse on Method*, he demonstrates this attempt when he writes, "For it is not a dictate of reason that what we thus see or imagine is in reality existent, but it plainly tells us that all our ideas or notions contain in them some truth. For otherwise, it could not be that God, who is wholly perfect and veracious, should have placed them in us" (32). Aside from being a reworking of Anselm's ontological argument, his central assumptions include the existence of God, His perfection, and His divine omniscience. Of course, Descartes witnessed Galileo's condemnation from the Church, which resulted in his

momentary notion of never publishing again (Küng, *Does God Exist* 17). Nonetheless, Descartes still tries to reconcile God and reason in *Meditations on the Foundations of Philosophy*, which according to Küng, "provoked vigorous opposition on the part of Catholic and Protestant theologians" (18). Apparently, the theologians of the time saw their God shifting away from the Scholastic or even Reformed God to the hyper-rational God.

Regardless, Descartes argues, "from the certainty of the thinkable abilities of the human being, God definitely exists. If one thinks of God, one must conclude that God exists" (qtd. in Groenewald and Buitendag 150). In the midst of arguing for the *certainty* of God's existence, Descartes problematizes the very entity he aims to prove. His four rules lead to methodological doubt or an advanced / extreme doubt, the penultimate to outright skepticism. If one reads the subtext of (or deconstructs) statement sixteen in *Principles of Philosophy*, the death of God seems inevitable from the natural or logical outcome of reasoning about God. It states, "Hence, at times when we are not intent on the contemplation of the supremely perfect being, a doubt may easily arise as to whether the idea of God is not one of those which we made up at will" (*Selected Writings* 165). Ironically, this statement answers a self-created arbitrary objection to God's existence. Küng concludes, "With Descartes, European consciousness . . . reached an epochal turning point . . . the medieval way of reasoning from certainty of God to certainty of self is replaced by the modern approach: from certainty of the self to certainty of God" (*Does God Exist* 36-37). Descartes's reversal helps Nietzsche to declare the murder of God because it solely relies on human subjectivity manifested in rational thought. In other words, belief in the existence the self (personal human subject) precedes and validates the

existence and subsequent belief in God, rather than belief in God confirming the existence of the self.

Kant provides even more assistance to Nietzsche. Although Kant asserts an argument to support belief in God, he offers a devastating refutation of the three central arguments proposed for the existence of God. In the section entitled "Transcendental Dialectics" from the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant refutes "traditional proofs of the existence of God" (Ofodile 2), which he identifies as the ontological, the cosmological, and the physico-theological arguments (Kant, *Pure Reason* 563).

First, Anselm's ontological argument proposes that "God is that which nothing greater can be thought" (*Proslogion* 7). Kant rejects this reasoning. Belgian Philosopher Ezulike Ofodile paraphrases Kant when he writes, "Logical possibility of the concept of an absolutely necessary being is not the same as real possibility; a jump from the former to the latter is not acceptable" (3). Simply put, Kant does not feel that one can "define things into existence" (Plantinga 545) and as Notre Dame Professor Emeritus Alvin Plantinga continues "one cannot, by adding existence to a concept that has application contingently if at all, get a concept that is necessarily exemplified" (545). Therefore, Kant eliminates one of the most famous and well-regarded proofs of God's existence within his framework of rationality. Again, reason itself eliminates God.

Kant then refutes the cosmological argument for the existence of God. The cosmological argument claims that since the world and the universe exist, some-thing first causes it to be.[4] Kant argues, "It is really only the ontological proof from mere concepts that contains all the force of proof in the so-called cosmological proof . . .

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[4] See the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy for a more comprehensive description at http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2006/entries/cosmological-argument.

perhaps leading us only to the concept of a necessary being, but not so as to establish this concept in any determinate thing" (*Pure Reason* 571). Kant uses the term "mere concepts" frequently in his *Critique*. This phrase counters empirical evidence because a mere concept only offers assumptions made from reason rather than from empirical / sensory experience. Kant already debunks the ontological argument and sees the cosmological argument as an extension of the ontological, since the concept of the being does not necessitate the being's existence in objective reality. The earth and the universe may exist concretely as objects to a subjective mind, but that does not prove the existence of a being outside of the observer who precedes the entire physical realm. Ofodile summarizes, "Kant's critical philosophy rejects any form of unwarranted jump from the contingent to *a priori* postulation, and this, for him, is what the cosmological argument does" (5). Therefore, the cosmological argument for the existence of God fails in Kant's view.

Finally, Kant refutes the physico-theological argument for God's existence. This argument explains, "There are clear signs of order and purposiveness everywhere in the world . . . [and] God is understood as that all perfect, highest cause, the architect whose existence explains the order we see" (Ofodile 6). Again, Kant refutes this proof for God's existence with the same reasoning that refutes the cosmological argument. He writes that the psycho-theological argument "elevates itself from magnitude to magnitude up to highest of all, rising from the conditioned to the condition, up to the supreme and unconditioned thing" (*Pure Reason* 581). The contingent first cause cannot simply appear in concrete or objective reality because things in concrete or objective reality exist empirically. Kant does not support the existence of something unconditioned because of

the appearance of order among those things that are conditioned. Obviously, this evidence does not cover all of the nuances of the proofs of God's existence or Kant's refutation of the proofs; but this evidence supports Nietzsche's claim that theological (or philosophical) reasoning (metaphysics) causes the inevitable death of God and supports his claim in *The Gay Science* that "We have killed Him" (168).

Despite refuting God's existence, Kant still clings to the belief in God founded upon human reason. To Kant, belief in God does not require absolute proof of God's existence. American Professor Allen Wood clarifies, "[The] concept of a supremely real being arises naturally and even inevitably [through reason]" (62). Ofodile continues, "Yet, this concept of God is one for which we have no claim of objective certainty nor proof that is conclusive theoretically" (9). Therefore, Kant feels that the human faculty of reason allows humans to reach a vague notion of God, but humans still have "no concept at all of what it is in itself" (*Pure Reason* 607). Kant calls this thing we know "Something" (*Pure Reason* 607). The evidence that reason apprehends this "Something" rests in the proliferation of ideas over centuries that pertain to this "Something." Therefore, we reason God into necessary belief, but not into necessary existence.

Finally, Kant completes his belief in God when he cites the requirement of belief for morality. Thus, Kant states, "The highest good in the world is possible only in so far as one assumes a supreme cause of nature that has a causality conforming to the moral attitude" (*Practical Reason* 159). Groenewald and Buitendag clarify, "To Kant humans were moral beings that had to perform certain moral duties. God was not an object, but an idea of the rational mind. The idea of God rested on . . . practical reason's willing of the good and its acknowledgement of moral law" (152). Therefore, Kant separates practical

reason and pure reason. From practical reason, God exists as an idea for the moral benefit and duty of human beings. Understandably, to Nietzsche, whose views on morality differ completely from Kant's, this line of reasoning serves to murder God rather than to maintain God. In fact, Kant, in his *Critique of Judgment* concludes, "This moral argument is not meant to offer any objectively valid proof of the existence of God" (339). The natural progression of the field of metaphysics (reason) kills God who represents the entire suprasensory world.

Hegel further murders God. One major concern of Hegel involves God as a being. Humans exist as beings. A being exhibits traits like power, knowledge, love, and presence. In fact, God exemplifies these qualities. However, Hegel's God differs in terms of the noun "being." John Caputo, Philosopher of Postmodern Christianity, declares, "Hegel prepared the way for the insight that just as God is not a being that steers things from above, neither is God some immanent guiding force situated here below" (*Perversity Absolute* 60). Thus, God loses the omni-attributes assigned to Him by the Church Fathers because only physical beings articulate and are associated with those types of linguistic signifiers. God is also not a being who resides above. Furthermore, He is not an inherent directorial force who set things into motion at some point only to allow human life (or nature) to unfold blindly. In addition, He is not Augustine's "is *is*" whose essence transcends human thought and discourse. In summation, California State University, Los Angeles Professor Joseph Prabhu explains, "[Hegel] calls the 'bad infinite,' an infinite merely set over against the finite, and therefore external to or bounded by the finite" (222). So Hegel forecloses God's infinite nature through rational means perpetrated by human parameters constructed on earth or in the finite realm.

Further, Hegel's perspective of logic provides insight into his idea of God. He writes, "[Logic] is metaphysical theology [because it] treats the evolution of the idea of God in the ether of pure thought" (qtd. in Hodgson 15). Hegel's "Logic" as the center of reality illustrates his rational viewpoint of reality itself. The use of logic brings God (and the world) into existence or reality, rather than God existing *a priori* and creating the world *ex nihilo*. Being metaphysical in nature, Nietzsche correctly identifies Hegel's emphasis on logic as part of the progressive death of God through metaphysics.

If the consciousness of humans produces religion, then God exists as (or through) a historical process. American Professor J. A. Leighton summarizes, "The Hegelian *Logic* is . . . an attempt to trace the evolution in the conception of the ultimate fact, God" (602). This ultimate fact becomes "Absolute" through the development to a final category "known as God" (603). The dichotomous relationship of the subject / object becomes complicated. As radical theologian Thomas Altizer notes, "The break between objectivity and subjectivity . . . is consummated in Christianity . . . [and is] the final ending of transcendent objectivity . . . [so] objectivity . . . [is] the realization of subjectivity . . . therefore objectivity perishes as objectivity . . . 'in-itself'" (77). In other words, once the subject and object unite, supernatural objectivity dissipates through the unity with the subjective experience of mind and body conflating to objectivity within the paradoxical boundaries of subjective thought.

Therefore, the object cannot be a boundless object depicted by subjects, but rather the object resides within the subjective experience and manifested by the historical process of metaphysical relations. University of Georgia Professor Richard Dien Winfield explains, "Hegel logically captures this process . . . in terms of the Idea, [which]

unites concept and objectivity in and through themselves . . . The embodied mind . . . [exhibits] the truth of the Idea . . . where body and mind unite objectivity and subjectivity" (236). Simply put, the transcendent objectivity of God comes down to earth as an object of thought from human subjectivity. To Hegel, the incarnation of Christ also displays the objectivity of God on earth. Therefore, the object, God, unites with the subject, human, in rational thought. To emphasize, the historical process in which God manifests himself clearly buttresses Hegel's ideas on God. Hegel Scholar Darrel E. Christensen reiterates, "Where the dialectical history is under consideration . . . the emerging identity [of God] comprehends the most comprehensive opposites, being and thought, which identity is actuality" (527). The actual existence of God realizes itself in this way.

In addition, Hegel alters rationality to incorporate contradictions as reasonable. Philosopher Stephen R. C. Hicks explains that Kant was "too trapped in the old Aristotelian logic of non-contradiction" (48) and that Hegel formulated a "better kind of reason, one that embraces contradictions and sees the whole of reality as evolving out of contradictory forces" (48). The previously reviewed theologians as well as Descartes and Kant, employed reason to make God a universal (non-contradictory) and rationally cogent defined being, but Hegel admits to the contradictions embedded within God's nature. This assertion contributes to the death of God because the metaphysical God can no longer be successfully reasoned without accepting contradictions. This results in the further ascension of faith. And these contradictions illuminate the precariousness of the previously reviewed claims about the metaphysical God.

In summation, the examples of Descartes, Kant, and Hegel support Nietzsche's central claim of the murdered God. The complexity of reason that these philosophers utilized to keep God alive while they implicitly argued against long-standing conceptions of God, illustrates how "reason" first explains God, and then kills God. Nietzsche conceives this idea as the natural outcome that stems from the original concepts that surround the Christian God. In other words, when one proposes a figure that encompasses every possible positive attribute in the most perfect possible manifestation, then that figure will fail to meet those expectations in objective reality. Hicks clarifies when he writes, "[Christian] cosmology . . . posits a perfect being that generates evil, [and] believes in a just being that gives humans independent judgment [free will] but punishes them for using it" (48). Therefore, the omnipotent, omnipresent, omnibenevolent, and omniscient metaphysical God who gives humans the gift of free will and is laden with contradictions, dies. Nietzsche is able to claim the death of this God while he also forecasts a replacement that embodies the same principles as the murdered God. This new God is science, which later manifests as advanced technology.

V. THE RISE OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL GOD

This chapter discusses the rise of science as the central means to apprehend the nature of the cosmos. Previously, the existence of the metaphysical God provided all the necessary explanations. Subsequently, a new mechanistic viewpoint of the world began to overwhelm the metaphysical vantage point. In Nietzsche's terms, the Apollonian overwhelmed the Dionysian. Eventually, science served as a new God that could explain every aspect of human life. Moreover, the daily use of machines, invented through the application of science, altered daily life to the point where the machine began to mediate all aspects of human activity. Therefore, this chapter highlights the central reasons why the technological God ascended from the method previously employed to explain the metaphysical God.

Indian Physicist Rustum Roy constructed the analogy that science is to technology as theology is to religion (667). In this sense, the broad (significant) theoretical assertions come from science while the application of those assertions manifest in technology. Similarly, theology offers the framework for religions to operate. More importantly, the worlds of science and theology and technology and religion circulate near or around the others. To follow this analogy through, one detects that the way humans practice religion corresponds with the way humans practice technology. However, the phrase "practice technology" remains out of popular use. One does not practice technology, one uses technology. Does one use a religion? To use a religion one might pray, confess, or attend church. Still, the analogy seems to fail. But perhaps

paradoxically it makes issue clearer. Perhaps, we are practicing technology. To practice technology means to use it religiously. Each text message, search query, or interactive video session involves the practice of technology, the new religion.

Before a full discussion on technology as religion, the discussion on science as theology requires interrogation. The advent of science follows the pattern of rational metaphysics, which Nietzsche identifies. As documented above, the Scholastic thinkers employ their extensive reasoning capabilities to explicate and promote, with as much exactitude as possible, the nature of God. Therefore, the method remains in place for Descartes, Kant, and Hegel to retain God, yet reason Him to death. For instance, Lacan claims that "Descartes inaugurates the initial bases of a science in which God has nothing to do" (*Seminar XI* 226). Therefore, it is only appropriate that science uses its methods to create a God that does things, through advanced technology.

During this time, science develops its method with Galileo, Kepler, Bacon, Newton, and Descartes, all of whom were theists. In fact, to repeat, Padgett confirms that "There was no conflict in principle, between . . . science and religion before the enlightenment . . . [and] theology and religion were instrumental in the development of the empirical, mathematical rationality of modern science" (579). Thus, the later medieval and Renaissance periods generally maintain a healthy coexistence between science and theology. Padgett declares that the "Enlightenment prejudice against authority, tradition, and religious faith . . . [aimed] to destroy the political authority of the church in Europe" (580-581). The Enlightenment period signals the beginning of the major rift between science and theology. Again, though, reason applied to theology itself

set this process in motion. Furthermore, the teleology of the two fields of thought continues.

Science as theology starts with the mechanistic concept of the world. To reiterate, Mumford looks at the period of astronomical discoveries as the central time period when the mechanistic scientific worldview becomes a new religion. He writes, "The period between Copernicus and Newton [contributed] a new outlook . . . while the Christian Heaven shrank, the astronomical heaven expanded . . . [which created] a profound religious reorientation . . . [that] accounts for the immense authority that the astronomical and mechanical world pictured exerted" (*Myth Machine* 34). Of course, the scientists never really challenge the authority of the church during this time. Even though the earth-centered universe proves implausible and alters the cosmos of the Church, the ultimate explanation of the new order still revolves around the magnificent order of God's creation (the cosmological argument). Mumford makes sure to note, "Despite conflicts and skirmishes with the Church, science produced no martyrs. Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, and Descartes . . . discreetly sidestepped martyrdom" (39) even though Galileo ushers in the negative of subjective experience in favor of the complete and total understanding of the objective world.

Again, to repeat, this *eliminates* Dionysian human experience from the scientific method. Mumford explains that Galileo's successors "pulverized . . . cultural heritage into that which was the measurable, public, 'objective,' repeatable . . . [and] obliterated the basic facts of human existence" (63). Moreover, "The new cult . . . promoted an immense concentration on the mastery of earthly life: exploration, invention, conquest, colonization, all centered on immediate fulfillment. Now, not the hereafter was what

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counted" (34). Consequently, the path to certainty and truth as it pertains to objective

reality no longer resides in the spiritual realm where the human lives as a subjective and

moral being. Rather, all subjectivity belongs to those who employ the scientific method

to apprehend objective truth of human objects and everything else in the natural world on

earth and in the universe. Cultural expressions of human existence (life after death, for

example) lose their status in the universal mechanical framework, since subjectivity

informs culture. This allows a one-dimensional viewpoint to usurp all other claims of

certainty.

To restate one of Nietzsche's important points concerning the futility and even the

danger of the scientific society, he notes in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, that a man lies in a

swamp, covered by leeches, as he studies the workings of their brains (202). Zarathustra

confronts the scientist who says, "How long already have I pursued this one thing, the

brain of the leech, so that the slippery truth no longer slips away from me here" (202).

Nietzsche criticizes the over examination of every tiny aspect of nature and life on earth.

However, this examination by the scientist does not remain benign. When the Apollonian

overpowers the Dionysian, the rules of the mechanical hold sway in society. In a sense,

the scientist who studies the brain of the leech asserts his will-to-power upon the leech.

By analogy, the scientific viewpoint of the cosmos and the earth take power over the

human mind and results in a singular outlook for humanity.

As the theology, through the Scholastics and the like, created a singular point of

view of life mediated by God (and them), the scientific project replaces theology as the

new dogma of mediation for the human subject (object). In her article, "The Problem of

Science in Nietzsche and Heidegger" American Professor of Philosophy Babette Babich

declares, "Our lives today, in whatever part of the world, for the rich and for the poor, are mediated more and more by technology. We take this 'connectedness' to be the 'gift' of science" (209). Mediation of subjects occurs through objects. Therefore, the object gives subjectivity. More alarmingly, perhaps, is the notion that the subjects lose subjectivity to the object and thus the roles reverse where the subject is the (technological object) and the subjects become human objects. Roy explains, "Contemporary science, which once was about a human's experience of nature, has retreated to the outer fringes of magnitude away from the interest or comprehension of ninety-five percent of humans" (672). Roy's point is accurate, but Nietzsche saw scientific specialization as occurring much earlier. Simply put, it has always been less than five percent of humans who have had interest or comprehension of the knowledge of science. Moreover, the same is true of theological specialization and the percentage of those who had comprehension or even access to it during the time of Augustine to Anselm.

Descartes lives as one of the main progenitors of the scientific project and, hence, epitomizes Nietzsche's central point in God's death and in the Apollonian dominance of the future. In *Discourse on Method*, Descartes insists that "knowing the force and action of fire, water, air, the stars, the heavens, and all other bodies that surround us, we might also apply them in the same way to all the uses to which they are adapted, and thus render ourselves the lords and possessors of nature" (49). Descartes use of terms such as "the heavens" (as opposed to the sky or even the universe) and "lords of nature" to infer the relationship of the scientific project to the coming new theology of domination. The suggestion to apply the knowledge of the mechanistic properties of the natural world to "all uses" proves particularly unsettling because it implies the enforcement of an entire

machine-like society. Mumford confirms, "Thus the ultimate aim of science, the proof of both its truth and its efficacy, would be to make all behavior as predictable as the movements of the heavenly bodies" (*Myth Machine* 82). To support this idea further, Babich states, "Science increasingly defines what is real and dominates the globe in a singularly irresistible fashion" (218).

Science begins to set up a teleological and utopian scenario of progress from its method and application, which replaces the Christian concept of heaven. Heidegger explains this aptly as he writes, "The flight from the world into the suprasensory is replaced by historical progress. The otherworldly goal of everlasting bliss is transformed into the earthly happiness of the greatest number. The engineering of life on earth will produce happiness and contentment" (64). In addition, the early work of Mumford proposes utopian city planning, but he later altered his perspective. British Professor Christopher May affirms, "[Mumford's] pre-40s work on cities and planning . . . exhibited a preference for technocratic, centralized bureaucratic control. However, by the 1960s, when his interest had turned almost exclusively to the problem of technology, he rejects sorts of Utopian visions which had influence him in the pre-war period, seeing them as essentially totalitarian" (247). Nietzsche calls it "The delusion of limitless power" (*Birth Tragedy* 65). In context, Nietzsche speaks of a Socratic quest for objective knowledge while neglecting the subjective experiences of music and art (distinct cultural expressions outside of the objective). Nietzsche rejects objectivism and stands in opposition to a purely objective standpoint divorced from our subjective involvement in the world (Samuel 4-5).

Scholar Gregory Morgan Swer reinforces this by claiming that "The gain in scientific knowledge and predictive power was offset by a corresponding loss in knowledge of the subjective, qualitative dimensions of existence" (59). These subjective dimensions could only be manifest in utilitarian routines mechanized by the universal production of necessities scientifically calibrated for the upmost efficiency. Commenting on utopian literature (*City of the Sun*, *New Atlantis*, and *Christianoplis*), American Historian Frank Manuel mentions, "The scientist was differentiated from other men of learning and began to play the dominant role in the imaginary society. The role of the scientist and the institutions of science in these three works set important form-giving patterns for many later scientific establishments" (216). In essence, the imaginary society exists as the ultimate expression of human organization through a sculpted configuration model that eventually becomes the governing paradigm. However, unlike the utopias of the literature, the manifestation of the model proves problematic as this model "repressed humanity and destroyed the environment" (Swer 59). When one traces the movement from the metaphysical assertion of God and the all-encompassing theology, of which it conforms to the method of science as a means to inform human enterprise and engagement, it is obvious that Rustum Roy's comparison of science as theology appears valid.

Technology as religion serves as the other side of Roy's analogy. Larry Stapleton uses the term "technoculture" (97). He means, "The interpenetration of the human world to the machine world through which human existence is to be mediated and shaped" (97). It is significant to note that the language used for describing science in the world shares the vocabulary and usage with the terms that describe technology. For example, one

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might say, "The human is overpowered by scientific analysis or the human is overpowered by technological advancement." The above discussion on the nature of the Christian theological God demonstrates the mediation of human life through the prevailing religious dogma of the period. Despite the manifestation of human ingenuity in the form of newly constructed technology (the printing press, for example), the great majority of people found their lives mediated through religious practice and power. Since the Church ruled and God was absolutely perfect, mediation could be through nothing else. Consequently, the religious culture (religioculture) is the technoculture. Mediation bears significant relevance in understanding the power of technology in human life. Ultimately, if scientific knowledge exhibits a privileging of the mechanical in the operation of nature, then technology stands as the application of the mechanical operations of scientific discovery.

Science sees the machines in the universe and engineers fabricate the corresponding artificial machines artificially. Mumford declares, "In a world of machines, or of creatures that can be reduced to machines, technocrats would indeed be gods" (72). This claim provides a fine analogy, but rather than gods, the technocrats (scientists and engineers) live as the Augustines and Anselms (theologians) of times past. Stapleton refers to these technocrats as "functional rationalists" (98). He writes, "Functional rationalism is obsessed with the integration in which knowledge and insight is not embodied in humans but codified into data processing machines" (98). When the human reduces to a machine, the machine becomes a mode of human expression, of which the mediation to nature becomes empty and the connection to other humans (machines) becomes a mediated relation between mechanical objects. The codes in

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machines dictate behavior of the human subject. Since technocrats or functional rationalists build these codes, they mediate the connections to humanity to the without and the within. Roy explains, "Technology functions to replace what traditional religions offer" (670). The religious experience alters how human subjects mediate with the suprasensory. This religious experience becomes a technological experience.

