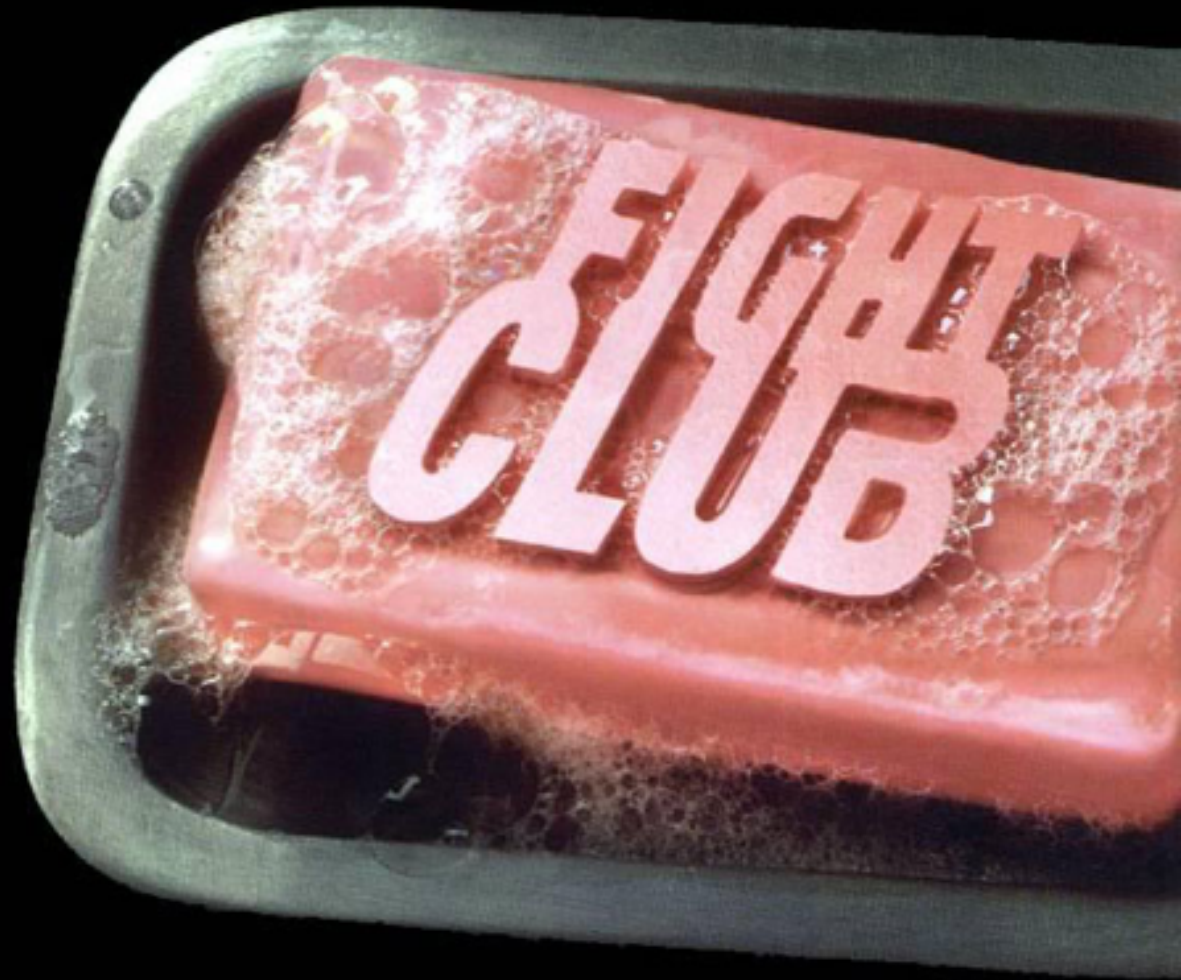