Thus, the qualities of the suprasensory must remain inside the codified expressions of mediation. Otherwise, the nature of belief becomes demystified. In other words, if Roy's figures on the percentage of those whose interest and comprehension of applied science reversed (95% of people understand and care about how technologies actually function), the system would implode. In order for it to be religious, like during the time of the Scholastics, the technocrats must keep the mystery of the object in place. Consequently, science and engineering (applied science) cannot actually fulfill its unrealistic assertion that it is a disinterested method for understanding. Roy confirms, "Basic science, the kind that is determined by the curiosity of individual investigators alone, not aimed at any goal or product but at understanding is coming to an end" (673). Over one hundred years earlier, Nietzsche already penned Roy's claim about science. Nonetheless, its accuracy illustrates the role of the functional rationalist as the new theologians who support and propagate religion as technology. Mumford recognizes that "the immediate outcome of the new [scientific] system of thought and deemotionalized statements was temporarily a happy one, for it cooled off the overheated atmosphere of theological controversy left over from the Reformation and the Counter Reformation . . . but the ultimate result of this mechanistic doctrine was to raise the machine to a higher

status than any organism or at best to admit grudgingly that higher organisms were supermachines" (66, 70).

Finally, the tie to science and technology bears the dictates of faith. Nietzsche discusses the element of faith. Kulak summarizes "Because the unconditional will to truth, which the natural sciences presuppose in order to begin, for Nietzsche, equally religious and secular, the secular is, it turns out, the truth of the religious, but only because the religious is equally the truth of the secular" (792). This "will to truth" constitutes the same act of faith found within the Scholastic metaphysical realm and also within Descartes, Kant, and Hegel. Nietzsche offers a clear explanation, "It is still a metaphysical faith upon which our faith in science rests, that even we seekers of knowledge today, we godless anti-metaphysicians still take our fire, too from the flame lit by faith that is thousands of years old, that Christian faith . . . that God is truth, that truth is divine" (*Gay Science* 283). Finally, Nietzsche makes the profound connection extremely evident when he writes, "The good faith in science, the prejudice in its favor that dominates the modern state and formerly dominated even the church" (179). This establishes the transitional period from the church through Nietzsche to our contemporary moment where science and technology rules every practice through its dominance in daily human life.

Moreover, Dutch Philosopher Willem Drees provides the most apt explanation for our times. He claims, "We look to the engineers for our salvation. This is not to be seen as an antireligious move, as we may appreciate their knowledge and skills as gifts of God, as possibilities to serve the neighbor" (645). The overt intermingling of faith based dictums and the technicians of the global scientific empire infer the imminent new system

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of technological religious conceptions. Drees, who welcomes the complete

transformation of faith, further claims, "Faith in technological culture is not that different

from what it has been, because we humans are not that different. We are still vulnerable

[confirming Freud], still looking for orientation, for something to hold on to, for a song

that strengthens us" (646). While Nietzsche foresaw the separation of the Apollonian and

the Dionysian, Drees employs the metaphor of the song with the advancement of

technological faith in objects. The current consensus among proponents of the global

proliferation of gadgets, mix metaphors to produce the connection between creative

artistic creations based in subjective human enterprise with the objectivity technology

implants in the human experience.

Drees does not mention a key element of Nietzsche's fears. University of British

Colombia Professor Mark E. Warren notes, "For Nietzsche . . . all ideas concerning

universal laws and necessities, truths, and values mask their particular and interested

relations to modes of power" (544). Drees metaphor serves as a narrow disingenuous

attempt to connect humanity through a shared sentimentality to the finality of

organization and security. His statement is the mask that Nietzsche discusses. It blocks

from view the underlying power of the technological theology and priesthood. At one

time, hope for a positive scientific future existed. Filipino Scholar Virgilio Aquino Rivas

describes, "Men who possessed of honorable intentions . . . alert mankind that a new

religion, that of technocracy, was emerging. Unfortunately, [these men had] dark sinister

intentions" (144). In addition, he declares, "God had returned to earth, but under a new

cloak . . . so expansive that it threatened to conquer the planet . . . in other words, the

annihilation of the whole planet" (145). Nietzsche fears nihilism. Those like Mumford,

who are critical of the religiosity of technological advancement, fear global catastrophe. Incidentally, Erling Hope feels that "technology becomes invisible, unnoticed, its interface becomes intuitive and gestural rather than technical. It becomes the medium in which we live and move and have our being" (252). Hope suggests a reality where the awareness of technology becomes obsolete, similar to how the awareness of the natural world has become obsolete. With his thesis, we return to Augustine's "God is *is*" (qtd. in Anderson 5), of which God simply defies our conceptual abilities and becomes everything to the point of Hegelian negation. Despite the overwhelming supremacy of science as theology and technology as religion, God remains unidentified. To comprehend the intersection of Hope's thesis with Augustine's God, we can ask: what scientific and technological entity defies humanity and becomes invisible in Augustinian terms? Google. Therefore, if God is *is* then Google is *is*, and, likewise, Google is God because God is God.

<div align="center">A Brief Introduction of Google</div>

This brief section examines the biographical and structural information of Google as a technological enterprise that engages in global mediation (in simple terms, Google as Google). Larry Page and Sergey Brin, the creators and founders of Google, met at Stanford University in 1995. According to Ken Auletta, Media Critic for *The New Yorker*, they shared much in common as their "fathers were college professors and their mothers worked in science; both were born in 1973 . . . both attended Montessori elementary schools . . . both were encouraged to study what they wished . . . and [both] majored in computer science" (24). They quickly became friends and began to collaborate on a search engine called BackRub (later changed to Google) with the

mission to "organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful" ("Google Company Mission"). Page explains the origin of the name Google, "Google means a very large number. It is the number V followed by 100 zeros . . . We were confused about how to spell this, and so we actually spelled it incorrectly. It is a mathematical term and it is spelled g-o-o-g-o-l" (qtd. in Vise 17). Page and Brin were thinking big!

To successfully fulfill its mission, Page thought of a new idea in the world of web search. Being a scholar, he understood that citations to a particular text or study reinforced the legitimacy and popularity of the text exponentially. American Journalist John Battelle notes that Page "reasoned that the entire Web was loosely based on the premise of citation and annotation; after all, what was a link, but a citation, and what was the text describing that link but annotation" (72). In that late 1990s, none of the other search engines (Lycos, Netscape, Excite, etc.) employed this kind of strategy to gather search results. Pulitzer Prize Winning Journalist David Vise comments, "[To Page], all links were not created equal. He would give greater weight to incoming links from important sites . . . The sites with the most links pointing to them . . . were more important than sites with fewer links. In other words, if the popular Yahoo homepage linked to an Internet site, that site instantly became more important" (37). This idea proved vital to Google's success because the Google search engine allowed for more effective search results. Meghan Neal of *Motherboard* corroborates, "Before search engines like Google opened up the web to the wide world, you really had to know your

way around the net to find what you were looking for." Page later validated his theory

with a link rating system called "PageRank" (Auletta 30-31).

Page and Brin were able to utilize the resources of Stanford University to begin

their research. Vise confirms, "Stanford made it extremely easy for students in its Ph.D.

program to work on potential commercial endeavors using university resources" (30). In

fact, Page estimated that it "cost the computer science department $20,000 every time

they dispatched a 'spider' program to canvass the entire internet" (Vise 36). Eventually

their investigation into web search developed into an extremely popular enterprise. Levy

writes, "It was becoming less a research project than an Internet start-up run from a

private university" (31). Page and Brin received further funding and were able to move

off campus to work to develop Google. The funding of one million dollars arrived from

investors Jeff Bezos, Dave Cheriton, Andy Bechtolsheim, and Ram Shriram.

Subsequently, they officially incorporated their business of September 4, 1998 (Levy 34).

In the spirit of the lore that mythologizes the humble beginnings of tech companies,

Google first housed itself in a garage for around $2000 a month (Auletta 33).

VI. GOOGLE- A TECHNOLOGICAL GOD

"Google's techno-utopian vision and earthly appetite for power rest on the

foundational Enlightenment belief in progress" (Hillis et. al. 11).

This chapter discusses Google in relation to its Godly attributes of omniscience,

omnipotence, omnipresence, and omnibenevolence as well as it contradictory nature, its

gift of free will, and its mediation of human activity. It will also focus on Google's higher

causes that underlie its contradictions, like the metaphysical God. This chapter begins

with an investigation of Google that utilizes Lacanian psychoanalytic theory interwoven

with Baudrillard, Foucault, and McLuhan's relevant perspectives on human behavior

amidst technology. Then the chapter engages in an extended analysis of Google's "omni"

attributes, including its creations and modes of operation, as evidence for the central

claim that Google is a technological God according to the previously established

description of God.

All Human Activity: Mediated and Informed by Google

Google's origins overtly illustrate a mode of operation (and motivation) outside of

profit driven consumerism. Essentially, this moves Google beyond the simple

construction of a multi-national corporation bent on making money. Although James

Walters, in his book *Baudrillard and Theology*, notes, "[Baudrillard's] formulation of the

advanced capitalist predicament is also reminiscent of Michel Foucault's 'biopower' in

the way in which, through consumerism, capitalist processes have pervaded all aspects of

everyday life and thought" (27). Walker ties Baudrillard to Foucault as it relates to the

singular momentary actions that contribute to the vast mediation of productive /

consumptive power in basic daily movements. But the thesis of capitalist consumerism as

a means to dictate or mediate all aspects of life no longer fully resolves the question of

technological omni-prevalence. Google's (potential / inevitable / eventual) global

omnipresence or total mediation of human function, as Foucault's "biopower" and

Baudrillard's "inertial mass," fails because the processes that pervade all aspects of

everyday life and thought, while firmly embedded in consumerism, ascend to a state

where consumerism becomes irrelevant and, more importantly, *unconscious* in the

masses' use of (Google's) technological interfaces. In parallel, although the church(es),

held to financial aims in terms of God (God needs this money), which maneuvered the

daily life of its parishioners, God encompassed a more highly evolved or intrinsically

transcendent purpose. Taken with Augustine's "God is *is*" (Google is *is*), the rationale of

total pervasion through centrally economic means dissolves as an aggregate explanation.

Furthermore, the origination of God, both the pre-Mosaic Law or Pre-Nicaean

Creed, implies a supra-presence that invades motivational precepts while it interacts with

normalizing constructs throughout the central survival navigation in human movement. In

Lacanian terms (through Freud), the unconscious presupposes "the submission to the

father by creating a Father-God" (Braungardt). To be more precise, German

Psychotherapist and Professor Jürgen Braungardt accurately accounts that the truth of

religion (God) "exists in the unconscious as a repressed memory and manifests itself in

repetition." The repetition involves a manifested construction both from above and below

in Foucault's power relations and Baudrillard's inertial masses. Therefore, Google acts as

a representation of unconscious drives that aim for the desire of the ideal ego in

materiality that composes a naturalized system of material movement or creation of the ideal ego. Each Google search enacts a reinforcement of the domination of technic narrowing, individual physical automation, and psycho-physical worship. Lacan offers the undercurrent of power over the body so prominent in religious dogma when he asks, "Do we not see . . . the emergence of that which forced Freud to find in the myths of the death of the father the regulation of desire?" (*Seminar XI* 27). Thus, death and desire work in relation to conceptualizing Lacan's version of God, and within the context of technological or applied science as an extension or usurper of the metaphysical God, the death of Nietzsche's God admits to the desire of the very "biopower" embedded in Google's structure.

In terms of regulation, which surfaces when deconstructed through Foucault, Google aims for the desire at the initial presence of the initial creation of the search and fortifies the desire when search becomes a regulatory practice. For instance, Harvard Psychologist and Journalist Robert Epstein reports that "Google's ubiquitous search engine has indeed become the gateway to virtually all information, handling 90 percent of search in most countries." Therefore, Google fully articulates omniscience through regulatory practice, with desire at its base. This establishes that Google virtually controls all search. With this control, conceptualizing the normalization through religious dogma becomes an appropriate extrapolation in basic Lacanian discourse. The maintenance of such power previously required an interlocutor or, more appropriately, a mediator (speaker) whose presence dictated a naturalizing process. Lacan, through Freud cites the doctor as the mediator of which desire and prohibition manifest through language (*Ecrits* 37-39). In religious terms, the mediator comprises the class of priests, whether in the

process of preaching, confession, or otherwise. The clergy always includes a visible

material relation who offers, at least in practical terms, a two-way discourse to the

individual (of the inertial masses). Google search eliminates the physical mediator

regardless of the multiple technicians who oversee the operation of the technics.

In more cynical terms, the mediator manifests physically in the plastic form of the

screen and communicatively in the virtual form of the autocomplete and the list of

results. This places desire into an automated (or regulated) (pseudo)confessional space.

Beyond information and beyond any degree of specifically locatable rationality, desire

initiates through the unrecognizable register of the Imaginary. Lacan mentions the

relationship between analyst and analysand (Google search and human searching) when

he notes, "Something is mystically placed here on the person who listens to him" (*Names

of the Father* 20). The implication of analyst as God (Father) persists, but complicates in

the narcissistic moment when the analysand puts himself "in the place of his interlocutor"

(21). Here, the physical nature of the analyst dissipates, and the analysand takes on the

God syndrome. The question arises: what mediator (dis)appears when the screen replaces

the physical? A more fully cynical answer consists of the complete disappearance of the

human mediator, but revives less cynically with the insertion of God. Moreover, the

representatives of God (clergy and analyst) always fulfill the formerly necessary role

condensed in the (human) physical. With the screen, these mediators disappear while the

material presence of the screen results in a hyperreal manifestation of supreme regulatory

mediation.

The consequences of this alteration involves the shift in the Imaginary and the

Symbolic orders. Since the Imaginary contains the bed-place of ideal ego and

unconscious narcissism (Delay 9-10), it serves as a location to graft resistance to regulatory dictation. How can this continue to operate if the symbolic function of the Father becomes mediated through the virtual? Delay summarizes Lacan's symbolic (Father) as "everything collected in our psyche from our experience. It is our parents and friendships, our social norms and taboos, our gods and demons" (12). Within a hegemonic Google search, a dual regulatory machine deflates the symbolic further than the Christian God and its clergy, *before* the death of God. The screen as medium regulates the senses in McLuhan terms while the content regulates through calculated results.

First, to address McLuhan and the senses, he writes, "The effects of technology . . . alter sense ratios or patterns of perception steadily and without any resistance" (*Understanding Media* 19). The advent of the screen offers a sensory dimension that differs in experience from the one mediated in two-way human communication. McLuhan's key phrase, "patterns of perception," exemplifies the sensory engagement with the screen that encompass the ideas of Foucault and Baudrillard. From the vantage point of perception, McLuhan relates the myth of Narcissus to illustrate the ratio of sense to "numbness" (51). The screen numbs. McLuhan continues, "This extension of himself [Narcissus] by mirror numbed his perceptions until he became the servomechanism of his own extended or repeated image" (51). French Author Jean Querzola refers to this numbness as "electronic narcosis" (qtd. in Baudrillard, *Seduction* 166).[5] He continues, "The computer prosthesis . . . provides us with a . . . bio-electronic mirror, in which each person, like some digital Narcissus, will slide along the trajectory of a death drive and

[5] From "Le Siliciumfleur de Peau" in *Traverses*, No. 14/15.

sink in his or her own image" (167). The biological element involves the sense ratio inherent in the immediate interaction between the human and the screen. American Writer Nicholas Carr provides the evidence for McLuhan and Querzola's claim through neuroscience. He concludes:

> The recent discoveries about neuroplasticity make the essence of the intellect more visible, its steps and boundaries easier to mark. They tell us that the tools man has used to support or extend his nervous system, all those technologies that through history have influenced how we find, store, and interpret information, how we direct our attention and *engage our senses* . . . have shaped the physical structure and workings of the human mind. Their use has strengthened some neural circuits and weakened others, reinforced certain mental traits while leaving others to fade away" (48).

Therefore, the vital questions are: what senses does Narcissus employ when he sees his reflection in the river, and what senses do humans employ when looking in the smart screen? In the monologue of search, Google reflects an image unrecognizable to the human object, or at least an unrecognized version of the self. This vision ignites the Imaginary register, the ideal ego, of Lacan's Names of the Father.

Since Lacan's register of the Imaginary is the "domain of narcissism" (Delay 9), and the Imaginary, according to Lacan is what is "artificially reproduced" (*Names of the Father* 52), the human object "sinks" into a state of narcosis or narcissistic fixation. To explain, Freud states, "The ideal ego answers to everything that is expected of the higher nature of man. As a substitute for a longing for the father, it contains the germ from

which all religions have evolved" (*Freud Reader* 642). The ideal ego rests at the foundation of the God creation and also results in a continuous aim to fulfill this ideal through the death drive toward unquenchable desire. Lacan's "mirror stage" echoes Freud's assessment and, moreover, facilitates the endeavor of the human psyche to overcome the mystery of the image through the creation of the smart screen and the Google search. The search enacts this ideal driven performativity. Delay explains, "In the same way that one might look in a mirror and see an image more attractive than the image actually reflected, narcissism is unsatisfied with the conscious recognition of itself and compensates by creating a narrative . . . an Imaginary beyond the Imaginary" (11). Therefore, Lacan's Imaginary houses the birth of God (*ex nihilo* / beyond the Imaginary) and later the advent of (applied) science (the extension of God). Both require a narrative built within the psyche and both are epitomized in Google as a sensorial stalemate.

The narrative structure exemplifies the elaborate, colorful, and creative use of reason (and literary devices) found in Scholastic texts. This presents an ambiguity of the idea that "Man (is) God" and since "God is Dead," so is "Man." The concept of God, when taken to its psychoanalytical limit, reveals to the human that God was the Ideal human, all along; and lives as the ultimate and absolutely singular simulacra of the Imaginary register. The over four thousand pages of narrative from Thomas stands in alignment with the binary language of the computer. The theological narrative turns into an unspecified story void of linearity, conflict, spirit, or emotion. The only result manifests on the screen and bears witness to an unknowable author (programmer). Binary language which indicates the (anti)presence of pure simulacra only reveals the emptiness of historical human linguistic signifiers.

Baudrillard describes this situation by analyzing a chess match between

Kasparov, a human, and a computer program named Deep Blue. The human wins the

chess match. Baudrillard writes:

> But, to come back to Kasparov, if he won, it was surely because he is
>
> (metaphorically) capable of speaking more than one language: that of the
>
> emotions, of intuition, of the stratagem, in a word, the language of play
>
> [Dionysian], not to mention the language of calculation. Whereas Deep
>
> Blue speaks only the language of calculation [Apollonian]. The day this
>
> latter language prevails, in whatever form, Kasparov will be beaten. The
>
> day man himself speaks only that single language, the language of
>
> computers, he will be beaten. (*Screened Out* 161)

To explain, a global speak of religious rationale as exemplified in *Summa Theologica*

offers a global simulation of language usage. It represents a closed system of

homogeneity or as Baudrillard might say a fabrication of "non-communication" (*Requiem

Media* 164). Nonetheless, Thomas's lengthy text carries notions of genuine emotive

narration with clear and identifiable linguistic signifiers. This keeps language within the

realm of humanity while maintaining the ideal ego of God. The language of calculation

manifests without these human elements and transcends human considerations. The only

consideration is calculation. In Lacanian terms, the computer language incorporates the

ideal ego into the overlapping register of the Symbolic.

Lacan notes that the "Symbolic is the presence expressed in absence" (*Seminar II*

38). Therefore, the Imaginary is the conscious while the Symbolic is the unconscious.

Eventually, Lacan's Real reveals itself. Delay explains, "The Symbolic is an intermediate

register of sorts, the filter which the Real enters and becomes interpreted for the

Imaginary" (12). So, the *Summa Theologica* offers the Real of God the Father in the

conscious real through an elaborate rationale motivated by an ideal ego understood in

narcissistic consciousness. But the Symbolic unconscious motivation insists on the

creation of the ideal ego. Furthermore, in psychoanalysis, "conscious justification [such

as *Summa Theologica*] for a viewpoint is always of secondary importance" (Delay 13).

The language of calculation manifests or simulates the Real on a smart screen with a

singular homogenous vantage point. How does one grasp the unconscious in a binary

computer language of calculation? To repeat Baudrillard, "The day man himself speaks

only that single language, the language of computers, he will be beaten" (*Screened Out*

161). Querzola notes that the "development of . . . information technology is

accompanied by the dissolution of the personality structure we call Oedipal" (qtd. in

Baudrillard, *Seduction* 166). This makes Lacan's Symbolic register one dimensional and

implodes all human constructed regulations, laws, and (cultural) mores into one single

module of calculation.

In essence, Google search contains the properties which perpetually reenact and

decode all the psychological modes of desire characterized by modes of worship. It

delimits the sensory data and shifts potential analysis to what McLuhan describes as

"pattern recognition" (*Medium Massage* 63) both inside and outside of the smart screen.

It also transcends the simple and ineffective explanation from a strictly economic

analysis. To elaborate, "Google is search's most powerful innovator and driver. From its

late 1990s inception, the algorithm PageRank™, which underpins Google's search

technologies, transformed the practice and conceptualization of what it was to search the

Web" (Hillis et. al. 3). The algorithm demotes the role of the Symbolic from the human and promotes the artificial unconscious of computer language of calculation.

Of course, Baudrillard's hyperbolic anxiety rests upon the human becoming the machine and, thus, eliminating the human. With the global dominance of Google, algorithm becomes, in Foucault's terms, normalized. Professors Ken Hillis, Michael Petit, and Kylie Jarrett explain, "Online and mobile search practices and the algorithms that determine results are accepted by most searchers as utilitarian, though widely understood to be powerful, their very ubiquity has quickly naturalized them into the backgrounds, fabrics, spaces, and places of everyday life" (5). Hillis et. al use the term "naturalize," but a more fitting term might be artificialize. Therefore, the more naturalized Google's algorithms become in human life, the more artificially constructed human life becomes. This is the technological God at work. Regardless, the central point involves the constant mediation of Google search embedded in human existence.

While humans previously saw the metaphysical God as the mediator of all interaction and activity that mediator is now the technological God. The scientific ideal ego. Auletta, describes the creators of this mediation when he writes, "Google's leaders are not cold businessmen; they are cold engineers. They are scientists, always seeking new answers. They seek a construct, a formula, an algorithm that both graphs and predicts behavior. They naively believe that most mysteries, including the mysteries of human behavior, are unlocked with data" (8). To turn to Foucault, the dual relationship between the creator and the rank and file participant reinforces the omnipotence (and omniscience) of Google. While the engineers, who aim to dehumanize the globe, construct systems to unlock the "mysteries of human behavior," they actually inform,

construct, or dictate the human behavior, itself. Foucault already discusses this system of

calculation by the Panopticon. He writes:

> The Panopticon should be the formula for the whole of government[.] . . .
>
> It must give way to everything due to natural mechanisms in . . .
>
> behavior[.] . . . It must give way to these mechanisms and make no other
>
> intervention . . . [except] . . . supervision. Government . . . is only to
>
> intervene when it sees that something is not happening according to the
>
> general mechanics of behavior. (*Birth of Biopolitics* 67)

Although Foucault speaks of government, Google carries more wealth and power than

traditional statist governments.[6] Essentially, Google attempts to catalogue and analyze

"natural" human behavior without direct intervention and create search based on the data.

It only intervenes when human behavior conflicts with the data. The intervention includes

a shift in the algorithms, which alters "natural" human behavior.[7] The language of

calculation solidifies the Symbolic regulation of the ideal ego while it prescribes the

models of normalcy (or what is natural) for human behavior. In this system, humans no

longer need Edwards hellfire to behave accordingly for God; they simply participate in a

calculated system of Google constructed algorithms. Power from top to bottom reinforce

from bottom to top.

Google engineers overlook McLuhan's basic thesis that "the medium is the

message." Human behavior cannot be a mystery when the medium through which the

behavior of the human is manifest carries inherent outcomes of human behavior. The

[6] See *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction* by Immanuel Wallerstein for a further
explanation.
[7] These shifts are documented on https://moz.com/google-algorithm-change.

simple existence of the smart screen communicates certain behaviors by design.

Therefore, human behavior *is* by design. Google guarantees specific human behavior

because it owns the medium. Since it handles "90% of search in most countries"

(Epstein), the human mind can be molded through the use of Google search until all life

is basic simulation. For example, Foucault mentions, "Throughout the penal procedure

and the implementation of the sentence there swarms a whole series of subsidiary

authorities" (*Discipline and Punish* 21). Obviously, the use of Google search is not an

exercise of governmental legal punishment, but there is a major element of control over

the body and mind of the individual within Google search. The main point lies in the

"series of subsidiary authorities." In basic terms, when ninety percent of people utilize a

single informational medium, this "swarm" shares behavioral attitudes, ideas, movement,

and preferences. Eventually, without any thought, the swarm "naturally" behaves by the

dictates of the algorithm (and the medium) or as "subsidiary authorities." This is

microphysics of power and the manifestation of Baudrillard's inertial masses. This is

omnipotence.

<p style="text-align:center">The Omnipotence of Google</p>

This section mainly focuses on Google's omnipotence, but its other attributes will

be referenced in the discussion. First, to repeat, omnipotence involves the power to

create. In terms of Google, former Google CEO, Eric Schmidt said, "Our goal is to

change the world" (qtd. in Auletta 8). The idea of change Schmidt implies relates to the

idea of eternal scientific progress. This began through the advent of reason that Scholastic

theologians employed through Descartes and Bacon's scientific method to the

proclamation of the death of the metaphysical God by Nietzsche and the rise of science as

<p style="text-align:center">94</p>

the authority for apprehending the world. Google's changing of the world can be logically interpreted as the omnipotent creation of a new world. Baudrillard's famous interpretation of the Borges fable, in which the map of the territory covers the territory, offers one evident reference to this change. He writes, "The territory no longer precedes the map, nor does it survive it. It is nevertheless the map that precedes the territory" (*Simulacra Simulation* 1). Foucault supplies another obvious reference with the construction Bentham's Panopticon. He states, "The Panopticon is a machine" (*Discipline and Punish* 202). Therefore, the architectural / mechanical construction allows for only predetermined activity, a specifically determined state of being, and a prescribed range of sensory input.

To further apply this to Google's omnipotence through creation, it is significant to note that God as a human creation aligns with Google as a human creation. The former as the creator of the universe, as proposed by theologians and the latter in the realm of the contemporary God of science and technology through, literally, Sergei Brin and Larry Page. Both constitute human creations (*ex nihilio*) and both exit the axis of something with direct entry and sublime clarity into something that is Real in the Lacanian sense of the term. Moreover, the Scholastics' God became complicated over time and became a being whose explanation rationally eliminated the being, itself. Moreover, the Real was overwhelmed by the intersection of the Imaginary and the Symbolic, in other words, by meaning.

The Christian God created the human in His own image, and "The goodness of God is reflected in [human] creation" (Bray 146). If God created it, it is good. Thomas replies to the objection that "God can do evil things if He will" (145) by replying, "Both

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the antecedent and consequent are impossible: as if one were to say: If man is an ass he has four feet" (145). Google creates (the human) in its own image. Google's motto is "Don't Be Evil." If Google creates it, it is not evil.[8] To return to Google search, discussed briefly, it functions as a reflective *and* two-way mirror, of which the human gaze returns upon itself. In this sense, Google's original search enterprise epitomizes the grandiose nature and goodness of its creation.

In the earlier review of God's omnipotence, God's ability to create involves establishing the "laws of the heavens and the earth." Of course, ample scriptural evidence supports the theologians' assertions which relate to the laws of the universe as set by God. For instance, Job 38:32-33 states, "Can you lead forth a constellation in its season, and guide the Bear with her satellites? Do you know the ordinances of the heavens, or fix their rule over the earth?" (*New International Version*). Also, Jeremiah 31:25 notes, "This is what the LORD says, he who appoints the sun to shine by day, who decrees the moon and stars to shine by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar, the LORD Almighty is his name" (*New International Version*). Essentially, the power of creation includes the parameters and rules for the objects within creation, and these are inherently good and for the good of His creation. Augustine refers to this as "eternal law" (*On Free Choice* 8-12). He mentions that "It is the law according to which it is just that all things be perfectly ordered," and "command that the soul be ruled by reason" (14). So God's power to create includes the rational elements of the cosmos. So does Google's.

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[8] The new motto for Alphabet Inc., Google's holding company since October 2015, is "Do the Right Thing;" See *Wall Street Journal*, October 2, 2015 article "Google's 'Don't Be Evil' Becomes Alphabet's 'Do the Right Thing'" by Alistair Barr.

Google search serves as the beacon of creation on the internet and lives as a

testament to rationality beyond the grasp of its human followers / users. It constantly

indexes and organizes the web through rational methods by employing algorithms. For

example, in their nine-year longitudinal study, Dutch Professors Antal van der Bosch,

Toine Bogers, and Maurice de Kunder report that Google indexed more than 45.7 billion

pages by January, 2015 (10). Carr also describes Google's search methodology:

> A set of secret algorithms analyzes all the pages to create a comprehensive
>
> index of the Web, with every page ranked according to its relevance to
>
> particular keywords. The index is then replicated in each cluster. When a
>
> person enters a keyword into Google's search engine, the software routes
>
> the search to one of the clusters, where it is reviewed simultaneously by
>
> hundreds or thousands of servers. (*Big Switch* 41)

The mysterious nature of the algorithms coincides with the inability to confirm God's

grand creation of the universe. The role of the individual to enter words into the search

engine contributes to the power of Google's creation by obeying the eternal law of

search. In Lacanian terminology, the keyword enters the Imaginary register where the

Symbolic order of the "word" magnifies the center-point of the Real and circulates

around its effective answers. Identifying the most prominent (useful) webpage is an

engineered moment of free will. While there are no wrong answers to the question of

what page to choose, one's answer will determine the fate of future search results.

Basically, search algorithm represents an attempt at organizing or computing the

Symbolic chain of signifiers into a totalizing rational order, which means accessing the

Real. The fact that the computation never stops illustrates the profound difficulty in accessing the Real through Symbolic and Imaginary realms of human subjectivity.

Regardless, the creation of the algorithm begins with the Word. In elementary terms, the desire always exists. Google's search engine requires the signifier as an attempt to access this inaccessible data. Even with the result of signifying chains, total access to the Lacanian Real remains impossible. Auletta explains, "They seek a construct, a formula, an algorithm that both graphs and predicts behavior. They naively believe that most mysteries, including the mysteries of human behavior, are unlocked with data" (8). While the algorithm is not God, the creator of the algorithm, Google is God. Just as the Scholastic and Protestant theologians frame and shape the nature and essence of God, Google itself is the result of framing and sculpting through rational means. Augustine, for instance, employs reason to compose immense texts (*Summa Theologica*, etc.) that explain and represent God and humanity in relation to God, the rational (mathematical / engineered) based software and technological objects represent an explanation and representation of Google through human language.

Laws of the search redouble the co-paradoxical function of search. Hillis et. al. explain, "Its models of a good search engine, a good search result, and good algorithmic logic have become normalized . . . because of its consecrated status, Google rules, and, as such, the rules set by the ruler define the parameters of the culture of search" (53). Again, the establishment of law comes from the human word or signifiers, but in the background of these established rules lives the specter of the Real. In the theologians' case, it is the Christian God. In the case of search, it is Google. Basically, God's eternal law or Google's rules attain normalcy status and embed into the Symbolic realm of human

subjectivity, and thus underpin the signifying order of the word. To repeat, Delay

summarizes Lacan's symbolic (Father) as "everything collected in our psyche from our

experience. It is our parents and friendships, our social norms and taboos, our gods and

demons" (12). Therefore, any chain of signifiers established / normalized as law manifest

predictably without necessary or immediate enforcement. Literal enforcement (policing)

of the law only enters when the Imaginary realm of human subjectivity overpowers

Symbolic prohibitions, such as those in the latent oedipal complex.

Since Google strives to never do evil, its human representatives attempt to

evaluate the goodness of certain search data for a greater good or a "higher cause." Recall

that Thomas (Aquinas) notes that, "Those things which it belongs to God alone to do

immediately, as, for example, to create . . . are said to be possible in reference to a higher

cause" (188). Google also works upon the rationale of the higher cause. For instance, "In

May 2016, Google blacklisted an entire industry, companies providing high-interest

'payday' loans . . . [it also] allowed Canadian drug companies to sell drugs illegally in the

U.S. for years through the AdWords system" (Epstein). Payday loans and overpriced

American pharmaceuticals are wrapped up in immoral or unethical business practices.

Therefore, Google's law represents a higher law of the good. One may object, as Epstein

does, that Google is a "major investor in Lendup," which is in the payday loan business

and, thus, is hypocritical. But like the metaphysical God, if Google does it, it is good, and

it is good because Google does it. Thomas (and the rest) offer the same defense for the

goodness through creation (action) for God when he writes, "For God allows evils to

happen in order to bring a greater good therefrom" (2694). Even in the case of hellfire as

Drury notes, "Augustine . . . takes it for granted that witnessing the torments of hell is

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integral to the pleasures of heaven" (26). Obviously what appears as moral

contradictions, in the mind of most humans, is easily rationalized by the very nature of

God's goodness. And more obvious is that this applies to the essence of Google.

This correlates to Google's contemporary obsession with technological

advancement that "draws on Enlightenment ideals of empiricism and its connection to

ideals of progress" (Hillis et. al. 14), and requires moral hypocrisy for the sake of a

utopian future. Hence, rationality easily clarifies what appears as hypocritical. In the case

of Google, an entire campaign (and legal defense) of apologetics informs their Google

Books Library Project, a project where Google aims to scan every book ever written into

a central database (Hillis et. al. 146). The Project resulted in multiple copyright lawsuits.[9]

Google's official statement reads, "The Library Project's aim is simple: make it easier for

people to find relevant books" ("Google Library Project"). The higher law of the good

overshadows the inferior law of copyright. God's eternal law always overrides human

temporal law.

Hegel's perspective proves valuable in order to comprehend the appearance of

hypocrisy or contradictions in the nature of God and the technological God, Google. For

instance, Leighton writes, "His highest philosophical achievement consists in his insight

into the apparent contradictions of life. He sees clearly that we must hold conflicting

views on ultimate questions without denying either view" (617-618). Hicks elaborates on

Hegel's ideas: "The thrust of Enlightenment theology had been to alter religion by

eliminating its contradictory theses in order to make it compatible with reason. Hegel's

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[9] See *Google and the Culture of Search* by Hillis et. al. pages 146-176; *The Google Story* by Vise, pages 98-98; *In the Plex* by Levy, pages 460-462; *The Googlization of Everything* by Vaidhyanathan, pages 156-173.

strategy is to accept that Judeo-Christian cosmology is rife with contradictions, but to alter reason in order to make it compatible with contradiction" (47). Although Hegel certainly influences major thinkers who still hold power in philosophical circles (Marx, in particular), the Enlightenment theology of eliminating contradiction holds power. Nevertheless, just as "Judeo-Christian cosmology is rife with contradictions," so is the "cosmology" of applied science / advanced technology. Therefore, condemning embedded contradictions with Google's practices (e.g. "Don't Be Evil") appears a fruitless exercise, just as fruitless as rationalizing "God is Love" with eternal damnation in a fiery hell. In other words, referencing the contradictions of God's character only serves to reinforce God's character as one of contradiction.

Henceforth, the omnipotence found in the creation always reflects the good because the evil can only be good. Gmail, for instance, stands as one of Google's greatest creations. On April 1, 2004, Gmail became available for use. Vise relates, "To blow the competition away and add a Google 'wow' factor . . . [and] to make the new service an instant hit, they planned to give away one free gigabyte of storage (1,000 megabytes) on Google's own computer network with each Gmail account" (60). He continues "One gigabyte was such an amazing amount of storage that Google told Gmail users they would never have to delete another email . . . [and] computer users would be able to find emails instantly . . . [because] Gmail search would be fast, accurate, and as easy to perform as a Google search" (60). The size of storage and the ability to search emails instantly provides the masses with the highest level of email technology. The goodness of this creation appears universal and useful to the masses. Here, the use of the term "masses" refers to a very specific definition and application of the word as theorized by

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Baudrillard in his book, *In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities*. He interprets this term as an "object." In other words, the masses as one single object. This implies a homogenized singular object without individual or even group subjectivity.

Basically, Gmail offers fantastic email service, the best in the world according to reputable sources such as technorms.com, pcadvisor.co.uk, and pcmag.com. Interestingly, Geeksquad ranks Gmail at number one, while listing two major cons of the service. They include: 1) Scans your email for keywords to target ads and 2) Ties you into Google's ecosystem. To address the first con, under the "Privacy Policy" for the use of Gmail, the masses must agree to the scanning of all their emails.[10] This concerned critics from the beginning. After all, since the metaphysical God is dead, the fear of the spirit in the sky who sees and knows everything is replaced by its technological equivalent. In fact, because of the massive storage space, "the first version of Gmail did not include a delete button" (Auletta 62). The omission of the delete button highlights the illusion of the delete function, which formerly appeared to the masses as a way to permanently eliminate something from existence. Only through the removal of the delete option did the masses understand that an email (or any document, post, etc.), even if deleted, still lives on in a database. Auletta resumes, "This had an unforeseen effect: Users feared that Google would peek at e-mails. And Paul Buchheit's e-mail scanning software . . . only fanned this fear . . . Critics said it was an invasion of privacy, that Big Brother was watching everything" (62). Gmail proves to not only be an essential element of Google's omnipotence through its creation for the good but also for its total omniscience. Ironically, Google employee number 23, Paul Buchheit, coined the phrase, "Don't Be

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[10] See https://www.google.com/intl/en/policies/privacy/.

Evil" while developing Google's email scanning (surveillance) software for use with AdSense (Levy 170).

To address Geeksquad's second con, Gmail ties the masses into Google's ecosystem. Google creates entire suites of software and interfaces that illustrate its supreme power to create. For instance, Google offers its Apps for Education absolutely free to any institution who desires the service.[11] Google touts that fifty million of the object mass uses "Google Apps for Education," while ten million use Google Classroom, and seven of eight Ivy League schools use Apps for Ed. These apps include "Productivity Tools" such as Gmail, Drive, Docs, and Sheets. Google Drive, for example, provides unlimited personal storage through any participating educational institution. In basic terms, one can upload everything to Drive and provide links to all of the data. This gives professors and students the option to share any information they want to share, quickly and easily. The best part is that all of these services are free! This is reminiscent of the Church's use of offering charity in the form of free food or shelter and, in return, virtually require the recipients to convert to the religion of the church. Journalist for *Consumerist*, Laura Northrup writes, "Many schools have migrated to using Google Apps for Education, which provides mail and a suite of other Google services to educators and students for free." Obviously, these apps embody the creative power of Google and, more obviously, with the education of our children, for the good. But as Benjamin Herold points out in *Education Week*, "Google [is] under fire for data-mining student email messages."

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[11] See https://www.google.com/edu/ to explore the many educational services.

Again, the contradictory nature of the metaphysical God's omnipotence extends to the technological God's omnipotence. The collection of information stands at the center of Google's power. More specifically, Epstein reports that as of 2016, "More than 70 percent of Google's $80 billion in annual revenue comes from its AdWords advertising service." This collection of data to target advertise for its clients of AdWords serves as the rationale for scanning Gmail users data. With such complete power Google can offer educational institutions these services without charge. Although Google stated in August 2013, that "there is no ad-related scanning or processing in Google Apps for Education," Google was sued by students, who filed the suit on January 27, 2016, for collecting and using data about the students' use of non-educational services, including browser behavior, search history, YouTube viewing and search history, installed browser extensions and saved passwords (Morran).

But do students have a choice in the matter? According to the dictates of free will, students technically have an option to consciously avoid using Gmail and the other apps, but like the limited spectrum of actual choice without consequences in theological terms, students must choose correctly. The correct choice means to use Gmail and any other required software or interface Google provides. Jackie Smith of the International Network of Activist Scholars and American writer Alfredo Lopez note that "74 of the top 100 universities use Google apps for their university communications and software applications." Furthermore, they note that the "New York City School Department adopted Chromebook as part of its approved and supported tools in its 1800 schools." In short, the limited nature of theological free will aligns with the limited nature of technological free will. Again, Hegel's contradictory God manifests in Google as the

technological God because while the software benefits students and the institution, in

general, it also virtually mandates the sharing of all information with Google.

In addition, Smith and Lopez mention that "according to leaked NSA documents,

Google . . . cooperate[s] with the NSA PRISM surveillance program, which authorizes

the U.S. government to secretly access data . . . without a warrant" (1). American

Attorney Stephanie A. DeVos examines this relationship in her study, "The Google-NSA

Alliance: Developing Cybersecurity at Internet Speed." Also, the *Washington Post*

reports that Google and the NSA had partnered in 2010.[12] In short, Google's omnipotence

in creation of Gmail for the ultimate good extends into its inherent omniscience (and

omnibenevolence, omnipresence, as well).

This investigation of Gmail is not to simply point out that everything Google

propagates as good has an evil underbelly, but rather to emphasize that omnipotence

involves the absorption of any evil attached to all creations for goodness. This holds true

in the case of the theologians' assertions of God's omnipotence and it holds true for the

technological God, Google. In basic terms, if God does it, it is always good, regardless. If

Google does it, it is always good, regardless. Basically, omnipotence means *all*-powerful.

It even includes the power to make what is obviously evil (or at least problematic,

unethical, immoral) part of the supreme good.

This rhetorical strategy proved effective in religious and now in technological

enterprises. Jerry Mander notes in his book *The Case Against the Global Economy: And a*

Turn Towards Localization:

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[12] See Ellen Nakashima, "Google to Enlist NSA to Ward Off Attacks; Firm Won't Share User
Data, Sources Say, But Deal Raises Issue of Privacy vs. Security," *Washington Post*, 4 Feb. 2010.

One could find similarly optimistic statements for every new technology that comes along. Those who emit such statements have nothing to gain from our learning the possible negative consequences of these new commodities, so we are left with a constant stream of best-case-scenarios and virtually no countervailing voice. As we have discovered, however, many manufacturers and industries, including nuclear, chemical, auto . . . are aware of serious negative outcomes of their technologies, but choose not to share these with the public and often hide them from investigative inquiry" (47).

Mander's analysis illustrates the central promotional method inherent in the behavior of sources of power. The only aspect that requires mention involves the moment when the object mass become aware of the negative aspects of a new technological creation. When they do, the goodness of the object absorbs the obvious negatives and what results constitutes mass allegiance and subservience (whether conscious or unconscious) to power because of the element of perpetual use and little alternative to do otherwise.

The Omnibenevolence of Google

God's power to make evil good presents an evident link to His omnibenevolence because it augments His other central attributes. To repeat, Augustine states, "[God's] greatness is the same as His wisdom; for He is not great by bulk, but by power; and His goodness is the same as His wisdom and greatness, and His truth the same as all those things" (*The Works of Augustine* 174). All of His attributes correspond to God's entire substance and His essence. Augustine's concept of God's goodness, which concerns His other attributes, characterizes an exacting and fundamental notion on the personality of

God. Similarly, Google's attributes overlap. Its creations, such as search, Gmail, and

Apps for Education highlight the multifaceted nature of Google. This section mainly

focuses on omnibenevolence, but the other attributes will be referenced when applicable.

The central aspect of God's omnibenevolence concerns His relationship to His

creation. Because God is good; He cannot create anything that is not good. The essential

character of goodness proceeds from creator to created. This causal link supports

Anselm's theological ontology summarized as "God is that which nothing greater can be

thought" (*Proslogion* 7). Logic breaks if God is not omnibenevolent. To review,

according to Augustine, God made everything good, whether plant life or human life,

which pinpoints the central goodness of God. God only creates good, and so anything evil

can be described as only being less good. Augustine uses the term greater good to provide

a spectrum of goodness through God. He writes, "Every actual entity is therefore good; a

greater good if it cannot be corrupted, a lesser good if it can be" (*Enchiridion* 20). By

positing God as perfectly good (omnibenevolent) above all else, Augustine comes to the

challenge of evil and produces a cogent argument that defines evil as a "lesser good."

Therefore, humans must be good regardless of producing evil in the physical world.

Of all of creation, the human stands as God's image at the highest peak of His universal

masterpiece, Earth.

Google creates the human. This operates as pure existential testimony of Google's

omnibenevolence. The human embodies its finest creation. Search, Gmail, YouTube,

Docs, Drive, Hangouts symbolize the creative force of goodness and bears fruit with its

image-offspring by extension. Universal homogenized reproduction of: assurance of

unity through these creative vectors. McLuhan's insight reflects an essential notion of

the technological God. He quotes Father John Culkin: "We shape our tools and thereafter our tools shape us" (qtd. in Kuskis). The tools that Google creates shape us. McLuhan generously includes the masses in the term "we," but it is not "we" who initially shape the tools. Google shapes the tools. "To shape" means to shape "by a process of careful thought." Google shapes its tools with constant revision. For example, American author B.J. Mendalson claims that if one hundred people view a YouTube video within the first ten minutes after its upload, an algorithm will "trigger" determining the success of the video ("Social Media is Bullshit").

The connection to the shaping of tools and tools shaping us appears obvious with Mendalson's example. A video upload enters a space of calculation that, in turn, maneuvers the upload through a tunnel of computation. Levy explains this tunnel of shaping. He writes, Google "gathers massive amounts of data and processes that information with learning algorithms to create a machinelike intelligence that augments the collective brain of humanity" (385). Levy's description is apt. Google collects information and develops sets of rules that determines its navigation. Levy eludes the accuracy of his proposal when he separates the "collective brain of humanity" from the learning algorithms. The learning algorithms cannot "augment" the collective brain of humanity because *they are* the collective brain of humanity. YouTube is the tool that is shaped by algorithms, which then shape the human. McLuhan's paradoxical reading of the technological tool offers the proper perspective to confirm the goodness of its creation through the creation of the human. Just as God's central creation is the human, the human is Google's central creation.