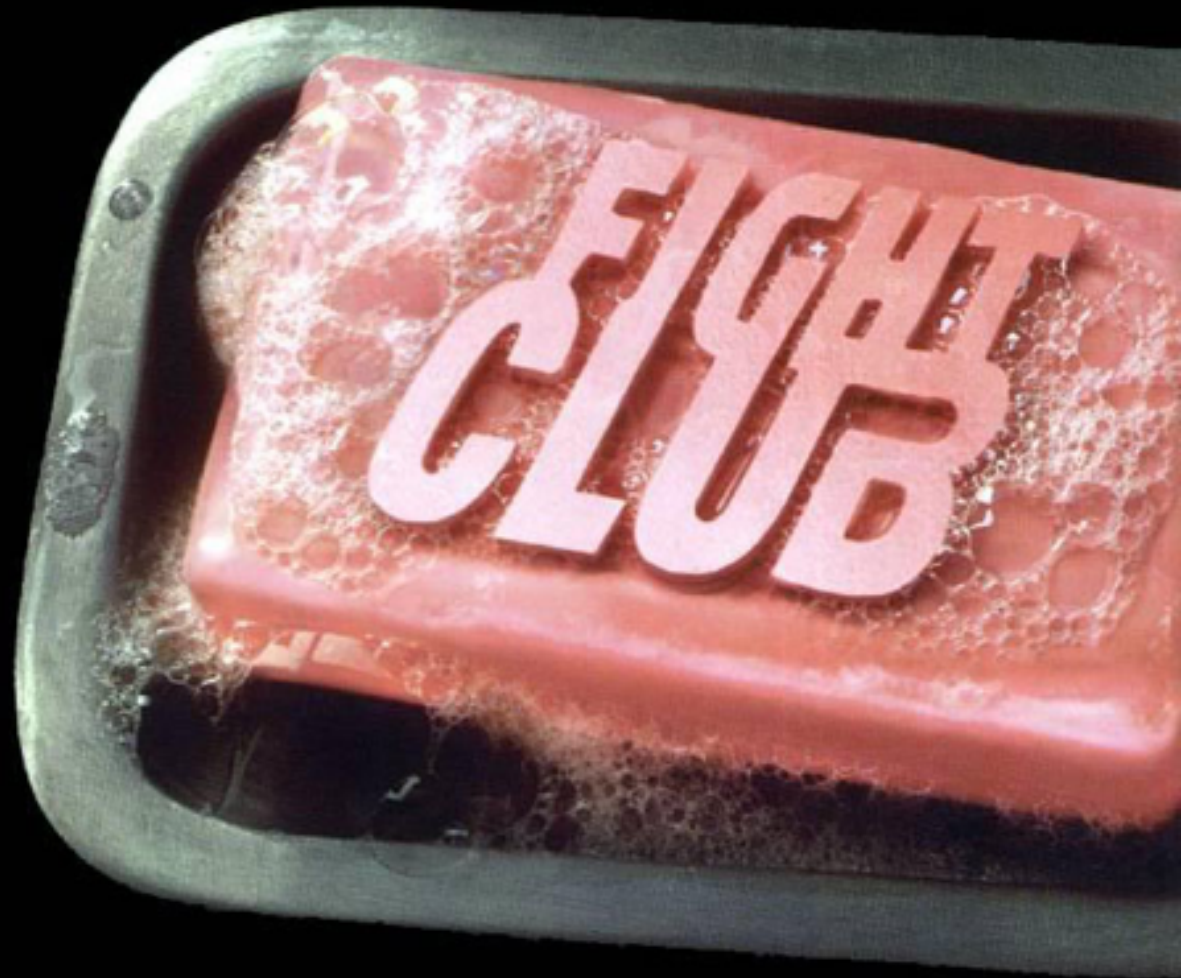