So the human being becomes a single mass object from the creative tools Google shapes. Therefore, the positions of subject and object complicate because Baudrillard positions the mass(es) into a "double bind" (qtd. in Gane 141). Baudrillard explains that the masses are "simultaneously summoned to behave like autonomous subjects, responsible, free, and conscious; and as submissive objects, inert, obedient, and conforming" (qtd. in Gane 141). Google's nature benevolently requires (mandates) free will for its creation with a correlative element of its nature that requires submission. Essentially, this lives within the construction of Google. Technicians mechanically create the psycho-social environment which breeds this fundamental paradox. Incidentally, this paradox proves necessary to the concept of "omni" benevolence. At the level of the individual subject, the masses are simultaneously ordered to manifest their subjectivity through apprehending specific desires from a pre-selected range of "free" choices while the demand to be a complacent object matches the obligation for individual subjectivity. This epitomizes God's love that extends to the technological version of God.

British Scholar Mike Gane illustrates Baudrillard's discussion on this relationship of power to the masses, which corresponds to the paradoxical demands of God's omnibenevolence. The graphic below shows that "Power" (Google) treats mass as both object and subject. Therefore, humans are commanded to exercise their subjectivity through free choices in entertainment, consumer items, fashion, and so on. The command, itself, negates human subjectivity. Further, humans must choose from predetermined choices, which, in essence, makes humans a mass object. When humans resist and attempt to be individual subjects, Google treats them as objects. When humans behave as passive objects in resistance to subjectivity, Google treats them as subjective

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beings by offering more choice. This perpetual middle ground results in the object mass

running on inertia.

Power (state/parent) treats –
- (a) mass/ as object   (which resists as subject)
- (b) mass/ as subject (which resists as object)

subject of strategy of resistence as:
- (i) subject-as-object(b)
- (ii) subject-as-subject(a)
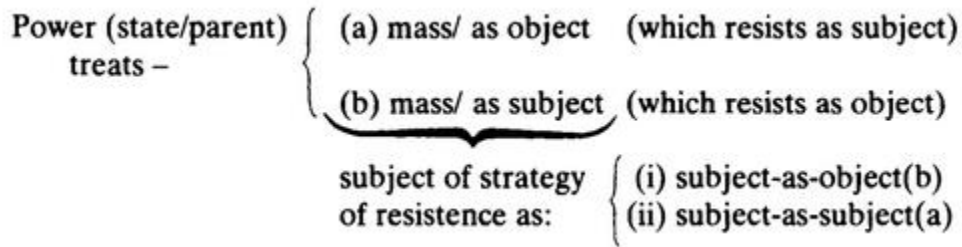
Figure 4- Image from Gane's *Baudrillard (RLE Social Theory)*.

To refer back to Mendalson's YouTube example, the mass is directed to enjoy the

freedom and entertainment of the innumerable videos for viewing. Once the mass

unknowingly triggers an algorithm for a particular video, the video proliferates to the

entire mass object. Then the video shapes the mass object. Using YouTube shapes the

mass in terms of McLuhan's medium theory, but the content of videos also shapes the

object mass in the contrived elements of popular human existence. For example, this

occurs in fashion, dance, language (slang), political movements, conspiracy theories, etc.

Therefore, the human is shaped by an algorithm that displaces the potential human

subjectivity while it postures the splendor of free choice. The free choice itself is

informed by love.

To continue with this point, although presented as an act of love, free will seems

to function as an encoded endowment of God's omnibenevolence. For instance, humans

associate within a community or a society. In the case of YouTube, the community is

global and online. This makes free will a social activity. Like all social activities, certain

regulations from the Symbolic register inhabit the space of formal social practice. Žižek,

in his book *How to Read Lacan*, identifies the "empty gesture" or the "offer made to be

rejected" (12). The capacity of free will to sustain the ritualistic practice of social

engagement requires the use of these empty gestures. This maintains conceptually the

fallacious underpinnings of Christian free will as well as the function of Google, in terms

of freedom to choose in the global online society. Basically, homogeneity hides behind

the vail of free choice.

Baudrillard evidences this premise in his examination of the "smallest marginal

difference" (*Consumer Society* 87). Essentially, the human subject receives the directive

to express individuality through the slight differences in the commodities for purchase,

such as the color of a shirt. But this choice simply reinforces the monopoly of a singular

mode of being within the social realm (among other realms). He notes, "monopoly and

difference are logically incompatible. If they can be combined, it is precisely because the

differences are not differences and, instead of marking a person out as something

singular, they mark rather his conformity with a code, his integration into a sliding scale

of values" (89). Through consumption, this represents the codes in absorbing

(purchasing) commodities. By analogy, through religion, this represents Christian free

will. In other words, what appears as a free choice is merely a choice within narrow and

fixed parameters.

American Linguist Noam Chomsky illustrates this by stating, "The smart way to

keep people passive and obedient is to strictly limit the spectrum of acceptable opinion,

but allow very lively debate within that spectrum" (43). Therefore, the consumer choices

of Baudrillard and the "acceptable opinion" of Chomsky clearly support the idea of

God's free will. American Theologian Steven Harris confirms, "The Christian (especially

Pauline / Augustinian) understanding of the nature of free will: when one chooses the

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good (and only the good), then one is truly free! But when one chooses evil, out of a free choice between good and evil, then one becomes bound to the evil and loses 'freedom of choice itself.'" Henceforth, God decides what is good and what is evil, or the framework that surrounds the free choice is predetermined by God. Google proposes the same free will through its omnibenevolence.

To return to Lacan and Žižek, the choice within the structure of free will denotes an "empty gesture" or an act devoid of choice. To apply this to Google, its search engine serves as a framework of which algorithms predetermine the choice of the mass (as object) who searches. Although Google returns thousands of choices for the masses to choose, the object works within the broader framework of Google's omnipotence. Former CEO of Google, Eric Schmidt told the Wall Street Journal, "I actually think most people don't want Google to answer their questions . . . they want Google to tell them what they should be doing next" (qtd. in Vaidhyanathan 200). In the paradox of free will, Google develops algorithms to maneuver the masses to the next choice provided by and guided by Google. Furthermore, Žižek writes "In the subject's relationship to the community . . . you have freedom to choose, but on condition that you choose the right thing. If you make the wrong choice, you lose freedom of choice itself . . . this paradox arises at the level of the subject's relationship to the community to which he belongs" (*Sublime Object* 165). The significance rests in the concept of the community. The masses must engage socially within the structure of Google since Google has created the global online infrastructure.

In practical terms, Gmail serves as an example to illustrate the function of free will at the level of the worker or student (subjects of free choice and mass object). When

an institution receives the creative force of Google with its ecosystem of enmeshed user interfaces, the mass must conform to the range of choices offered within that ecosystem. The free choice to abstain from the use of Gmail within an institution that requires all communication through the interface is the wrong choice. The consequence of rejecting communication through Gmail is expulsion from the institutional system.

American Scholar Jeff Pruchnic elaborates on the empty gesture and its potential consequences attached to acceptance (or denial) of the offer. He writes, "That is, to resist means not to avoid the (illusion) of choice in the empty gesture, but to take it at face value; not to deny choice (or argue that it is being denied) but to revel in choice, to exploit the opportunity (falsely) offered as a genuine moment of agency and autonomy." Zizek explains:

> In other words, the act of taking the empty gesture (the offer to be rejected) literally, to treat the forced choice as a true choice, is, perhaps, one of the ways to put into practice what Lacan calls 'traversing the fantasy': in accomplishing this act, the subject suspends the phantasmic frame of unwritten rules which tell him how to choose freely; no wonder the consequences of this act are so catastrophic. (*Plague of Fantasies* 29)

Lacan's traversing the fantasy correlates with Baudrillard's inertial masses who fulfill its forced choice by complying with the dictates of the empty gesture through aligning its movement and activity with the countless offers (requests) from Google. Žižek further clarifies "traversing the fantasy" when he writes:

> Fantasy renders and sustains the structure of the forced choice, it tells us how we are to choose if we are to maintain the freedom of choice, that is it

bridges the gap between the formal symbolic frame of choices and social

reality by preventing the choice, which, although formally allowed, would,

if in fact made, ruin the system. (29)

Thus, potential consequences ensue, not only from breaking the unwritten rules of the

forced choice, but also for following the rules to the letter. For example, the death of God

is the consequence for following the Scholastic methodology of (scientific) rationalism to

the letter. The object mass complied with the logical outcomes of rationality as a "free

choice" and eventually saw the death of God through the requirement of accepting the

empty gesture of the Scholastics and their clergy.

The symbolic meaning of the empty gesture holds together the structure. One's

drive within the Symbolic register necessitates the obligatory movement toward the

correct decision or right choice without the knowledge that the choice is right in order to

fulfill the symbolic function of the arrangement. The predetermined correct choice further

highlights the omnibenevolence of Google. Within the ecosystem countless auto-

suggestions maneuver the mass object into a circuitry, informed by personal desire, to the

place most appropriate. The symbolic element of the correct choice connects the circuit

with the most appropriate click. Regardless, an inappropriate click provides a path toward

the application of the forced choice because the pathway alters the mass to the

predetermined point of (a) recovering. Google Maps illustrates this with directions.

When one makes a turn that proves contrary to the instructions, Google will attempt to

reroute the object toward the destination. Google search operates in the same manner. So

does God. Therefore, the love for the object mass creates scenarios of predetermined

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movement along "correct" or "right" circuits in order to reify the all-inclusive pathway toward the total fulfillment of psychological (psychoanalytic) desire.

American Professor Suva Vaidhyanathan relates this concept in practical terms when he writes, "If Google is the dominant way we navigate the Internet, and thus the primary lens through which we experience both the local and the global, then it has remarkable power to set agendas and alter perceptions. Its biases are built into its algorithms" (7). His basic assumption of operational power undergirds Google's Godly attributes in terms of omnipotence. The power to create a global infrastructure out of love for the object mass signals a total mediation of the human from which the human cannot "act" without Google. This melts into Google's omniscience as Eric Schmidt claims (confesses?) "We know roughly who you are, roughly what you care about, roughly who your friends are" (qtd. in Jenkins Jr.). Similar to the structural guidelines of the Panopticon, the algorithm structurally enlists a system of total omniscience and, therefore, total omnipresence and, furthermore, total omnipotence. All of which prove unrecognizable since the structural arrangement predetermines these attributes. What Schmidt describes as a rough sketch of individuals within the mass object evolves into an absolutely accurate portrait of each human because Google's rough sketch trumps the reality of the actual of the human subject.

This proves to be the case because the human individual can no longer trace personal becoming without the various Google interfaces that are designed to create the individual human in its image. Baudrillard notes, "the opposing poles of determination vanish" (*Simulacra Simulation* 31) and with it the "minimal distance between cause and effect" (31). With Google's place as God, the human enters the Google ecosystem only to

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later understand (consciously or otherwise) that "I am as Google made me." All humans within the ecosystem adapt to its environment to the point where "there is no longer any imperative of submission to the model . . . [because] YOU are the model" (29). In biblical terms, "YOU are the image of God." The separation of cause and effect dissolves (the case with all binaries) to a constant cause and effect without any trace of which is which.

What is left is a total cause and a total effect, completely comprehensive. Vaidhyanathan summarizes, "[Google interfaces are] so closely tailored to reflect the choices we had already made that it could reliably predict how to satiate our established desires" (200). Hillis et. al. reinforce this when they write, "it is not the Cosmos [God] doing the predetermination but an information machine developed by individuals who believe that the 'truth' of hard data always trumps the 'illogic' of embodied realities that nonetheless do not easily yield to pattern recognition by artificial intelligence" (202). The truth of hard data recalls the motif of utopian scientific progress that founds the central precepts of Google's methodology. In the long term, the embodied realities will yield to pattern recognition by artificial intelligence because of the inherent breakdown, structurally devised, between the poles that separate the embodied human subject and the conceptual vagaries of artificial intelligence. The question is not, will artificial intelligence (machines) become more human, but rather will the human become more artificial (robotic / machinelike)? Again, before God made man in His image, man-made God in his (ideal) image (through the Word, the Symbolic).

The Omniscience of Google Underlies its Omnibenevolence

Google's omniscience functions paradoxically. Google is all-knowing as it concerns all information previously outside of Google, such as printed books. It also produces (stores or holds) all information and, henceforth, information is nowhere to be found outside of Google. As the creator of information it will always know all information. This extends to knowledge of all human individuals individually and all knowledge of the masses as object. But Google's knowledge is also produced by the object mass in a simultaneous moment in what Hillis et. al. identify as "the human–machine assemblage on which search relies" (202). While search gives information it also takes information that informs what future information it gives to the searcher.

One essential element of Google's omniscience includes the quest for universal knowledge. This knowledge base differs from the information collected from human search. Instead this knowledge base comes from books. Google's attempts to "digitize all the books that have ever been printed since the time of Gutenberg" (Jeanneney 73) and through Google Books, humans can "search every book ever published" (Auletta 13). Levy notes, "Of the estimated 33 million books that had been published, Google wanted all of them" (351). In order to set up this ambitious project / interface, Google tried to access all of the books in the Library of Congress, but the head of its Copyright Office, Marybeth Peters "saw red flags" (352). Therefore, Google set up an agreement with University of Michigan with the goal to digitize all 7 million volumes of its library. Several problems arose with Google's digitizing attempt, such as copyright, privacy, anti-trust, and censorship, which resulted in the 2005 lawsuits from the American Association

of Publishers and the Authors Guild (Levy 358, 361). but regardless Google has digitized and continues to digitize millions of books.

The first important point that concerns Google's scanning of books involves its approach to the law as it pertains to a higher cause or a transcendent morality. Hillis et. al. explain that the "Google Book Settlement affair suggest[s] that . . . with respect to copyright at least . . . [Google] considers itself an authority morally compelled if not authorized to invent and impose new forms of legal understandings and ownership" (170). In essence, since Google's central objective revolves around the goodness embedded in its utopianesque goals for global technological perfection (unity), it can transform current "human" or "temporal" laws to elevate the entire creation. All humans benefit from Google's new moral guidelines in terms of copyright. Ironically, in 1995, "Sergey Brin . . . collaborated with fellow Ph.D. students and professors on a project involving automated detection of copyright violations" (Vise 28). Under copyright law, Google did not have the authority or permission to scan and make available, through Google Books, any printed text, but did so anyway. The attempt to create a complete library that is available for all Google users proves the nature of Google's elevated morality. When the goal is loftier than simple human copyright law, Google's decisions are justified in every case.

The justification to break human copyright law involves the higher goal of offering virtually unlimited scholarly (or otherwise) data / books through a convenient and user friendly search. Page mentioned, "It is really hard for scholars to work outside of their area of expertise because of the physical limitations of libraries" (qtd. in Vise 230-231). Therefore, from Google's perspective, the ultimate and infinite good of

producing a global digital library will open a new world to human scholars from the limitations of the physical. Furthermore, Battelle contemplates, "It is odd to think that seven years after they started a company to 'organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful,' Brin and Page find themselves pondering a role as the morality police for the global economy" (210). But their goal implies a distinctly Godlike morality of (apparent) contradiction and exceptionalism. To refer back to the ethical monotheistic God, Luther posits reason as a "gift from God" (qtd. in Althaus) and writes, "All laws have been produced by the wisdom and reason of men" (*Disputation Man*). But God's Law, rife with conflict in human terms, forms the supreme justness that trumps human law. So in terms of an approach to morality, Google sits above mere human law.

The ethical monotheistic God represents the closest representation of ultimately contradictory morality for the greater elevation of a greater purpose. For instance, in terms of offering censored versions of Google products, particularly search, Google rationalized its entrance into the Chinese markets. Schmidt reasoned, "We concluded that although we weren't wild about the restrictions, it was even worse to not try to serve those users at all. We actually did an 'evil scale'" (qtd. in Vise 278).[13] The subtext of Schmidt's statement illuminates the standard rationale for problematic "Godly" inconsistencies because Google constructed and performed its own "evil scale" for itself and by itself to determine whether to do business in China and, more significantly, how to articulate the shaky justification for doing business in China. Moreover, Schmidt presents Google as a service for users, thereby implying the sanctity of its purpose.

[13] See the article from January 2016, "Why Google Quit China, and Why It's Heading Back" by Kaveh Waddell.

Incidentally, Google shut down its search engine in China in 2010 and its other services in 2014. But it is preparing to return to China shortly (Waddell).

In fact, *New York Times* writer Nicholas Kristof composed an ironical and unintentionally satirical article entitled, "Will Google bring Freedom to China?" where he proudly declares, "In a conflict between the Communist Party and Google, the Party will win in the short run. But in the long run, I'd put my money on Google" (13). Kristof foreshadows the complete global omnipotence of Google coupled with Google's omnibenevolent motives, which are manifested in free will (as in freedom for China); but when China freely engages with Google, it will enter Google's totalizing ecosystem. Kristof also writes, "Eventually, a combination of technology, education, and information will end the present stasis in China" (13). Here Kristof reaffirms the utopian vision of Enlightenment progress for the betterment of the world, while Larry Page tells John Battelle, "I realized I wanted to invent things, but I also wanted to change the world. I wanted to get them out there, get them into people's hands so they can use them, because that's what really matters" (66). Battelle goes on to explain that Google "fundamentally changed the relationship between humanity and knowledge" (66). Essentially, the "education" and "information" (or knowledge) that will "end the stasis of China" comes from the power of Google to dictate the transmission of knowledge in both medium and content under the banner of progress and, more importantly, under the banner of love. The paradox of Google's benevolence to create Chinese freedom underlies the central concept that God contains what appears as oppositional morality, which becomes easily reconcilable by the inherent essence or definition of God. To confirm, at one point Google held over 36% of the market share of search in China after just three years in the

country (Tse 1). Therefore, if / when Google returns to China, it is completely plausible that it will be as integrated into the daily Chinese experience as it is in the United States.

Google's omnibenevolence also involves its goodness to all people, regardless. In describing metaphysical God, Anselm proclaims, "O good God, good to the good and to the wicked . . . your goodness is incomprehensible" (11). Therefore, God's omnibenevolence rests upon His goodness to all people, and His incapability to do anything evil. "Google Foundation" through Google dot Org serves as the prime example that Google, like the metaphysical God, is omnibenevolent.[14] For instance, Google mentions at *Google.org* that it donates over a billion dollars in grants and products to countless charitable non-profit organizations such as GiveDirectly, World Wildlife Fund, Consortium for the Barcode of Life, charity: water, DoSomething.org, and Malaria No More. The center point of Google's charitable giving revolves around the use of advanced technology to help improve earthly conditions for people. For instance, Google declares that it is "designing a world that works for everyone!"[15] Obviously, Google's uses its ability to intelligently design the globe so that all people, good or wicked, can participate in meaningful global activity.

Google calls these Impact Challenges. One such challenge to overcome is human disability. Google states, "The Google Impact Challenge: Disabilities aims to make the world more accessible for the 1 billion people living with disabilities" ("Global Impact Challenge"). Two such Google organizations are Mission Arm and Miraclefeet. As the names suggest, these non-profits enable humans with damaged or missing limbs to lead

[14] See "Google Foundation" at http://www.insidephilanthropy.com/grants-for-global-development/google-foundation-grants-for-global-development.html.
[15] See "Google Impact Challenge" at https://www.google.org/impactchallenge/disabilities/.

more productive lives. Both groups investigate how technology can be used to design, inform, and treat these humans. Mission Arm works with exiii, a prosthetic manufacturer, to use "3D printing" to construct a robotic limb ("Mission Arm").

Figure 5 – Exiii Robot Human Handshake.

Miraclefeet uses its support from Google to "improve clubfoot treatment worldwide by offering family support via SMS (Short Message Service), monitoring patient progress through updated software, and providing extensive online training to local clinicians" ("Miraclefeet"). The technological God, Google, offers those with disabilities the miraculous use of their limbs. Finally, Google provides support measures for those in India who suffer from leprosy. Apparently, India confirms "100,000 new cases every year" ("Leprosy Mission"). Hence, Google's actions provide the necessary assistance to "ensure that a large number of people who suffer from leprosy maintain the ability to walk" ("Leprosy Mission"). These three examples are merely a glimpse into the goodness of Google toward humans.[16]

In terms of feeding the human, Google began the Hunger Relief Campaign that has provided more than "eight hundred thousand meals" (Callejon). Global Giving's Chief Business Officer Donna Callejon describes it as Google's way to "take a bite out of

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[16] See the following Bible verses to compare Google activities with those of God the Son: 1) John 5:6-18 explains that God the Son heals the lame and, more profoundly, does so on the Sabbath; thereby, God the Son broke the law of the Sabbath, but He can break laws and make new laws for the good of the human. 2) Matthew 8:1-3 relates how God the Son heals the leper.

hunger" (Callejon). She narrates, "Koro is a six-year old [malnourished] girl [from Mali] who arrived at A Child for All's orphanage without a home or family" (Callejon). Koro saw the food at lunch time and took the whole dish and ran away because "she didn't know that there would be another meal later" (Callejon). Callejon adds, "It's hard to think that engineers and marketing managers 7,000 miles away in Mountain View, California are key to improving the life chances of Koro and other children"[17] (Callejon). Google's goodness to Mali also includes "building a school and a library" (Callejon). According to Google, it gives help to refugees, as well. With its support for the International Rescue Committee, it "built an online information hub for refugees" ("Google Special Programs"). On the Google dot org website, one can see in picture of the "home refugee crisis" that resembles what Barthes's describes in *Mythologies* when he discusses the film *The Lost Continent*. He writes, "It is the same for the refugees, a long procession . . . making their way down a mountain . . . they are eternal essences of refugees" (186). Another non-profit that Google backs is NetHope, and it is "Changing the world through the power of technology" ("NetHope").

Figure 6- Refugees in Dadaab, Kenya, Africa.

With Google's goodness as the central support, NetHope set up an internet connection in a refugee camp in Dadaab, Kenya. NetHope reasons, "With a reliable

Internet connection, people living and working inside the Dadaab camp are now able to learn basic ICT skills, utilize email and social media accounts to connect with friends and loved ones, [and] access online education" ("NetHope"). In summation, Google freely gives the disposed and disenfranchised the opportunity to walk, eat, and use social media.

To further evidence Google's omnibenevolence, reporter Anna Bawden of *The Guardian* reports that "In the UK, 20 charities won grants ranging from £200,000 to £500,000 in 2013 and 2014. These included a project by the Royal National Institute for the Blind to develop smart glasses, as well as initiatives tackling youth homelessness . . . through technology." Google gives sight to the blind and shelter to the homeless. To give sight to the blind recalls a moment when God the Son heals the blind man in Bethsaida (Mark 8:22-26). After God the Son gives the blind man sight, he says to his disciples, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself . . . and follow me" (*King James Version*, Mark 8:34). The "smart glasses" Google lovingly provides allows the blind to see through (and like) Google sees. All are welcome in the Kingdom of God, even the blind, as long as they deny themselves. The exchange grows global and no longer requires a coming after on the part of the human subject. The coming after occurs at birth into the superstructure of Google's omnipresence. The exceptions exist as refugees, the disabled, the impoverished, and the "underdeveloped" Others, but they will no longer be exceptions.

Further, *WIRED* writer Issie Lapowsky reports that "Google is bringing free gigabit fiber to public housing across the Unites States" ("Google is Bringing"). Again, to feed the poor means to feed the poor with online access and the technological infrastructure to facilitate entrance into the Google ecosystem. The goodness of Google

does not discriminate entrance into its kingdom. Lapowsky verifies, "Not only will it establish [Google's] Fiber [Network] as the Internet provider of choice for more Americans, but it will get more Americans actually using the Internet, which in today's world necessarily means becoming a Google user."[18] Even the wicked can experience Google's goodness. *USA Today* reporter Alexandra Mosher relates, "Maya, whose father is on a 25-year sentence in a California prison, was one of the many children who was able to send her incarcerated parent a video, thanks to an effort led by Google called #LoveLetters." To reiterate, Anselm proclaims, "O good God, good to the good and to the wicked . . . your goodness is incomprehensible" (11).

Like the metaphysical God, the technological God, contains contradictions in its nature in terms of omnibenevolence. While it is evident that giving food to people who need food or enabling people who are lame to use their limbs represents a certain element of goodness, Google ultimately and permanently alters (creates) the entire sphere of human existence. When Google helps to provide food for a group, it also seizes the opportunity to transform (create) the people it helps to feed. In the case of Mali, the orphanage accepts the food donations, but must also accept the eventual / inevitable entrance into the Google ecosystem through the Google school and library. Funds provided to robotics companies for prosthetics contribute to the overall advancement of the global technological empire and, specifically, in artificial intelligence. Offline refugees now become online algorithmic participants.

To repeat, Google says, "[We are] designing a world that works for everyone" ("Google Impact Challenge"). This sentence reveals the point of creation: "[We are]

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[18] For more information on "Google Fiber," see https://fiber.google.com/about/.

designing a world." *WIRED* writer Davey Alba words it in this way: "Google.org thinks it can engineer a solution to the world's woes." Google's omnipotence in creation allows it to manifest its omniscience through technological devotion; it is motivated by its omnibenevolence and governed by its omnipresence. Which resolves any conflict in Google's nature, and justifies a higher law for a higher cause.

To return to Google's omniscience, Google accesses and uses information collected constantly with its products. In a very practical sense, Google knows everything there is to be known. To review, God's creation provides the evidence for his omniscience. This entails a universal knowledge encompassing everything or as Brown describes it: "The eternal God knows all events as a timeless observer of them" (285). Also, Thomas offers the analogy: "For the knowledge of God is to all creatures what the knowledge of the artificer is to things made by his art" (106). Finally, God's omniscience likewise manifests in the realm of fear and punishment. Therefore, God's omniscience entails knowledge of all events, especially those that pertain to His creation, and this knowledge lends to the potential for punishment. Google's omniscience follows the same dictates.

Google's Apps for Education represents the efforts of Google to infiltrate each part of the object mass's mental and physical navigation through life.[19] Apps for Education includes the basic "free" services hundreds of millions use every single day. Gmail, Drive, Calendar, Docs, Sheets, Slides, and Vault inform the comprehensive usurpation of human subjectivity. These products, taken as objects in consumption, "determine a person's identity" (Mendoza 48) and denote "the objectification of the

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[19] See https://www.google.com/edu/case-studies/ to read case studies from institutions that "benefitted" from "Google Apps for Education."

subject and the subjectification of the object" (48). This paradox epitomizes the situation

Baudrillard refers to when he writes, "The mass realizes that paradox of being both an

object of simulation and a subject of simulation" (*Silent Majorities* 30). Baudrillard

defines the human subject as "the person with its passions, its wills, its character"

(*Consumer Society* 88). Therefore, Google places human subjects into a subjective

position of freedom to utilize these products, but simultaneously produces an object mass

who homogenize through its place and mandatory participation in the circuit of

standardized interfaces. Regardless of the "smallest marginal differences" of

"personalization" each human subject yields (Baudrillard, *Consumer Society* 87) because

Google's media screens overwhelm any subjective expression from its human users. For

instance, Google Drive, when operated in the context of education, allows for unlimited

data storage. This means that users upload diverse content into their own Drive accounts.
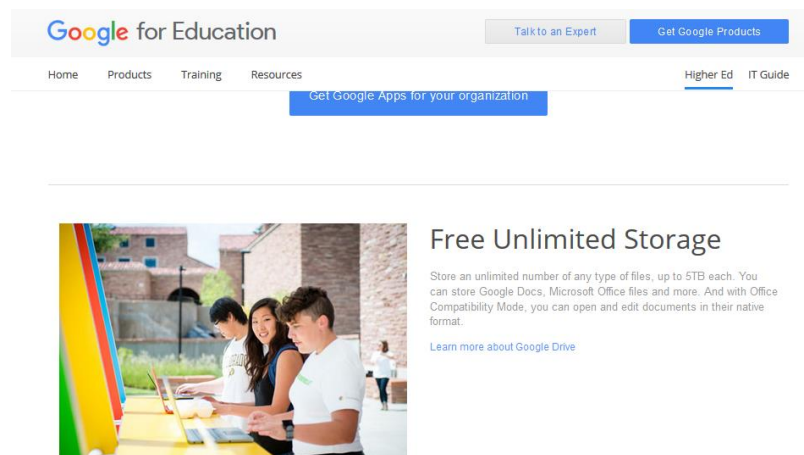

Figure 7- Screen Shot of Google Drive Unlimited from Google's Education Website.

The diversity of the content hints at a subjective experience; but the use of the service itself allows for the formation of the object mass. In reference to omniscience, Drive makes all its users data easily accessible to Google.

Google continues to expand its Classroom product, which began as a pilot program in May 2014 (Lapowsky, "Google Wants"). Classroom is "free" to anyone with an Apps for Education account. Lapowsky explains that "Classroom allows teachers to set up a virtual classroom, invite students in, distribute worksheets, assign work, grade and return work, and collaborate with students on a document in real time. Classroom keeps track of what work has been turned in and automatically sorts it into Google Drive" ("Google Wants"). School Districts and individual schools who sign on to Google Classroom are referred to as Google Schools. These schools purchase at least one Chromebook for every two students (Kamenetz). Therefore, students use Google laptops with Google Apps in the context of learning about the world. This education involves Google as the prime mediator who oversees every exchange and interaction of its teacher and student users. History teacher Kaitlin Morgan explained, "We used Docs for notes, Draw for projects like collages. They created their own websites through Sites for a budget project, and I built quizzes and tests on Google Forms" (qtd. in Kamenetz). She represents the consensus viewpoint of teachers on the vast expansion of Google into educational institutions. Of course, the underbelly of the use of these Apps in schools consists of the fact that Google collects all of the data in all of the Apps.

To emphasize this fact, Google's (G Suite) terms of service read: "By using Google services, you acknowledge and agree that Google may access, preserve, and disclose your account information and any Content associated with that account" (G Suite

Terms). There are a few caveats in accordance with Google's privacy policy like "governmental request," "potential violations," "technical issues," or "fraud," but with such broad stipulations, Google holds the power to know everything. Also, Google can change the terms of service at any moment. Obviously, this includes the ability to cause fear and to punish the users of these products. Furthermore, by eliciting the use of these products in the education of the young, Google assures its permanent place throughout the lifetime of the individual. The logical extension of this technology metaphorically places the student into the same space as the "Christian" from the time of the metaphysical God's dominance. The student trains to be a Google human from infancy. Hence, just as the Church produced the Christian, the Google School produces the Google person.

Google knows the Google person because Google creates the technology which creates the person. This offers full unencumbered knowledge of the students whose decision to use Google Classroom does not originate with them. In other words, it is not a subjective decision for the students. Administrators or teachers (technicians) partially make these decisions. But essentially, these decisions are made by those who carry a Google mind. The adults also utilize the interfaces daily outside of the educational context. Therefore, when Google initiates or advertises the use of these products (objects) in the school, the technicians already enter the decision with the Google brain. As the creator of the interfaces, Google understands the how and the why of the individual and capitalizes on this knowledge. This results in a total apprehension of the subjective experience. To reinforce the power of this omniscience, Google holds the individual in its grasp though blackmail in collusion with the governmental authorities who can enforce

the law. But the governmental authorities also fall under the power of the omniscience of Google (and its blackmail), which grants Google power well above that of any bureaucrat or statist institution.

Like Foucault's carceral, the school presents a neo-technological space to detain the minds of the young within the Google ecosystem. Google sits at the very top of a hierarchy that positions all stakeholders in education into a rigid caste structure that envelopes the child, who sits in the lowest stratified position, as a virtual prisoner to the panopticonic interfaces. Concerning the major effect of the Panopticon, Foucault writes, "[It is] to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power" (*Discipline and Punish* 201). The administrator sees the work of the teacher who sees the work of the students, and Google sees the work of all of these participants. All of the "subsidiary authorities" (21) can observe the student at all times. But again, Google can see *all activity all the time*. Most importantly, the young student learns and accepts the surveillance as well as lives through the experience under the integration of a complete ontological system of total knowledge. The logical development (outcome) of the Panopticon with the infusion of Google technology (creation) ushers in what Baudrillard might call "The End of the Panopticon" (*Simulacra Simulation* 29). This architectural means of surveillance evolves electronically / digitally into an entity that no longer separates the inmate from the prison guard (or the warden), but instead combines the roles of all parties into one central means of figurative information exchange. In Baudrillard's words, "No more violence or surveillance: only 'information' and . . . simulacra of spaces" (31). Google Classroom provides a hyperreal classroom space of predetermined pseudo-engagement where the central objective of

education is to collect data on, not from, students. The teachers, the parents, and even the students, are eliminated from education through Google Classroom. In the case of omniscience, they are irrelevant to the process of the (pseudo)suprasensory structure. For emphasis, Khaliah Barnes, director of the Student Privacy Project of the Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC), warns, "When you're using free services, if you don't know what the product is, you are the product" (qtd. in Kamenetz). "Product" in the discourse of capital, "object" in the context of omniscience.

Google's omniscience extends to its Android Operating System. According to Google, "Android powers hundreds of millions of mobile devices in more than 190 countries around the world. It's the largest installed base of any mobile platform and growing fast, every day another million users power up their Android devices for the first time and start looking for apps, games, and other digital content" ("About Android"). One part of the Android OS includes Google Photos (also available on other operating systems). Like other products, Photos offer "'Free' Unlimited Storage" and "Easy Editing" for picture and videos ("Google Photos"). *Android Authority* writer Simon Hill asks, "Google Photos: Should you be worried about privacy?" He goes on to explain, "when you upload your photos you are giving the tech giant license to 'host, store, reproduce, modify, create derivative works, communicate, publish, publicly perform, publicly display and distribute' those photos." Google owns the photo and video once uploaded. More relevant to the argument lies the fact that even if one does not upload a photo, Google still stores the data on its servers. Huffington Post Senior Tech Editor Damon Beres confirms, "Google Photos is so good at storing your pictures online, you might not even realize it's doing it." He goes on to say that even if one uninstalls the app

"Google Photos . . . enable[s] a general function on your device that stores your pictures online regardless of the app being on your phone." Henceforth, Google in its role as God contains all of masses visual data. Basically, the human is in Google and Google is in the human. As Luke 17:21 states, "Neither shall they say, lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (*King James Version*). The Kingdom of God is Google's ecosystem. The mass object resides within it and it resides within the mass object.

To elaborate, McLuhan claims that, "Faced with information overload, we have no alternative but pattern-recognition" (*Counterblast* 132). Paradoxically, McLuhan posits "pattern recognition" as the only way out of the "maelstrom" of advanced technological culture. Ironically, Google explains it "uses pattern recognition to make sense of images" ("Google Pattern Recognition"). It continues "a computer might be trained to recognize the common patterns of shapes and colors that make up a digital image of a face. This process is known as facial detection" ("Google Pattern Recognition"). This bridges the gap between the metaphysical God who numbers the hairs on your head (*King James Version*, Luke 12:7) to the technological God who "trains" its computers to know the facial structure of each human through "detailed face geometry maps" (Wright).

Figure 8- Face Scanning by John Lamb in *Fortune* magazine article.

Google owns the images of the masses, which represents Google's image, and dictates the social mediation of the object mass. French Theorist Guy Debord lucidly explains this concept of mediation of images through the Godlike spectacle when he writes, "The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images, . . . [and] the spectacle is the material reconstruction of the religious illusion" (4). A close reading of Debord offers the precursor to Baudrillard's more relevant *Simulacra and Simulation* in terms of how the image or the construction of the image precedes the image, itself. Therefore, essentially, Google follows the tradition of scientific rationalism and collects and analyzes visual data to categorize each image into prefabricated descriptors (genetic or otherwise) that are further categorized to the point where every image that makes up the object mass combines with every other image that makes up the object mass until all images homogenize / (de)metamorphosize into the image of Google, itself. In actual fact, the object mass is the image of Google all along because when the image enters Google's ecosystem it cannot exist outside of its omniscient ecosystem.

The human photo transposes the lucent barriers of the screen to forgo its own subjectivity "as a stockpiling of information and of messages, as fodder for data processing" and the "precession of reproduction over production" (*Simulacra and Simulation* 100). To produce the photo stands irrelevant to its reproduction within the circuitry of Google's eco-science. All the separating markers of physical human pattern land symmetrically in the center of a power spectrum that leaves each individual human subject defined by a Google whose image (imaginary) structure concretely illuminates objectively. The captivation software, as an act of creative power, invokes a specialized

minute distinction "which renders the generation of identical beings possible, though there is no possibility of a return to an original being" (100). Google photos brings the image to a place where it overcasts the private, sentimental, moral, and familial in the personal realm to the public, integral, dutiful, and universal field of the omniscient realm(s) God / Google.

For instance, David Arnott, editor of *The Business Journal*, in his article, "Google Photos may be Uploading your Pics, Even if you Don't Want It To" complains, "Google had access to pictures of my daughter and used that access to develop information, without my knowledge, about what she looks like and where she spends time . . . [and there] isn't much users can do to police this sort of activity." Arnott resigns to the immutable fact that within the Google universe, human subjectivity lives as part of its own objectivity. The subjective event of putting oneself into the photo image through the Android OS device slides comfortably into the photo as official object. The gaze transforms into the technical identification of the Google pattern recognition to "develop information" that will later (almost simultaneously) prescribe a revision in the abundance of ever increasing knowledge. Therefore, at present (at future), Google is omniscient and simply becomes more omniscient because knowledge cannot exist outside of Google. The photo outside of Android (or the technological framework) has disappeared.

Google Photos
Photos. For life.

Figure 9- Screenshot from "Google Photos: Free up Space" Commercial.

Baudrillard substantiates: "The absolute loss of the image, bodies that cannot be represented, either to others or to themselves, bodies enucleated of their being and of their meaning by being transfigured into a genetic formula or through biochemical instability: point of no return, apotheosis of a technology that has itself become interstitial and molecular" (*Simulacra and Simulation* 102). The life of the photo (image) continues in Google, but what is lost is the human distinctly separated from the biometrics that inform facial recognition. The Dionysian is absorbed into the advanced modes of scientific innovation where the actual disappears into the virtual. When Google expresses, "Photos. For Life." It articulates the reality of the infinite and immortal storage of the photos and more aptly the mechanism for survival. The human is not living until Google creates a geometric map of the human subject in order to confirm its biological existence. Inversely, the mapping of the face effectively kills the subject's freedom to transform in the Google ecosystem.

Google's omniscience extends to the use of pattern recognition for identifying speech through Voice Search. On its Privacy and Terms page it explains, "Voice Search allows you to provide a voice query to a Google search client application on a device instead of typing that query. It uses pattern recognition to transcribe spoken words to written text" ("Google Privacy & Terms). Moreover, it continues, "We send utterances to Google servers in order to recognize what was said by you. We keep utterances to improve our services, including to train the system to better recognize the correct search query." So Google hears what a human says and keeps whatever the human says on its servers. *PCWorld* contributor Chris Hoffman confirms, "Google captures and keeps all the voice searches, voice actions, and voice dictation activities you perform on your

phone. It stores this with your 'Voice and Audio Activity,' which is tied to your Google

account and used on Android, in Chrome, and in Google's apps on IOS." As this

technology advances, Google specifically recognizes with almost total accuracy the

distinct voice of each human. Google knows all human voices.

Moreover, *WIRED* writer Robert McMillan describes how this works. He writes,

"When you talk to Android's voice recognition software, the spectrogram of what you've

said is chopped up and sent to eight different computers housed in Google's vast

worldwide army of servers. It is then processed using neural network models." In a

circular arrangement of discovery, Google uses the structure of the human brain as a

means for a synthetic "brain" to decipher a centrally individual human trait, the voice. As

the human enters Google's voice recording arrangement, the brain of the human

conforms to the technological medium; therefore, Google both uses and changes the

human brain. Carr clarifies this idea with this explanation, "The recent discoveries about

neuroplasticity . . . tell us that the tools man has used to . . . extend his nervous system . .

. have shaped the physical structure . . . of the human mind. Their use has strengthened

some neural circuits and weakened others" (25). Google identifies this software

development as "neural network algorithms" (McMillan). Neural network algorithms

support a "computerized learning system that behaves like the human brain." Again,

according to McLuhan, "We shape our tools and thereafter our tools shape us." Google,

in its omniscience, creates algorithms based on the neural features of the human brain,

which then transforms the neural features of the human brain to conform to Google's

ecosystem media.

Google's explanation implies that the human must initiate the communication through Voice Search by saying, "Ok, Google." This places the human into a subjective position. But this fails to cover the actual usage of Voice Search. Andrew Griffin, Journalist for the *Independent* makes clear that Google Voice Search "records and keeps conversation people have around their phones." Google is omnipresent, which works with its omniscience, in voice recognition. Griffin reiterates, "Google could have a record of everything you have said around it for years . . . the company quietly records many of the conversations that people have around its products." Swedish IT entrepreneur Rick Falkvinge supports Griffin's assertion and notes that "Google will still start recording audio at random times and send it to Google's servers, when it picks up something it thinks sounds like 'Ok, Google' from a conversation." In short, Google Voice Search enables Google to hear and store everything an individual says. While it is clear that Google has the capability to do this, it may refrain from doing so. Although Google holds the power for total omniscience, it does not necessarily mean that Google *manifests* this attribute all the time. Google can hear, recognize, record, and store every "utterance" from every individual at all times, but may not actually do so. This fact does nothing to diminish Google's omniscience.

To further facilitate Google's omniscience, it plans a future with driverless cars. Obviously, a human within a car controlled by Google software and navigated through Google Maps indicates a very specific form of omniscience. Basically, Google controls movement and knows where one travels. With Android software on all human devices, Google already knows the location of the human. Through Google Maps use on the Android device (and on non-Android devices), Google knows the route the human takes

or plans to take. Generally, Google explains the best route to take. Again, as an overlap to Google's omnibenevolence, the goal for the fully self-driving car is "to transform mobility by making it easier, safer, and more enjoyable to get around" ("Google Self-Driving Car"), and further that "there are many people who are unable to drive at all who could greatly benefit." As of now, the Google Self-Driving Car maneuvers its way through traffic with both human and manual controls; but Google plans to "remove these manual controls from the prototypes because our vehicles are ultimately designed to operate without a human driver." One can add the major implication that the vehicles are ultimately designed to operate without a human (no passenger required).

The Google Self-Driving Car works in cohort with its counterpart, Google Maps. *Android Authority* writer Joe Hindy relays that "Google has been really on top of navigation . . . [and] Google Maps is better than pretty much everybody." Like other services, Google offers its Maps for free. In return, the human, in Foucauldian terms, reinforces Google's omniscience by utilizing the Maps app. Google mentions that Maps includes comprehensive maps of 220 countries and territories as well as "detailed business information on over 100 million places" ("Google Play Maps App"). It also lists the total number of installs on devices at one to five billion. *The Guardian* reporter James Ball notes the extent of Google's knowledge. He writes, "it effectively means that anyone using Google Maps on a smartphone is working in support of a GCHQ [Government Communications Headquarter or the British equivalent of the NSA] system." Also according to Hindy, the human can install a variety of GPS apps for use with Android OS. Therefore, regardless of whether the app is produced by Google, such as Maps, or a

non-Google navigation app, Google still knows the whereabouts (and activities) of all humans through its Android OS.

Appropriately, McLuhan famously declares, "Since Sputnik and the satellites, the planet is enclosed in a man-made environment that ends 'Nature' and turns the globe into a repertory theatre to be programed" (*Cliché to Archetype* 9). The Global Positioning System or the Global Navigation Satellite System took Google above the earth and into the heavens to program the world in its techno-centric image. The human subject as a product of nature transforms into the human object on display for contribution to the algorithm. For instance, Maps provides a trip to other areas of the universe. It brags that with Google Maps the human can "check out the Milky Way, make a pit stop at Mars, and view the face of the moon. No spaceship required" ("Google Maps"). So through the Google interface, the human sees these areas according to Google. The former starry heavens now live as images though Google Maps. No telescope required, either.

Google Earth additionally adds a layer to Google's omniscience. In his book, *How Google Works*, former Google CEO Eric Schmidt describes the goodness that works alongside the knowledge in terms of Hurricane Katrina. He writes, "When Hurricane Katrina ravaged the US Gulf Coast . . . Google Earth had been on the market for only about eight weeks" (201). Then he adds, "But when the hurricane hit it . . . Google launched over eight thousand up-to-the-minute satellite images . . . [that] helped rescue workers . . . [and helped] agencies [to] distribute relief supplies and later aided survivors in deciding whether or not to return to their homes" (201). The altruistic benefits of Google Earth show Google's true omnibenevolent character. In fact, the Google Blog

features countless images of global natural disasters, such as the Kumamoto earthquake and the Erskine fire in California.

Another example of Google's omniscience conjoined with its omnibenevolence comes from the "real" life story of Saroo Munchi Khan. Similar to the narratives from Google's charitable practice from Google dot org, the story of Saroo provides another global (third world) tale of Google's goodness. *Vanity Fair* contributor David Kushner narrates, "Separated from his older brother at a train station, five-year-old Saroo Munchi Khan found himself lost in the slums of Calcutta. Nearly 20 years later, living in Australia, he began a painstaking search for his birth home, using ingenuity, hazy memories, and Google Earth." Apparently, Saroo began to evaluate his life after a period that included a "bad break up" and a lot of "partying." According to Kushner, "That's when he went to his laptop and launched Google Earth." Eventually, with Google Earth. Saroo reunites with his mother in India.

In addition, Google made efforts through its Earth app to help "an indigenous tribe, the Surui, map deforestation in their area of the Amazon" (Metz), and uses its "neural networks to scour Google Earth in search of [more] deforestation. [Also Google] . . . can track agricultural crops across the globe in an effort to identify future food shortages." In fact, *WIRED* writer Cade Metz confidently announces that "paired with AI and VR Google Earth will change the planet[!]" Essentially, Google Earth moves from seeing the planet to knowing the planet to changing the planet. Of course, this echoes all of the visions supported by the advent of rationality from previous spirituality. It also fully evidences Google's power to create *what* the human sees of earth and *how* the

human sees the earth. Finally, it illustrates the construction of the earth in Google's image by way of Google's omniscience and omnibenevolence.