MARX.
NIETZSCHE.
FREUD.



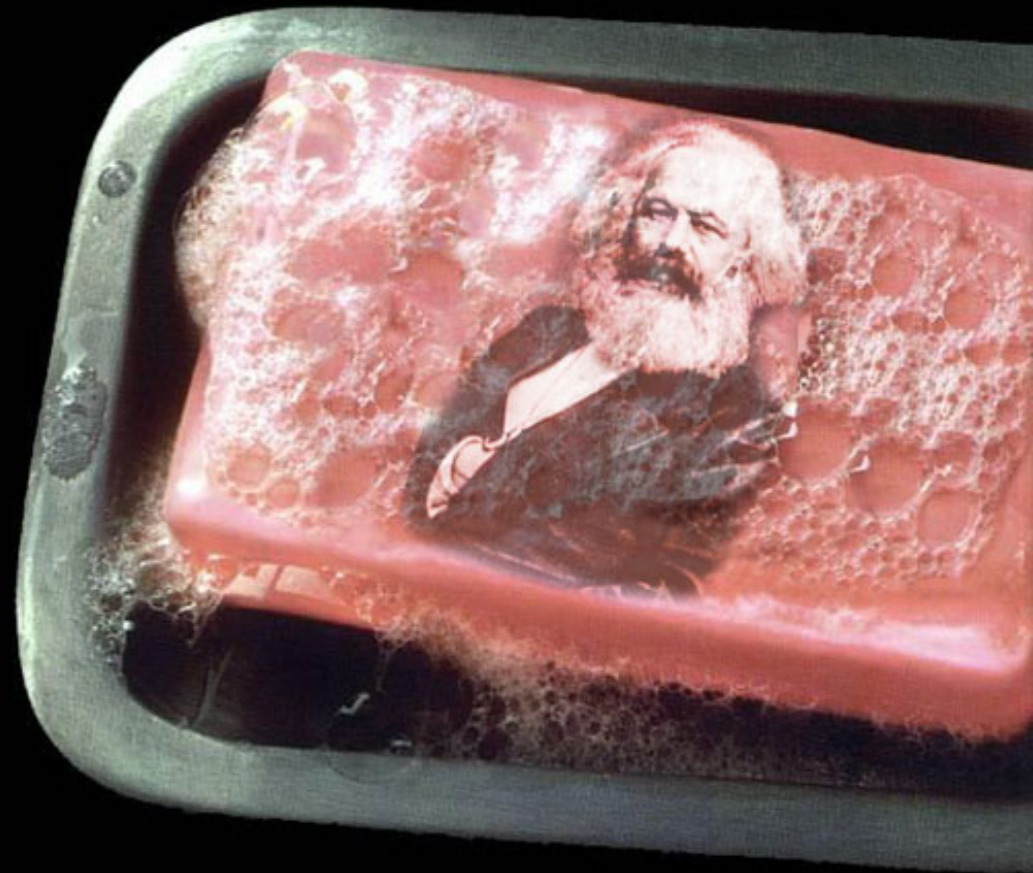
Fight Club & Modernism

or, why you have to read Marx, Nietzsche and Freud (and a little Darwin wouldn't hurt) in order to understand *Fight Club*



Karl Marx (1818-1883)

- ✦ What Marx gets right
 - ✦ Commodification (5)
 - ✦ Globalization (6-7)
 - ✦ "Innovation" (6, 7)
 - ✦ Alienation (6, 7, 11)
 - ✦ Capitalism co-opts every form of resistance, lifestyle (5, 11); fantasy relieves alienation



Commodification & Reification

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the feudal ties that bound man to his "natural superiors", and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, callous "cash payment". It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervor, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and has set up that single, unconscionable freedom – Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.

Globalization

The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connexions everywhere.

All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilized nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe.

Alienation

The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society...

Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed relations, with their train of ancient prejudices, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify.

Owing to the extensive use of machinery, and to the division of labor, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and, consequently, all charm for the workman. He becomes an appendage of the machine...

Progress

In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.

In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have commerce in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.

Co-optation

I said, "Simplify my PC."
They simplified my PC.
How you like me now?