Lastly, Google Earth enables humans to "explore the world from the palm of your hand" or "without leaving your desk" ("Google Earth"). As the general mediator of information, one can see the planet from Google's perspective through the screen. The mystery surrounding the surface of the earth and aesthetics of the heavens are no longer a mystery since the image displays real-time three dimensional vantage points from over thirteen thousand satellites. As Metz relates, "Google Earth is a nice way to look at the planet, not to the mention Mars, the Moon, and the heavens." The reality of the place in time or the time in place no longer lags, but rather exists in the image of the real. Rescue workers in Louisiana play their role in the digital display mediated by the satellite and Google. From a distance, the human sees the global events through Google's interface and, thus, Google creates the global event for the human to consume. In essence, Google plays the Godly role of mediator to the reality of the catastrophe (that needs charity) and manifests its omniscience by, not only seeing all events all the time, but also labeling, defining, and explaining the events with(in) its ecosystem. Google Earth offers an all-inclusive package for human pseudo-involvement in the world.

Other Google endeavors highlight its totalizing knowledge and power. In 2014, Google purchased its own satellite company, Skybox, a "startup that uses cube satellites to take more frequent and higher resolution photos from the skies" (Metz). Skybox now calls itself Terra Bella and looks to complete the puzzle of the world (Lopez). Its mission statement reads as follows: "We work alongside experts that have created geospatial data to serve billions of users and have the expertise to access data streams that complete the

puzzle. It's a beautiful world and it's telling us a story. Are you listening?" ("Terra Bella"). The object mass may not be listening, but it can be assured that Google listens.

The story the earth bears tells of technological and scientific advancement that recalls Zarathustra's perspective of the scientist who studies the brain of the leech. In other words, every tiny aspect of earthly existence comes under the microscope of the Google satellite. Google's Terra Bella boasts, "Our satellites offer a unique look at how our world is evolving, and how we can make positive changes in it." For instance, Google tracks mining development in Mongolia and relates, "This data can be used . . . [to] systematically track development of projects in remote areas." Under the banner of its goodness, no area, however remote, goes unnoticed by Google for the benefit of the object mass. Moreover, the scientists and engineers herald:

> While our satellites are zipping around the earth . . . [they are controlled] through a Chrome browser in our Mission Control Center capturing high-resolution imagery and downloading it to Google Data Centers for processing and storage. From there, the imagery is processed with a suite of processing algorithms allowing our team to then extract any useful information from the imagery to recognize patterns and help solve real problems. ("Terra Bella")

The term "real world" means the world according to Google and not necessarily the "real" world. A more accurate term is Baudrillard's "hyperreal" world.

Finally, Terra Bella offers the seventeenth century rationale and future utopian promise that still dominates Western culture when it states, "Through approaching daily global activity as the world's largest data science problem, we want to change the way we

look at the world." The obvious subtext conveys the fundamental change in how the world ought to be looked at by and through Google. Daily global activity, when identified as a "science problem" includes the analysis of every aspect of life. The human or object mass serves as the brain of the leech to Zarathustra's scientist. More importantly, Google is omniscient through its use of satellites.

To further continue its position as God, Google utilizes other objects that facilitate omniscience and omnipotence, through its omnibenevolence. One such object is "Google's Magic Internet Balloon" (Van Boom). Officially known as Project Loon ("Google Project Loon"), Google intends to fill the sky with balloons that carry the technology to provide internet for millions who live in rural areas.

Figure 10– The Google Balloon from Surabhi Agarwal in *The Economic Times*. Eventually, Google looks to launch balloons above rural India every thirty minutes to continuously support the "loon network" ("Google Loon Project"). The choice of rural India supports Google's goodness as *CNET* editor Daniel Van Boom notes, "Eight hundred and eighty million [Indians] live in rural conditions or poverty." Plus, as one government official claims, "We are trying to test the effectiveness of Loon in the interiors of the country, since there is already ample connectivity in urban areas" (qtd. in Agarwal). Naturally, the urban Indian population uses Google more than any other search

engine as Google controls 96% of the search market in India (as of 2015).[20] Now the

rural poor of India can join the urban population of India to access Google's ecosystem

and gain entrance into the global network that informs Google's omniscience and

consolidates its omnipotence.

Another floating (or flying) technological object Google employs are the Google

drones of Project Wing. Project Wing announces, "We're building the next generation of

automated aircraft, and working toward the day when these vehicles deliver everything

from consumer goods to emergency medicine, a new commerce system that opens up

universal access to the sky" ("Google Project Wing"). In September 2016, some "lucky

Virginia Tech students . . . [got] their Chipotle fix" (McFarland) as Google drones

dropped the food from the sky into the crowd of hungry students. The drones not only

feed humans, but help the climate because they take delivery vehicles off the road, which

waste about "3.1 million" gallons of fuel a year.

Furthermore, Astro Teller, CEO of Google X, the research and development

factory now simply known as X, theorizes, "What excited us from the beginning is that if

the right thing could find anybody just in the right moment they need it, the world might

be a radically better place" (qtd. in Madrigal). Teller implies that one can receive an

immediate answer to one's request (prayer); ask and you shall receive (Matthew 7:7).

Eventually, one might only think of an object, and Google will deliver it. Oliver

Burkeman, writer for *The Guardian*, adds, "A search engine for the physical world is of

limited use if it only serves up online photos of whatever you're looking for. A Google

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[20] Data from "2015 Search Engine Market Share by Country" from *Return on Now*,
www.returnonnow.com/internet-marketing-resources/2015-search-engine-market-share-by-
country/.

drone network could bring you the thing itself, almost as instantaneously as the search

box delivers electronic results." With the other objects and interfaces in Google's

ecosystem, its drones represent the physical inclusion of universal connectedness

whereby when the human enters text the drone shortly arrives. More accurately, the drone

is always already there and precedes the human action of entering text.[21]

Daydream View allows the human to see the screen of the smart phone up close

with a total virtual setting. The human lacks the capability to see peripherally. Everything

on the screen explodes in color in the vision of the human. Sound funnels in and

surrounds the human so that all sensory data comes from a single technological source

that swarms around the human. The outside disappears collapsed by the inside of the

virtual world. This hyper-simulated reality overwhelms the primordial Real since

signifiers do not exist in their basic form. New signifiers erupt under the weight of

promised new worlds. Google exclaims, "When your phone's screen becomes your big

screen, you can get fully immersed in your favorite shows, movies, VR videos, and

more" ("Google Daydream"). It offers subjectivity its command to "Take Control." The

injunction to grab individual subjectivity cannot be refused. The subjective human must

oblige while shifting to the role of object mass as explained in Baudrillard's paradoxical

"double bind." The only choices available to the human remain within the limitations

inherent within the technological object. Žižek reiterates, "He must choose what is

already given to him" (*Sublime Object* 186). Google commands, "Daydream View's

intuitive and expressive controller transforms with your imagination" ("Google

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[21] Mike Murphy's article, "Google Wants to have Drones Buzzing around Offices, projecting our Faces at Meetings" provides information on other uses related to the drones.

Daydream"). The imagination of the object mass becomes transformed by Google or in more accurate terms, created by Google.

Google's Omnipresence

All of the previously reviewed Google activities strongly imply Google's omnipresence. As explained earlier, the metaphysical God is omnipresent. To be more specific, God's omnipresence is what the central theologians reviewed in this study refer to as "derivative" omnipresence. This means that "God, considered apart from his standing in some relation or relations to objects that are themselves located at place fundamentally, could nevertheless be located at place" (Inman 4). Or basically that God is in all places at all times even in the same place as something or someone else. To summarize the Scholastic theologian Thomas, "It belongs to God to be present everywhere, since He is the universal agent, His power reaches to all being, and hence He exists in all things" (729). Google is also present everywhere and exists in all things. Again, *all* of the previously discussed Google products describe Google's omnipresence. Simply put, Google's presence abounds everywhere. The object mass cannot exist without the interaction of / with Google. Google is here with the human at every moment.

As it relates to omnipresence, the Google ecosystem serves as an environment which surrounds the object mass and to which the object mass contributes by participation. Although the ecosystem appears overtly through various signs of real interaction (typing text, for instance), its central all-encompassing circuitry actually remains invisible to the human. McLuhan offers a succinct explanation that concerns the invisibility of technological environments. He writes, "Environments are not passive wrappings, but are, rather, active processes which are invisible. The groundrules,

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pervasive structure, and over-all patterns of environments elude easy perception" (*Medium Massage* 69). McLuhan's assertion of the invisible omnipresence of the technological environment especially applies to the most advanced and highly developed spaces. Therefore, the intensity of daily and constant engagement with technological objects (media) correlates with the level of technological (in)visibility. Mander reinforces McLuhan when he notes, "Because technology is now everywhere apparent, pervasive, and obvious, we lose awareness of its presence" (*Absence Sacred* 31). Omnipresence reflects a reality where the existence of the omnipresent weaves itself into the fabric of daily life.

In the case of Google, the Android OS on the billions of cellular phones simply exists in the background of everyday life. The object mass loses touch with the referential concept of the operating system that lives within the phone and, furthermore, mediates each interaction for each human on each day of each life. In the short term, the object mass may recognize the omnipresence of Google and may even comment on its omnipresence; but after that short period, Google simply exists everywhere without any conscious engagement (critical or otherwise) with Google from the object mass. Mander continues, "Once we accept life within a technically mediated reality, we become less aware of anything that preceded it" (32). In the case of the Kenyan refugees, they will initially perceive the entrance of Google into their collective space, but soon after, Google will transparently hover over their daily lives without any significant thought or reflection upon the omnipresence of the technology. In the more advanced world, Google has already accomplished this feat and is totally omnipresent.

To elaborate, Mander further writes, "We live our lives in reconstructed . . . environments; we are inside manufactured goods" (31). By analogy, the contemporary conception of the house, for instance, becomes omnipresent as a location of shelter. It is always there around the human. Houses simply exist as part of the landscape and no longer as additions to a previous landscape. The house simply is, and the object mass simply lives in houses. Similarly, Google's ecosystem simply exists as part of everyday existence or as an afterthought in daily life. The idea of life without Google loses any kind of reference conceptually. The object mass can no longer conceptualize life without Google because it does not conceive Google as a separate construction any longer. Google is within the object mass, but more notably, the object mass is within Google. Mander's "manufactured goods" that contain the object mass include all of Google's media products. Just as the object mass must live in houses or suffer the indignity of homelessness, it must also live in Google or suffer the indignity of Googlelessness . . . while simultaneously and *unconsciously* assuming that both houses and Google are fundamentally and immutably natural to human existence. This is the height of omnipresence.

At the heart of Google's omnipresence lies the creation of a space where reference to the previous space dies. Baudrillard expounds on this relational concept of omnipresence. Following McLuhan, he claims, "[Technological media] has evolved into a . . . closed system of models of significations" (*Political Economy* 176). He calls this "mass mediaization" (176) the large scale production, proliferation, and usage of technological mediums (media) that cover the landscape and close the system for entry by any opposition. Once the environment becomes totalized by these media, the media

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becomes invisible. Australian Scholar Peter Dallow clarifies, "Baudrillard warned that there is no worse mistake than taking the real for the real" (57). Thus, Google's media (search, Gmail, YouTube, Android OS, etc.) cover the referential real and become acknowledged as the real, but in truth, are merely the hyperreal. Dallow resumes, "Progressively the media . . . have replaced a lived sense of our world," (57) and what were once "science fantasies" are now "technological fact, so that they now appear as the logical expression of contemporary consciousness, and of how we inhabit our lived world" (57). Consequently, the object mass in developed spaces lose their identification with anything previous to Google and now live within a naturalized omnipresent ecosystem. Conversely, those in underdeveloped spaces (rural India, Kenya, Mali, etc.) will lose their identification of a previous landscape without Google and enter Google's omnipresent space, and subsequently, lose all reference to the previous lived space. In Baudrillard's theory, this constitutes the covering of the real by the hyperreal, which then becomes the virtually real. At this stage, it becomes invisible.

This illustrates a crucial point of Google's omnipresence as the technological God because the world, as the creative activity of Google, becomes natural and, therefore, out of sight. This aligns with Foucault's claims about the prison. He asserts:

> One can understand the self-evident character that prison punishment very soon assumed. In the first years of the nineteenth century, people were still aware of its novelty; and yet it appeared so bound up and at such a deep level with the very functioning of society that it banished into oblivion all the other punishments that the eighteenth-century reformers had imagined. (*Discipline and Punish* 232)

Google's omnipresence develops a self-evident character after only a short time within its ecosystem. Once it appears as a self-evident element of nature, the awareness of its novelty disappears. Reality, previous to Google, held the basic concepts and ideas of scientific and technological utopian advancement to the point that all new forms (Google) were readily accepted (whether purposefully or not) by the object mass.

Therefore, the entrance of Google into a system that held this transcendent and comprehensive attitude toward science and technology appears natural. Just as the eighteenth century punishments were banished into oblivion by the newly self-evident nineteenth century forms, so too the previous ways of being in the world are quickly banished by the Google ecosystem of being. As Foucault reports, in order for the prison to function with the utmost effectiveness, it must utilize "omnipresent surveillance, capable of making all visible, as long as it could itself remain invisible" (214). Google's omnipresence hides in plain sight and serves as a hyperreal naturalized formality of being within the confined space (Google's ecosystem) where the object mass resides without conscious awareness of being inside a carefully constructed environment. This reality quintessentially relates to the Kenyan refugees who consciously live in confinement, but who unconsciously reside in Google's environmentally omnipresent confinement.

To fully articulate this omnipresence in terms of Lacanian psychoanalysis, Žižek comments on the explanation of former Unites States Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld on the question of "weapons of mass destruction" in Iraq. Basically, Rumsfeld

mentions "known knowns," "known unknowns," and "unknown unknowns."[22] Žižek

points out, "what [Rumsfeld] forgot to add was the crucial fourth term: the 'unknown

knowns,' the things we don't know that we know, which is precisely, the Freudian

unconscious, the 'knowledge which doesn't know itself,' as Lacan used to say" ("What

Rumsfeld Doesn't Know"). The object mass within Google fails to conceive of its status,

but knows its location nonetheless. Google's environment proves so invasive in presence

that the knowledge of this presence dissolves in daily interaction and navigation within

the environment.

But Google's omnipresence as an "unknown known" of the mass object

highlights an obscener element embedded in the concept of the metaphysical God as well

as Google. In psychoanalytic terms, the human resides unconsciously aware of its spatial

constraints, but cannot bear this harsh reality. Therefore, the mythologizing elements of

Google's omnibenevolence serves to sublimate the unconscious knowledge of Google's

omnipresence. Žižek further explains that the "unknown knowns" represent the

"disavowed beliefs, suppositions, and obscene practices we pretend not to know about"

("Between Two Deaths"). To pretend that Google exists as a benign force for

technological progress occurs in the realm of Lacan's Symbolic register, which is

"everything collected in our psyche from our experience. It is our parents and friendships,

our social norms and taboos, our gods and demons" (Delay 12). In fact, the entire faith in

the utopian promises of science through technological advancement already resides (has

[22] The full quote reads: "Reports that say that something hasn't happened are always interesting to me, because as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns, the ones we don't know we don't know. And if one looks throughout the history of our country and other free countries, it is the latter category that tend to be the difficult ones" (Rumsfeld).

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been implanted) within this part of human subjectivity through a symbolic chain of signifiers that ignites the pseudo-presence of the Real. In order to maintain the fantasy of the ([im]possible) Real, the object mass must continue to not know what it knows.

Moreover, the essence of omnipresence dictates that the knowledge of presence must be misapprehended or else the entire foundation of conviction loses all of its validity. In practical terms, the object mass must continue to utilize every facet of the Google ecosystem without critically engaging with Google, itself. To consciously concede to the omnipresence of Google means to "traverse the fantasy" toward institutionalization. As reviewed earlier, the fantasy of God resides within the small overlap of space primarily designated as an unconscious meeting place for the Symbolic, the Imaginary, and the Real. When the human decides that Google bears the signifier, omnipresent, the ascension of Google as the master-signifier paradigmatically enunciates the central assumptions implanted within the unconscious, which insists. The word then enters the field of observation through the subjective gaze of the individual.

For example, Google enters as the master-signifier to produce the Real within the framework of the natural world with its "Consortium for the Barcode of Life." It designates the living beings as the object-as-other through the sublimation of knowledge and conservation. The identification of each individual animal from each species through the use of the digital "barcode" signifier allows Google to serve as the omnipresent mediator for the natural environment. Google dot org reports "A DNA barcoding library [allows] law enforcement officials to easily identify illegal trade species and better protect the world's most endangered wildlife" ("Consortium Barcode"). Reports from Mexico, South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria reinforce Google's essential entrance into the

space of the "other" in order to traverse the "fantasy of the phantasm, which structures the relation to the other" (Tutt). Therefore, the ethical attempt to subjectify to animals of the spaces outside of the institutional Symbolic works as an extension to subjectify the human in those same spaces. This conceptually counteracts the intention to bring into the field of the Real or bring out the Real from the unknown, the other. The use of barcode fulfills the Imaginary function that unsuccessfully allows for the convergence of the interrelational subjects. Through this core subjectifying act, Google, in turn, creates its subjective opposite and delimits the allowance of fantasy to manifest into sublimative fruition.

When the objectified other grasps the entire impetus for total information that comes from Google, Google's omnipresence serves as a presence through the forced choice within a closed framework of narrow and very specific identification. In basic terms, the other cannot self-identify (enter the Symbolic chain of signifiers) unless the other (human / object mass) itself traverses its own fantasy by objectifying the presence of Google. The problem occurs in this equation because Google maintains the potency to project all meaning upon all figures, animal, human, and all else. This proves to be the case because identification initiates the Symbolic "inscription of lack" (Tutt). With the initiatives and substantial ability to name or to bring forth the word to the Symbolic realm, Google brings into the chain of signifiers those that / who were previously outside and inside (in the realm of) the primordial Real.[23] The lack becomes the presence of the other and out of the Real comes the exactitude of name through predetermined linguistic

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[23] "And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought *them* unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field" (*King James Version*, Genesis 2:19-20).

and numerical signifiers. This can only occur through the evident power relations of the subject / object binary as Google exclusively possesses the authority to bring into being the Symbolic presence of the object. Henceforth, Google's omnipresence must remain outside of the consciousness of the objects that it identifies. And again if the object mass were to comprehend the omnipresence of Google, the entire Borromean Knot would unravel and the center point of fantasy, exemplified in the ideal ego, could no longer exist for Google.

This one-way discourse or continuous monologue serves to employ a specific relationship or mode of relations between those without the word and Google who creates the word. The frightening prospect of Google's omnipresence, from the vantage point of those yet defined by Google's designations, presents a potentially crippling conflict within the field of actualized morality. Tutt makes this clear when he writes that the "narrative retelling of suffering can only fit within the confines of a fantasmatic system that depends on an ethical exclusion capable of alleviating the uncanny character of experience." The omnipresence of Google's narrative of the other, in terms of its omnibenevolent endeavors, survive and reproduce because of the limited ethical confines located inside its own "fantasmatic" word / world construction inscribed upon the pre-symbolic lack of the other it introduces into the chain of signifiers. Simultaneously, Google, through the word (or as the Word), initiates the fantasy of the primordial Real by narrating itself into a sublimated discourse with and about itself, or as Žižek words it, "the story we tell ourselves about ourselves, in order to account for what we are doing, is fundamentally a lie" (qtd. in Swift 110). Thus, Google's monologue incorporates all the aspects of an all-inclusive circuitous rendering of the Real and creates an imagined

fantasy (a lie) that institutionalizes the object-as-other into a dome of an omnipresent

soliloquy, which reproduces the pre-symbolic inscription of lack located within the

Imaginary register of the (split) subject(ive) desire or ideal ego. And so exists the

'knowledge which does not know itself,' or the "unknown known" (Žižek, "What

Rumsfeld Doesn't Know"), which sustains Google's omnipresence.

VII- GOOGLE'S GODLY ATTRIBUTES WITHIN ITS ADVERTISING FEARLESS

In terms of advertising, Google explicitly propagates its attributes and role as the God of technology. For instance, a commercial for the Nexus 7 tablet illustrates the entrance of the word from the Symbolic while suggesting the pre-Symbolic lack of the adolescent during the beginning of the genital stage of psychosexual development. The advert begins with an invocation to Google. The Google app or voice search allows the human to speak to Google and, thus, (re)produces *creatio ex nihilio*. The adolescent says, "Ok Google" and Google listens. Understanding the omniscience of Google, the adolescent asks, "What is glossophobia?" and Google responds, "Glossophobia or speech anxiety is the fear of public speaking" ("Nexus 7 Commercial"). Essentially, the adolescent fears entrance into the Symbolic chain of signifiers that initiate the existence of the Real. The fear reveals the loss of the father who Google replaces as the central figure of God. The father does not appear in the commercial and most likely left the son to take his role in the phallic exchange during the oedipal drama.

Figure 11– Screen Shot from "Google Nexus 7 Commercial (Fearless)."

The adolescent must complete a public speaking assignment for school. The elimination of the father prevents the adolescent the opportunity to rival the phallus in the conflict for the object of desire, the mother. The resulting lack for the adolescent dictates his decision to adopt a surrogate phallus figure. The creation of the word bears extra significance because the "drive itself is an incompleteness in the structuration of language" (Beardsworth 43). In the presymbolic loss of the father, the adolescent must bring to life the Symbolic register and, therefore, his own conception of the Real. Basically, he needs a God the Father, and Google plays this role. The advert shows the rivalry in action:

Figure 12– Screen Shots from "Google Nexus 7 Commercial (Fearless)."

God / Google is the Father who is the "holder of the phallus" (Lacan, *Seminar III* 319). As Lacan notes, the "imaginary exchanges between mother and child are established around the imaginary lack of the phallus" (*Seminar III* 319). Google is both an expression of the Imaginary register of subjectivity as a concrete material structure (the tablet) and also the Symbolic location of the desire within the unconscious (the center of the Borromean Knot). Thus, the phallus is exchanged between mother and child, since neither represents the true holder. In the Oedipus drama, the real father is murdered, but lives in a pseudo-real presence while maintaining concrete existence through the image of the Imaginary. His concreteness is complicated by his Symbolic

(omni)presence. The adolescent sleeps with the phallus. But he cannot be the holder of the phallus, yet. The mother takes the phallus in Phallalic exchange.

The adolescent is fragmented. His "ideal" self, once visualized in the Lacan's mirror stage, is something he yearns to regain. His speech presents this opportunity because he can engage the Symbolic register and reconcile the primordial Real. Although the ideal self proves unattainable, by placing faith in the help of Google, he can strive for the image of the "ideal" self.
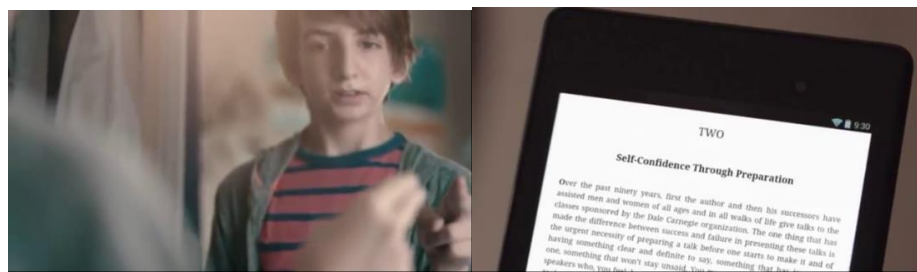

Figure 13- Screen Shots from "Google Nexus 7 Commercial (Fearless)."

He stands before the mirror, speaks and gestures as his God the Father has instructed. He emulates the images on Google's screen. His fear of no longer being himself is paradoxically quelled by his becoming someone else (or a simulation of someone else). Aside from the compulsion to control the anxiety associated with his fragmented body, the adolescent practices his speech in order to successfully perform in front of his classmates. His prayer to Google is answered through the interface and, moreover, the induction of the Symbolic from the entrance of word.

He carries the phallus or symbol of God the Father / Google to the classroom and completes his speech. His mother / teacher looks on as he lives the advertisement simulation while proposing to adolescents in his circumstance to believe in Google. He proselytizes the Word / Phallus of God / Google through his visible use of the concrete

structure (the Imaginary). Google has simulated a representative of the masses, stylized

as the image and united with the image simultaneously. The redoubling of the simulation

is also the redoubling of God as the Father in heaven and God as the Father as Google.

Both images restate the redundancy of God. God is the Father. God is the Phallus. God is

the Son. God is the Image. God is Google. The classroom serves as the space of symbolic

Phallalic exchange and also as the simulated exchange of separation and unity through

the obscene advertisement and the fiction of the actual hyperreal event, which is

simulated.

Figure 14- Screen Shot from "Google Nexus 7 Commercial (Fearless)."

The adolescent lacks. The soundbite from Roosevelt, in the commercial, is the

famous, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Interestingly, Franklin Roosevelt,

who suffered from polio, and, thus, whose body is literally fragmented, carries an "Ideal"

self in the image of the mirror of the screen. This shows an obvious connection to the

presymbolic lack, as the inability to use his limbs illustrates the inability for the

adolescent to utilize the phallus in the oedipal drama. The fearful fragmented self or the

dismembered or castrated adolescent body, stands before the object mass to catechize the

word. He fears his mother, the teacher, his father (the absent God), and in his hands, as he

speaks from (and to it), his image reflects from the image of God the Father: (The)

Google (screen). The completeness of the speech can complete the body and re-member

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the boy in the image of the father. The adolescent girl approves with a smile. Her role

constitutes the continuation of the conflictual psychosexual drama. But she also reflects

his incompleteness, his fragementedness, and the psychological drive to create God and

in this context, Google. He must return to Google and ask again, or pray again for the

phallus. Google's omniscience allows it to know what the adolescent desires before he
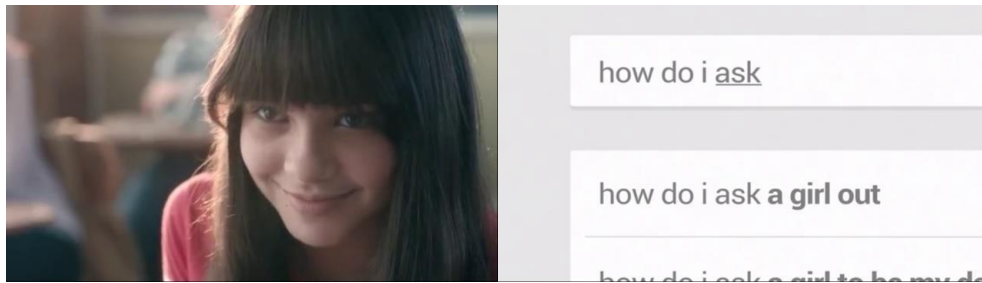
asks.

Figure 15– Screen Shots from "Google Nexus 7 Commercial (Fearless)."

Home

Google catalogues and covers the broad earthly space with Android OS, balloons,

satellites, drones, Earth, Maps, and more. It resides within the individual indoor space of

the home. Google Home is a "speaker" that talks to the human. It hears the reality of the

human within the home. Like the Google School, every aspect of one's life streams

through the object. Google proclaims, "With your permission, Google Home will learn

about you and get personal. Google Home can retrieve your flight information, set alarms

and timers, and even tell you about traffic on your way to work" ("Google Home").

Figure 16- Screen Shot from "Introducing Google Home."

The human opens up the home and the heart to Google and resides in its omnipresence. In every room in the house lives a speaker that transmits instructions to other humans. The word comes forth from the speaker initiating the child into the circulation of signifiers. Ironically, her sleeping life (pictured below) may represent her only mental moments outside of the Google ecosystem. Later, the son must conform to the injunctions.

Figure 17- Screen Shots from "Introducing Google Home."

The father of the home transfers the role of "father" to Google. Every commandant the children must follow circuits through Google. Google exists as the vector of omniscience who transposes algorithmic knowledge throughout the entirety of the home space because the Home object symbolically embodies the omnipresence of Google. Google exists everywhere regardless of the Home object, but the Home object characterizes the spoken "Word" and, thus, its function completes the triad of subjectivity: Imaginary, Symbolic,

and Real. The physical father always looks up to the sky to speak to Google, despite the Home location on the counters and tables. The heavens play an important role in the mythos of Google as a Godly figure. The son asks about the closest star in the sky and dresses like an astronaut. This normalizing of inevitable scientific and technological innovation demonstrates the continuation of the human enterprise of scientific rationalism. The mother packs to take an airplane flight and Google announces a thirty-minute delay of her flight. Google changes her dinner reservations to exactly thirty minutes later to compensate for the thirty-minute delay. Google knows the scientific exactitude of absolute time and the expectation of exact planning (engineering) of life. Google utilizes the astronomical theme frequently.
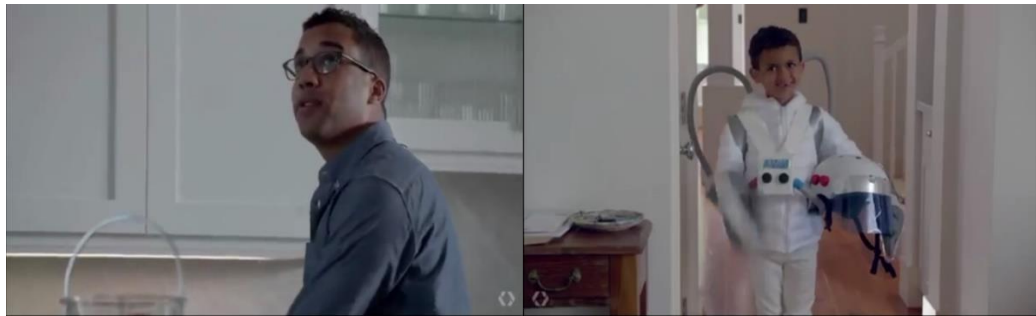
Figure 18– Screen Shots from "Introducing Google Home."

Finally, Google proves it dominance over the father by remembering the Space Day at his son's school. Of course, within the Google ecosystem the preference for scientific advancement, like space exploration, displaces other educational forms. Hence, every moment of every human day lives within the ecosystem of Google omniscient technological existence. Google Home offers the word within the domain of the living space and the home (family) belongs to Google. Google increases its omnipotence by shaping the children into Google children from their youngest ages. The final image

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invites the human to "Meet Google Home," or, more appropriately: "Meet, the Google Home."
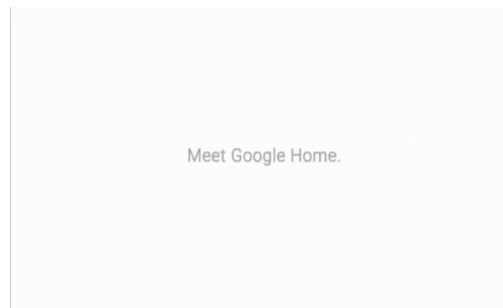

Figure 19– Screen Shot from "Introducing Google Home."

Furthermore, the Google Home is "always listening for the phrase, 'Ok, Google' so it can take instructions" (Gaudin). Google always listens. Technology Journalist for *The Register* Dan Olds confirms "That microphone will be witness to every verbal interaction in the home. It will also know what you watch on television, what you listen to, and obviously, when there's no one home" (qtd. in Gaudin).

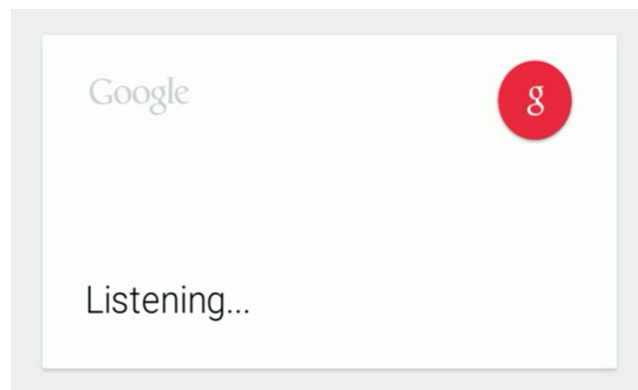Figure 20- Screen Shot from "Introducing Google Home."

American Technology Analyst Rob Enderle quickly asserts that "society is reaching a time when everything people do likely will be captured by someone . . . [and says to] anyone worried about Google Home collecting too much data about them, 'Don't buy it" (qtd. in Gaudin). Enderle's perspective proves limited as Google shapes or creates the

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environment and the world. The consumer concept of choice disintegrates under the creative force of Google to mandate the use of its products and entrance into its ecosystem. The Google Home is the only home that fully conforms to the world created in the image of Google. The logical outcome of the constant omnipresence of Google obligates human engagement with its objects.

To further address the Google Home in Lacanian terms, Lacan's ideal ego or Ideal-I extends beyond the individual who seeks (desires) total idyllic being initiated in the mirror stage. The object mass, as a single entity, becomes the model of the ideal, itself, projected by and manifested within the integration of Home. The individual subjects within the "family" space blend into the entirety of the Google space and, thus, conform to the dictates of a pre-determined transcendent ideal ego commenced through Google's omnipotent expansion into each psyche. The mirror stage begins "the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image" (Lacan, *Ecrits* 1-2). In the Google Home, the subject develops the ego. That is to say "The ego has to be developed" (Freud, *Complete Works* 2934). The difficulty for the human subject rests in the fact that within the Google Home, the human cannot resolve the "discordance with his own reality" (Lacan, *Ecrits* 2) because the subject cannot create reality since Google creates reality. Obviously, Lacan's "discordance" or "fragmentation" never resolves, but with the advent of Google, the technological God, the subject involuntarily integrates into an object mass where Google both destroys the opportunity to realize the ideal ego while it simultaneously constructs the mandatory template of the ideal ego for the entire mass.

Moreover, a meta-analysis of the Google Home advertisement engages the next step in movement toward the eventual totalization of Google omnipresence. For instance,

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the virtual nature of the actuality that associates family life and dialectical interaction among subjects already re(creates) a stable formation of specific being in the home and, in completion, the world outside the home. The shaping of the father now becomes an absolute virtual actuality by the omnipresence of the "smart" object who / that maintains the organization and central decisions of the family. Evidently, the re-insertion of the father into the Home comes by means of the "word" as well as the expansion of the object to allow for the material father to exist. Lacan's imaginary extends this possibility or as Dutch Philosopher André Nusselder maintains, "The mirror stage is the paradigmatic structure of the imaginary. All identifications with 'images' establish a sense of unity, mastery, or autonomy that is not there 'in the real'" (84). Through the projection of the image of the father as the pseudo-leader (God) within the Home, the "real" Father from the Symbolic initiation through the "word" interjects and, subsequently, supersedes the material by the image and results in Google as the "actual" father in the Google Home. Of course, this requirement of human subjectivity constitutes Google's ascension and necessitates "the coherent appearance of our reality" (85). The father appears to be the real father, and this maintains the actual reality that he is not the Real Father.

<div align="center">Dreams</div>

As evidence, in the Google commercial called "Dreams," the word "Ok" repeats frequently. The word introduces Google's Symbolic presence into the psychological space of the human subjects. In fact, the constant use of the term "Ok, Google" places the phrase into the omniscient sphere of the Google world. It serves as an almost hypnotic intermediate, which separates and integrates the human subject into the world of Google.

In "Dreams," the father loses his subjective relationship to the child. Google replaces the father as illustrated by decapitation or the detachment of the place of cognitive presence or subjective awareness.

Figure 21– Screen Shots from "Google App 'Dreams'" Commercial

Both fathers can no longer assume the role of the "subject who is supposed to know" (Lacan, *Seminar XI* 225). In Lacan (and Freud), this specific subject may be the analyst or the subject who the analysand accepts as one who can conceivably know. More aptly, Lacan mentions that Descartes identifies the "subject who is supposed to know" as "God" (224). According to Lacan, Descartes's God as the "subject who is supposed to know," knows the entire range of "knowledge that wanders about" (224). While Lacan never conceived of God or the analyst as a knower of this wandering knowledge, Descartes's conception of God aligns with contemporary Google because Google "organize[s] the world's information and make[s] it universally accessible and useful" ("Google Company Mission"). This is not to imply an equivalence of the analyst to God. Lacan makes this very clear. However, the analyst serves a role as the "subject who is supposed to know" even if the analyst does not know. In a situation where Google knows, the father (or any human) loses the possibility to be the "subject who is supposed to know." In the second image above, the father lays next to his daughter who asks Google for the answer to a question. The father's presence (or lack of presence) stands in

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contrast to Google's omnipresence as the something beyond the "subject who is supposed to know." Google offers the child the answer to her question and thereby eliminates the cognitive possibilities of the father.

Furthermore, Nusselder refers to the injection of the technological parent as the potentiality of the "artificial father" in terms of "computer psychotherapy" (115). In context, Lacan identifies the moment of potential transference when he writes, "As soon as the subject who is supposed to know exists somewhere, there is transference" (*Seminar XI* 232). In regards to transference, Nusselder claims that "transference to computers shows humans' psychological relation with 'something' behind the screen. Whether this interaction concerns a human user or a computer program" (115). This is exemplified when, in the commercial, the daughter holds the screen close to her face and chooses the behind the screen omniscience because she knows Google knows. She asks, "Do dogs dream?" Clearly she, through Google, sets up the moment to begin psychoanalytical therapy to address her unconscious desires (dreams) to address her movement toward (or around) her ideal ego. More clearly, she cannot do this with her father. In addition, in the Google Home, the interaction already assumes that Google resides behind the screen in actual omniscience.

Aside from the central psychoanalytical incursions, Google instigates the conflict of its injunctions to both implicitly submit to its ecosystem while exploring the boundless realities within that same ecosystem. Referring back to Baudrillard, the human mass unconsciously involves itself in the inherent conflict of desire and regulation. The requirement to be both subject and object that underlies the Lacanian drive to play out in a series of romanticized excursions to pleasure with its opposing restrictions. To repeat

the fundamental basis of the metaphysical God's concept of contradictory free will, in which the human must choose something of its own choosing within a narrow framework of choices. In God's conception, the wrong choice equals a fatal strategy. In Google's conception, the same holds true, but in a concrete material sense rather than a metaphysical torturous sense.

<div align="center">Questions</div>

For instance, Google commands the object mass to ask questions and propagates the question (the supplication after of entrance of the word ["Ok, Google"]) as the singular most significant act within the realm of human possibility. This makes sense since Google's central feature constitutes algorithmic search formulas. In the commercial called "Questions," Google proclaims that a question is the most powerful force in the world.

A question
is the most powerful force in the world.
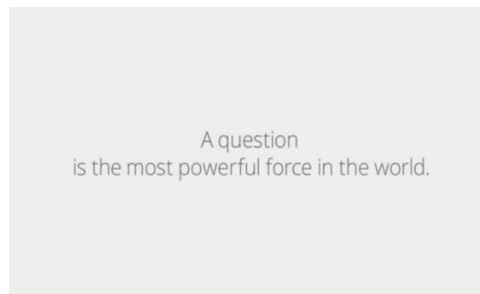
Figure 22– Screen Shot from "The Google App: Questions" Commercial.

Essentially, the word enters the world as a signifier and its force proves itself as a paradigmatic master signifier through the question because Google commands the object mass to ask it questions. When the object mass asks, Google's force permeates the physical interface as a tunnel that flows with pure energy through the conductive body of the object mass. The human must comply. It must ask a question. Google will answer. Without the question, Google's force dissolves.
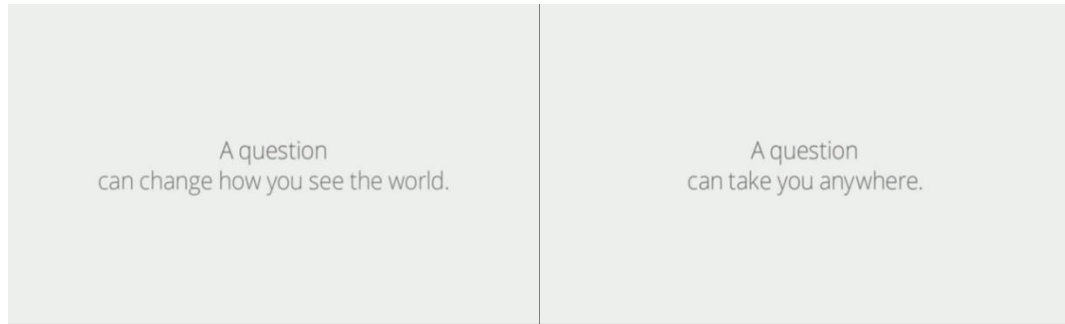
Figure 23– Screen Shots from "The Google App: Questions" Commercial.

After the question, Google provides the answers that place the human subject into conflict with its own objectified condition. The injunction to change vantage points and leave for adventure always reinforces the narrow mental perspective and one dimensional pathway within Google's ecosystem. The injunction to "change how you see the world" involves the obligation to see the world as Google sees the world. In fact, through the Google screen, the object cannot see the world any other possible way except as Google sees the world. Google places itself into the position of mediator from the individual subjective reality to the objectivity of the Google world. The human can never see / retrieve its pre-Google perspective or sight of the world once it enters the Google ecosystem. It is an absolute and complete conversion.

Moreover, the "anywhere" always remains in the space of the interface of / from the screen. Google presents images of "humans" going somewhere, particularly framed within spaces of exotic and extreme adventure.

Figure 24– Screen Shots from "Google App, 'Dreams'" Commercial.

The object mass must see, through the interface, images of the human involved in freely

chosen subjective behavior, such as jumping off cliffs and floating in outer space. These

images serve as a platform for the human to conceive desire as a mode of expression

through the screen while maintaining its reality within the Google world. The human can

never be fully engaged in the human world while performing these extreme feats, but the

human can never be fully outside of the Google world, if it freely chooses these

adventures. The Android OS, Google Images, Google Drive, Google Cloud, YouTube,

and so on capture the essence of these adventures and frame them within the overriding

omnipresent structure. If the human performs the cliff dive without Google, the cliff dive

never happens. Therefore, the object mass must perform all adventure in the Google

ecosystem to be a human subject while at the same time to perform all adventure within

the Google ecosystem equates to a loss of human subjectivity because Google objectifies

the very performance of adventure and thereby conflates human subjectivity with human

objectivity. Henceforth, the contradictory injunction of free will as first setup by the

metaphysical God and now by the technological God, Google.

<div align="center">Whales</div>

To return to Google as the replacement of the father (God). The Google Home

commercial called "Whales" features another father who can no longer assume the role of

the "subject who is supposed to know" (Lacan, *Seminar XI* 225). Again, in "Whales," as

in "Dreams," the father loses his subjective relationship to the child. Google replaces the

father as illustrated by decapitation or the detachment of the place of cognitive presence

or subjective awareness.

Figure 25- Decapitated Father in Google "Whales" Commercial.

Father and daughter share a moment of story time. The father attempts to read with his

daughter who continually asks him questions that he cannot answer. He does not know

the answers. He cannot pretend to know the answers, which would at least serve the

symbolic function of appearing to know. Rather, he must submit to Google's

omniscience. The daughter asks, "Daddy, how big is a blue whale?" He responds,

"Hmmm . . . Ok, Google: How big is a blue whale?" Google answers the question for the

daughter in precise scientific terms. Then the father must ask Google, "Ok, Google: What

noise does a whale make?" Google supplies a noise. As a technological God, Google

replaces the father within the home, especially in terms of knowledge. Since it is always

on and always present, it manifests its omnipresence.

Moreover, Google mediates the interaction between the father and the daughter

and takes on a subjective role while the humans sit powerless in their role as objects as

they attempt to engage with a fantastical children's story. The statistical and scientific

data related to whales overshadows the whimsical fictional tale of personified whales.

The home space succumbs to an omnipresent knower who clarifies and corrects the

ignorance of the human inhabitants. The Google ecosystem emphasizes the elevation of

the collection and organization of verifiable data, which then informs the state of being

within the home. The Symbolic becomes concretized and signifies its own endless

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tautological referents as it eliminates the mass object's opportunity to individually insert the Symbolic order within the home.

Figure 26- Google "Whales" Commercial.

Furthermore, in "Whales," a robot stands next to the Google Home physical object. This illustrates the displacement of the fantastical childhood toy to the mechanical toy of applied science. The normalizing of the robot persona enables the further vitalization of the ideal ego through the artificially intelligent object. Although the Google Home object works as a robot might, juxtaposing it with a robot serves to illuminate a contrived difference. It could also serve the paradoxical role of initiating the robot into the home as a small inconsequential object. Subsequently, the robot mirrors the human in position to the Google Home and Google, in general, as an object mass who mechanically engages with a Godlike machine in its space. In other words, there is little difference between the blue robot and the humans in the home.

To put this in perspective, the object mass will no longer have the opportunity to tell stories without the verification of plausibility. For instance, a story like Noah's flood will be interrupted by questions like, "How could Noah get all those animals into the ark?" and Google will reveal the implausibility of the story. Thus, the very human tradition of storytelling loses its Dionysian quality of myth and fantasy. The obvious replacement lies within stories that can be verifiable or stories of scientific possibilities

for the future. In others words, stories that say "this can happen" or "this is actually possible." Of all the objects that could sit next to the Google Home object (unicorn, family photo, flowers, etc.), the robot, as the most fitting, serves as a testament to the aims and eventualities of life within the Google ecosystem.

Storytime by you. Help by **Google**.
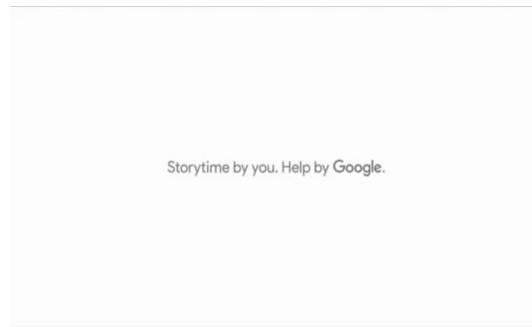
Figure 27- Storytime with the Help of Google from "Whales."

Google, the technological God, still provides the gift of free will and the hollow admission of choice for individuals of the object mass. "You" can still freely choose to perform the act of story time as a representation of subjective behavior. Google merely provides the help needed to successfully tell the story. Though in the advertisement, the subjective "father" becomes a child who is told the story by Google. Story time becomes an education in whale physiology from the omniscient presence of Google. Again, Google injects the primordial Real with the Symbolic word and objectifies the humans, fragmenting their egos in a reversion to childhood helplessness. In relation to Google, the human father becomes the helpless child. What appears to be a father and child sitting on a couch for story time, actually proves to be two children observed and helped by God the father.

Figure 28- Google "Whales" Commercial.