 Windows 7

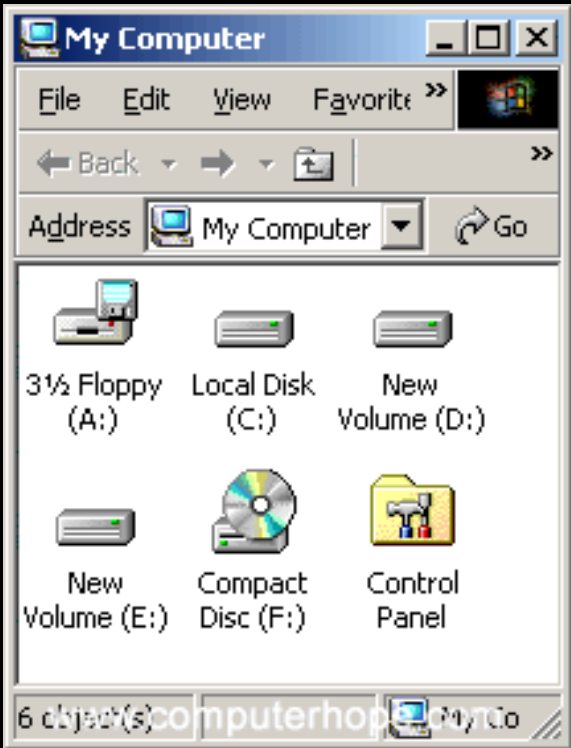
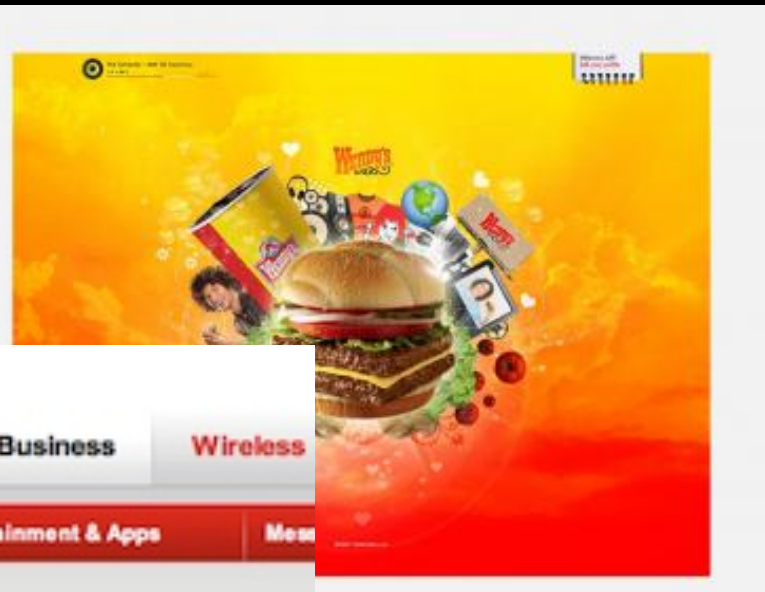


I'm a PC
and Windows 7
was my idea.

 Windows 7

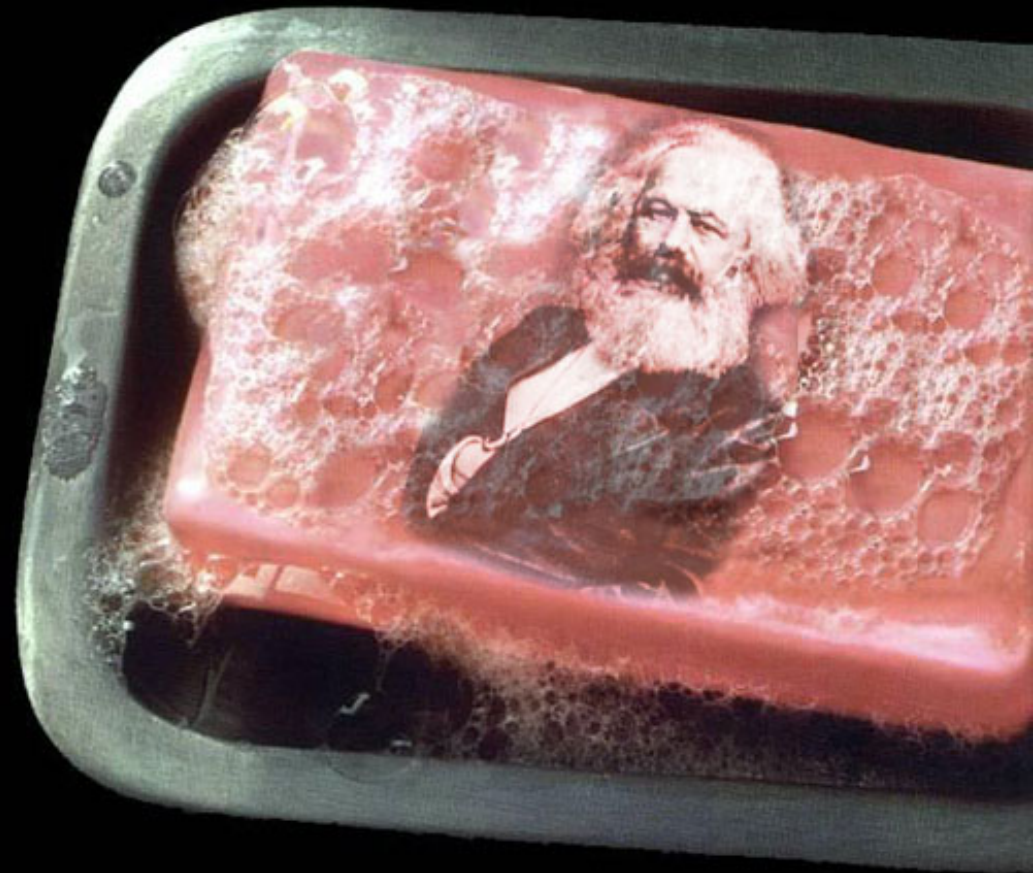


MyCarle



Karl Marx (1818-1883)