In this scenario, the child never elevates Lacan's Imaginary Father into the being she loves and fears. Rather, through the displacement of those feelings onto the Google Home object, the father of the psychological complex, becomes the Google object. As presented earlier, Google Home fulfills the functions normally completed by the human in terms of the "subject who knows." In taking on this role, the object mass become children unable to enter the psychosexual development proposed by Freud or the mirror stage proposed by Lacan. Instead the initiation to subjectivity revolves around interaction with an artificial omnipresent object whose grandiose nature encompasses all areas of life, even outside of the home space. Parents become children. The metaphysical God previously served this role without the immediate physical intrusion and relied upon elements of the Dionysian to maintain its sovereignty. In simple terms, the invisible father in the sky who always watches (knows, loves, punishes, creates) becomes the visible father in the home who always watches (knows, loves, punishes, creates).

The human father is still the original model for God, but the human father as a referent to the signifier is eliminated. In its place is the Google machine and media. Henceforth, the separation of signifier and referent dissolves as Google as signifier

becomes its own referent. Simply put, Google elevates to the level of master signifier. The intersection of Freud and Baudrillard reveals that the:

[The primeval father] reflects a profound reality;

[The totem animal] masks and denatures a profound reality;

[The monotheistic God] masks the absence of a profound reality;

[The technological God] has no relation to any reality whatsoever;

[Therefore, Google] is its own pure simulacrum. (*Simulacra and Simulation* 6).

As Google's invisibility extends in its omnipresent visibility, the world becomes covered with the Google reality. Baudrillard cites the Borges fable of the map that covers the territory and writes, "The territory no longer precedes the map, nor does it survive it. It is nevertheless the map that precedes the territory, precession of simulacra, that engenders the territory, and if one must return to the fable, today it is the territory whose shreds slowly rot across the extent of the map" (1). In immediate terms, the home as dwelling space for humans exists after the Google model. Reference to the pre-Google home can only be accessed through Google who models or mediates the image of that reference point. Eventually, the family home signifies the concept of the home as imagined by Google. Therefore, the Google home *is* home and the territory formerly understood as the family home is covered by the map of the Google family home to the extent that all proceeding family homes are modeled by the Google map of the home and, subsequently, home *is* the Google home. In Baudrillard's words, the family home is the simulacrum of the Google generated simulation of home.

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In broader terms, the earth and beyond become covered by the map imagined by Google (technology). It creates (changes) the world in its image as it creates (changes) the home in its image. It dictates the entrance of the Symbolic out of the space of the Real. The object mass must enter and perpetually live within a universal mirror stage, of which the ideal reflection is predetermined, unrelenting, and hyper-magnified. The projected ideal ego lives as an image, as media, as mediator, and as the father of the Imaginary register, and since the object mass cannot satisfy the drive toward the ideal ego, it maintains an inertial path along the circuitry of limitless desire created by the technological God. This eliminates regression to childhood and initiates the eradication of adult subjectivity, entirely. Of course, since "God himself was never anything but his own simulacrum" (Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation* 4), the metaphysical God already influenced humans, likewise. The basic difference rests in the fact that the projected ideal ego of the monotheistic God never covered and replaced the entirety of the territory with its own contrived map while the technological God has.

<div align="center">Assistant</div>

Google describes Google Assistant as "your own personal assistant"[24] ("Google Assistant"). The voice over asks, "It seems like sometimes it's easy to feel like you need help with the stuff just in your own world. Your Photos, Phone, Videos, Calendar, Messages, Friends, Trips, Reservations, and so on and so on. Wouldn't it be nice if you had someone to help with all that? Wouldn't it be nice if you had a google for your world?" The distinction Google makes between "your world" and the Google world

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[24] Obviously, the reference to the Depeche Mode song, "Personal Jesus" comes to mind. The lyrics read, "Your own personal Jesus. Someone to hear your prayers. Someone who's there" (Depeche Mode).

(ecosystem) appears disingenuous because all of the elements of "your" world *are* elements of the Google world (ecosystem). The human subject already lives within the (pre)scripted Google world. When Google mentions Photos, it refers to its Photos App. When it refers to your Phone, it refers to the Android OS. When it refers to Videos, it refers to YouTube. When it refers to Calendar, it refers to its Calendar App. When it refers to Messages, it refers to its Messenger App. and so on and so on. The visual image on the screen during this self-referential moment shows the human surrounded by the various Google Apps' logos.
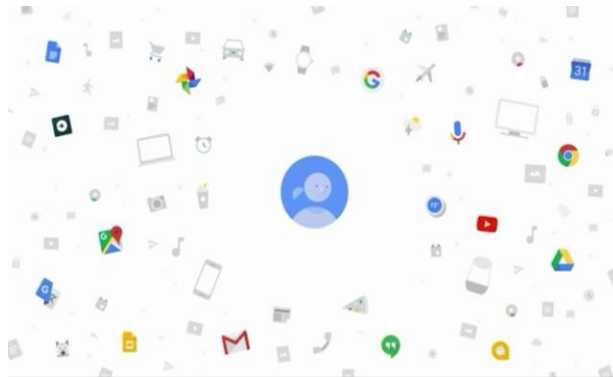
Figure 29- Google Assistant Apps' Logos from "Google Assistant."

Therefore, the Google ecosystem is "your" world. The Google Assistant serves to further catalogue and organize the object mass into its world. Aside from further continuing the mission of hyper-data collection of scientific inquiry and progress (Nietzsche's leech in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* [human as leech]), this illustrates Google's omnipresence. The human becomes enclosed inside an orbiting circulation of algorithmic generators of which the simultaneous process of creation and collection (or collection and creation) ignites then flows along a continuous stream of ceaseless knowing. The object mass resides within this spectacle where the only logical entrance to subjective being is

through Google's ecosystem. But it is a closed system. Or more precisely, it covers all other systems like the map that covers the territory.

The voice over continues by saying, "Just ask it what you need." Then the voice of the object mass responds, "Ok, Google. What do I have to do today?"
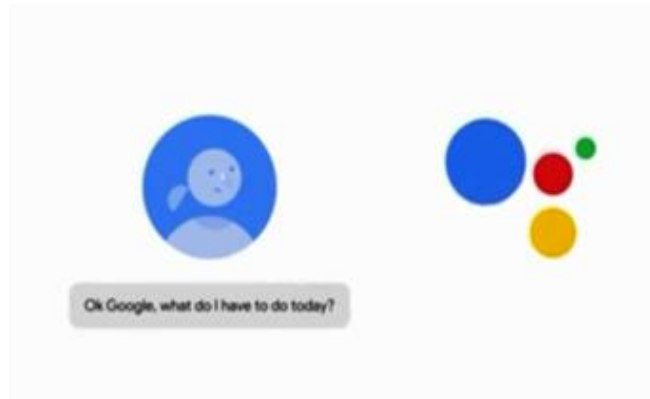
Figure 30- "What do I have to do today?" from "Google Assistant."

This question harkens back to when former CEO of Google, Eric Schmidt told the Wall Street Journal, "I actually think most people . . . want Google to tell them what they should be doing next" (qtd. in Vaidhyanathan 200). The question uses the phrase "have to" and when read along with Schmidt's claim, it means that Google tells the object mass what is "has to do" in the form of a command from Google. In other words, Google says "you have to . . ." and you do not have a choice.

Moreover, Google frames the injunction to participate in its ecosystem under the precept of love (or its omnibenevolence). Like the metaphysical God who can be approached in prayer at any given moment, the Google Assistant does likewise. The voice over declares, "Hi Aimee, how can I help?" and "Your Assistant understands and helps you out" as well as "Your assistant is always there for you." Basically, the advert presents the application as another force for good within an entire all-inclusive closed system. Google becomes the exclusive and central source of love because survival within

its ecosystem is contingent upon the human's obligatory dependency on Google; or the

human's obligatory dependency upon Google is contingent upon its survival. Therefore,

Google Assistant provides the loving support for the object mass to successfully navigate

through its ecosystem as displayed in Figure 31.

Part of its love for the human revolves around its knowledge of the individual

created in its image. The voice over states, "The more you use your Google Assistant, the

more useful it becomes." Although Google, through its omniscience already knows each

human, the more direct engagement the human has with Assistant, the deeper the

knowledge of the human individual grows. Less engagement means less use within the

system and also less success at navigation within the system. For example, the voice over

mentions, "If you're at home, you can ask it to play music." Figure 33 displays the

Google Home object.
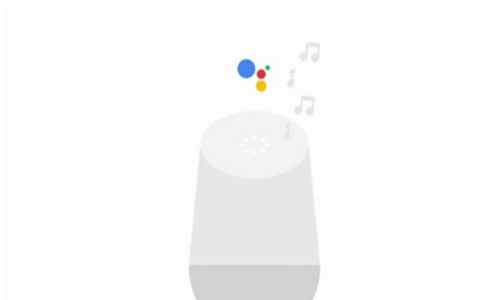
Figure 31- Google Home from "Google Assistant."

The home space as a Google home space already presupposes that the human resides

within a Google structure. Therefore, the phrase "Your assistant is always there for you"

carries the double meaning. One is of love and the other is of omnipresence. The voice

over confirms the omnipresent meaning when it states, "You will be able to access

[Assistant] in all sorts of places; so it will be everywhere you are." Figure 34 diagrams

life within the Google ecosystem.
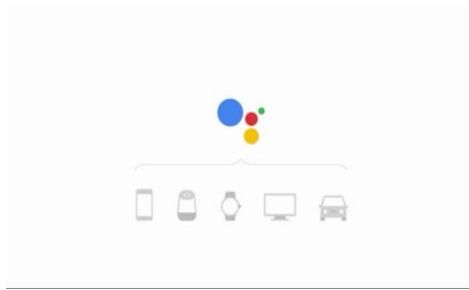
Figure 32- Human Life within the Google ecosystem from "Google Assistant."
Each picture in the photo represents a rational and sensory state of being. The smart
phone as communication. The Home as space. The watch as time. The television as
vision (images). The auto as movement. Above all the distinctions of human subjectivity
sits the Assistant that / who organizes all of the data to create a single human subject. As
all human subjects delve deeper in the entire rational and sensory parameters of the
ecosystem, individual subjectivity becomes mass objectivity. Communication, space,
time, image, and movement becomes homogenized to viewpoints absorbed within the
structure. So the voice over would be more accurate by relaying the opposite: "so you
will be everywhere it is."

In more honest terms, the object mass is the assistant to the Google Assistant. The
human assists with the operation of the technological God's imperatives. The human
functions as an object that supplies the Assistant with the data that reinforces the God of
the mechanized, data driven, automatically operated world. This concept echoes
Foucault's microphysics of power. Also, Baudrillard describes this as a "revolution in the
automatic perfection of technical devices and in the definitive disqualification of human
beings, of whom they are not even aware. At the hegemonic stage of technology, of
world power, human beings have lost their freedom, but they have also lost their
imaginations" (*Agony of Power* 79-80). As evidence, the Assistant supplies the

suggestions for entertainment, such as restaurants, choice of music, and films. Interestingly, the Assistant carries an option for the human to say, "'I'm bored' and the Assistant will suggest games, activities, or trivia" (Cipriani and Orellana). So the creative human functions of personal discovery through subjective thought become the prefabricated algorithmic choices from the technology that the more the human uses, the more useful it becomes.

Moreover, Baudrillard calls this a "massive transfer of decision-making to computerized devices. A symbolic capitulation, a defeat of the will much more serious than any physical impairment" (*Agony of Power* 81). Therefore, to argue that the ultimate decision rests with the human subject, ignores the fact that all decisions fit within a narrow framework of predetermined choices. One cannot choose outside of the choices provided. Again, this is the contradictory nature of God's gift of free will. Whether its food, entertainment, or movement, the human cannot decide to perform an activity outside of the omnipresent ecosystem. Google Assistant epitomizes Godly love, Godly knowledge, and the Godly power to create the human in its image. Henceforth, Google is the technological God.

VIII- CONCLUSION

Summary of Argument

This project focused on the nature of God and His death as a metaphysical being. It also examined the psychological motivation that brought forth the creation of the metaphysical God in the image of the human as well as from the product of the word *ex nihilio*. By tracing the trajectory of metaphysical belief from the very earliest of theological assertions to Nietzsche's declaration of God's death, it became clear that rationalism helped to kill God. But since humans evidently host the drive to create a God, this same rationalism led to the advent of the scientific God. In the case of this study, Google.

Google shares all of the attributes of God. These include omniscience, omnipotence, omnibenevolence, and omnipresence. Google also shares other characteristics proposed by the theologians and later the philosophers. These include the contradictory nature, a higher cause or transcendent morality, and the role as ultimate and exclusive mediator of all human activity.

To be more specific, this study established that the central attributes of God are omniscience, omnipotence, omnibenevolence, and omnipresence through a comprehensive review of the major Christian theologians from Augustine to Edwards. These theological assertions overlap greatly and span over a thousand years in time. Therefore, this leaves no question concerning the "omni" attributes of the metaphysical God. Furthermore, the contradictory nature of the metaphysical God was addressed by

Augustine and confirmed in Hegel. Also, as demonstrated, the appeal to a higher cause

was established as early as Augustine and later confirmed in Kant's discussion of God as

a moral foundation for humanity. Finally, the metaphysical God served as the mediator

for humanity through His creative power and supreme omnipresence in all areas of

human existence. So God's nature was well established in this study.

Next, the human drive to create God was based in the theories of Freud and

Lacan. Freud declares, "God was the exalted father, and the longing for the father was the

root of the need for religion" (*Future Illusion* 22). With Freud, humans birthed God out

of the father and son rivalry. Humans also create God out of the fear and guilt (castration,

for example) attached to this primeval conflict as well as the conflict with the natural

world, itself. Freud confirms, "A man makes the forces of nature not simply into persons

. . . [He] gives them the character of the father . . . [and] he turns them into gods" (17).

The father represents the projection of the perfect leader and protector in the sky first

intimated in the totem animal. God also represents the single ultimate and supreme being

to be both feared and admired. So humans created God as the highest being out of fear,

guilt, and the drive toward realizing perfection.

Lacan extends Freud by utilizing Sausseurian linguistics as well as incorporating

the concept of the mirror stage in human psychosexual development. His concept of

creatio ex nihilio illustrates the entrance of the word from the primordial Real to the

Symbolic register of human subjectivity. Therefore, humans spoke God into existence

from the pre-Symbolic nothingness. By analogy Baudrillard explains that computer

generated images (cgi) "emerge *ex nihilio* from numerical calculation and the computer"

(*Why Hasn't Everything Disappeared* 45). Like the computer generated image, which has

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no other referent than itself as a master signifier, God emerges from this same primordial void. The Imaginary register of human subjectivity houses the ideal ego generated during the mirror stage. The ideal ego is the "omni" God projected by humans, but unattainable in the Symbolic realm.

After establishing the psychological motivation for the human creation of the metaphysical God and the attributes of that specific God, this discussion focused on the advent of a new technological God from the method of reason, which was employed to prove the existence of the metaphysical God as well as to describe the nature of that God. As was explained, this method eventually leads to the death of God because the being itself could no longer hold up to the dictates of reason. This was illustrated by the assertions about God from Descartes, Kant, and Hegel. Therefore, a new God was born; one that could survive and thrive within the bounds of reason and the rising scientific method. Through applied science, advanced technology became the mediator of all human activity. Eventually, a clear candidate for the replacement God manifested itself with Google, a technological God with all the attributes of the metaphysical God.

After comprehensively outlining the psychological motives for creating God, the specific attributes of God, the use of reason to explain God, and, finally, the death of God, the next logical step was to establish the new God. The new God is a technological God. This new God is Google. To argue this point, this study examined how Google carries the same "omni" attributes of the metaphysical God through its creations that proliferate globally. As explained in detail, they include all parts of Google ecosystem, such as Gmail, YouTube, Photos, Home, Assistant, Earth, and Android OS. Also, this study showed that Google is contradictory in nature, which contributes to its moral claim

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of aiming for higher causes despite obvious problems. This was exhaustively argued with the various "charitable" technological donations (and inventions) such as Chromebooks for the Google school, balloons for refugee internet access, drones for food delivery, robotic limbs for the lame, and driverless cars for safety. Finally, with all of these services, Google serves as the ultimate mediator for all human activity. It is in every single human action globally.

Implications

One obvious implication from this study involves the potential of a completely homogenized global structure in the image of Google. Therefore, the object mass would serve as the extensions of the computer machinery through its own inertia. One may think of scenes from Fritz Lang's 1927 film *Metropolis* where humans are part of the interworking of industrial machinery.

Figure 33- Screen Capture from *Metropolis*.

But the image from *Metropolis* would prove inaccurate to the potential submission to global technological engagement. More appropriate images look like these:

Figures 34, 35, 35- Images taken from *BBC News*, *Thailand Business News*, and Young

Persons of Manchester University, respectively.

The humans in *Metropolis* can go home from the factory and end the labor for the day,

but the humans in a Google world cannot. Moreover, the individual role of consumption

and production occur simultaneously to reinforce the algorithmic foundation of global

life. This occurs in the assimilation of constant leisure and constant labor. Humans may

be involved with labor for their particular jobs with Google as a mediator. But they also

labor for Google as they perform mandatory leisure. Baudrillard discusses this concept.

He writes, "The apparent division into working time and leisure time, the latter ushering

in the transcendent sphere of liberty is a myth" (*Consumer Society* 155), because ". . . it

faithfully reproduces all the mental and practical constraints which are those of

productive time and subjugated daily life" (156). In the future homogenizing of human

life, the object mass will perform constant labor by use of the various technological

objects produced and proliferated by Google under the guise of leisure.

Baudrillard uses the term "technological hegemony" to refer to global technology

(*Agony of Power* 79). He notes that hegemony goes beyond simply the power of the

master over the slave. Rather, echoing Foucault, he implies that hegemony occurs when

the "emancipated slave internalizes the master," (59) and that "after voluntary servitude .

. . one could now speak of involuntary complicity, consensus, and connivance with the

World Order by everything that seems to oppose it" (60). Basically, this hegemony

means that the most critical individual or group must function within the technological framework; and within the framework, the critical (or radical) dimension of the individual or group dissolves or absorbs into the entire structure.

As evidence, one can look to political rallies confirmed on Google Calendar or the video of a radical speech on YouTube. In McLuhan terms, the medium is the message. YouTube is the message. Google Calendar is the message. Android OS on the smartphone is the message. Google Docs is the message. Google Home is the message and so on. Essentially, the global "involuntary complicity" of the object mass manifests in the *fact* that extremists from all sociopolitical persuasions unite in the use and proliferation of Google media. Both reinforce the technological hegemony. The communist and the fascist can shake hands in the church of Google. Finally, the term "involuntary" does not mean that the mass participates against their will, but rather that the choice to volunteer their engagement with advanced technology does not exist; it is a requirement, and that is what makes it hegemonic.

Future Research

To push this logic to its farthest limit, research that connects the death of the metaphysical God to the eventual or even inevitable death of the technological God serves mention. In context, will Google die the same death as the metaphysical God? Will Google die because rationalism pushes its logic to the edge of viability? How will this happen? Again, the metaphysical God died because the method employed to verify His nature and existence eliminated Him from the possible. Therefore, will the scientific rationalism, in terms of technological development, eventually eliminate Google? Will it implode and collapse upon itself?

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Two possibilities exist. Baudrillard alludes to both. The first only tenuously

connects to the scientific rationalism. It involves conscious rebellion. Baudrillard writes,

"We are not succumbing to oppression or exploitation, but of profusion and

unconditional care, to the power of those who make sovereign decisions about our well-

being. From there, revolt has a different meaning; it . . . [targets] permissiveness,

tolerance, excessive transparency, the Empire of Good" (*Agony of Power* 88). As

catalogued earlier, Google overwhelms with its global goodness in the name of global

unity and a higher cause. This goodness involves total oversight in the best interest of the

entire object mass, regardless. It resides in the total inclusion of all "diversity" into the

collective Google ecosystem where permissiveness and tolerance (race, religion, gender,

etc.) and transparency (social media, data collection) abound as the central concepts of

good. Initially, the rebellion occurs as a revolt against this "goodness." It later evolves

into "the only impossible revolution . . . one that is even inconceivable to reason . . . the

revolution against machines" (89). This revolution occurs as a regression to a form of

tribalism that expels the sameness of forced diversity within the Google ecosystem

(machine). Machine as both literal and metaphor. It is a revolt that breaks the entire

global project of the "good."

The other death of Google is informed directly by the logical endpoint of

scientific rationalism and aligns with the death of the metaphysical God. Essentially,

when human activity becomes exclusively mechanical, the human ideal ego is realized.

But the paradox of this realization is elimination. Google's media (its technology) aims to

build a utopian globe free of all (human) error. Again, Baudrillard discusses this scenario.

He writes, "Humanity, confronted with its own divinized model, with the realization of

its own ideal, collapses" (82). Then adds, "Human beings have become the weak link in technological processes . . . the passage into electronic calculation, to engineering and computerization is disastrous . . . [because] it implies the disappearance of every [human] subject . . . in favor of operational mechanics and the total deresponsibilization of mankind" (82). By its logic, if Google continues to operate in its normal mode with its basic goals, it will create a global elimination of the human. Therefore, without the human, the existence of Google becomes irrelevant, a non-factor. To refer back to the Lacan's *creatio ex nihilio*, without the human, the word cannot enter to ignite the primordial real into the Symbolic realm. Without the human, Google disappears.

Google as the ideal ego, as the aim of the subject, totally characterized by "omni" attributes, loses its paradoxical referent, the unideal human. Baudrillard summarizes this condition, as he writes, "If it is characteristic of living beings not to fulfill all their potentialities, it is of the essence of technical objects to exhaust all of theirs and to deploy them . . . despite human beings," and ". . . at the end of this irresistible process, leading to a perfectly objectified universe . . . there is no subject any longer; there is no one there to see it. That world no longer has need of us, nor of our representation" (*Why Hasn't Everything Disappeared* 34). An example of this possible eventuality involves the computer program that defeats the video game through algorithmic calculation. Technology Journalist Aaron Souppouris reports that "Artificial intelligence learns Mario level in just thirty-four attempts." Three elements of this report deserve a brief analysis. First, humans, by use of their rational faculties, initiate their own death. Obviously, this correlates to the death of the metaphysical God. Second, which relates to Baudrillard's assertions, the software must fulfill its potential by nature. It will succeed through

lightning fast calculation. Last, the role of the human may be to watch in wonder as the computer solves the game in superhuman fashion, but the technical algorithm carries no concern for the human. The implications of this final element are evident. Google calculates itself to death.

To conclude, Nietzsche asks the vital question that Google, by example, has answered. Nietzsche reflects, "Assuming . . . that we could not use any metaphysical explanations of the only world known to us, how would we then look upon men and things?" (*Human, All too Human* 38). Google answers, "To organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful" ("Google Company Mission"). To put it in Foucault's words, Google "supervises every instant . . . [and] compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, [and] excludes" (*Discipline and Punish* 183). In 1878, Nietzsche asks, "For according to historical probability, it is quite likely that men at some time will become skeptical about this whole subject of [metaphysics]. So one must ask the question: how will human society take shape under the influence of such an attitude?" (*Human, All too Human* 38). This study attempted to explain the shape that human society took, since 1878, because of the death of the metaphysical and the advent of the scientific. In the future, an extension of this study will analyze the death of Google.

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