- ✦ Three explanations of how Marx goes wrong
 - ✦ Right-wing explanation
 - ✦ Left-wing explanation
 - ✦ Teleological and utopian



- ✦ “Laborers are a commodity like every other article of commerce” (commodification): “Everything’s a copy of a copy of a copy”
- ✦ “The need for a constantly expanding market” (globalization): “Microsoft Galaxy, Planet Starbucks”
- ✦ “Work has lost all individual character... appendage of the machine... monotonous” (alienation): “Tuesday: cornflower blue tie... de-prioritize current reports ... primary action items”



Darwin & Memes

- ✦ Natural variation & selection
 - ✦ Darwinian conditions ("struggle for existence")
 - ✦ Because animals naturally vary, some more fit for "Darwinian conditions," leave more offspring: speciation, evolution
 - ✦ Some will be less fit, and leave fewer; extinction



Darwin & Memes

- ✦ Dawkins' *memes* (1976)
 - ✦ General "replicators"
 - ✦ Ideas also reproduce—in human brains.
 - ✦ What determines success of idea not inherent *goodness*, but whether a good replicator; no teleology, no *value*



Darwin & Memes

Other successful memes include:

- ✦ Any urban legend
- ✦ computer viruses
- ✦ suicide bombings
- ✦ term limits
- ✦ school shootings
- ✦ memes
- ✦ dank memes

Early successful memes included:

- ✦ fire
- ✦ the wheel
- ✦ the meta-meme: language



The Start of a Meme



The Anti-Meme



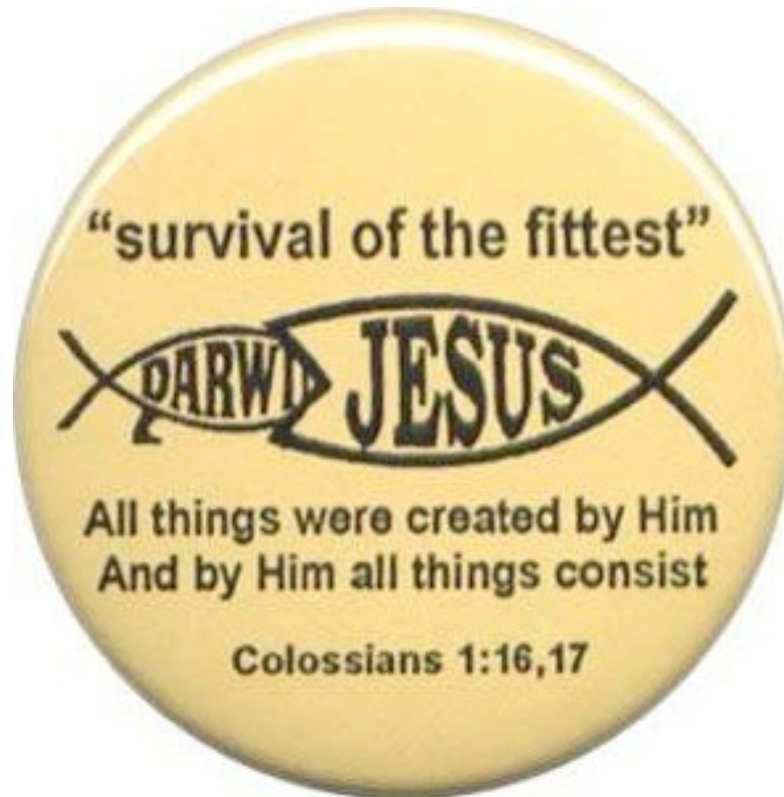
Competition



Reproduction increases fitness



Ineffective Competition



Variation



Self-reference



The memosphere of religious fish icons



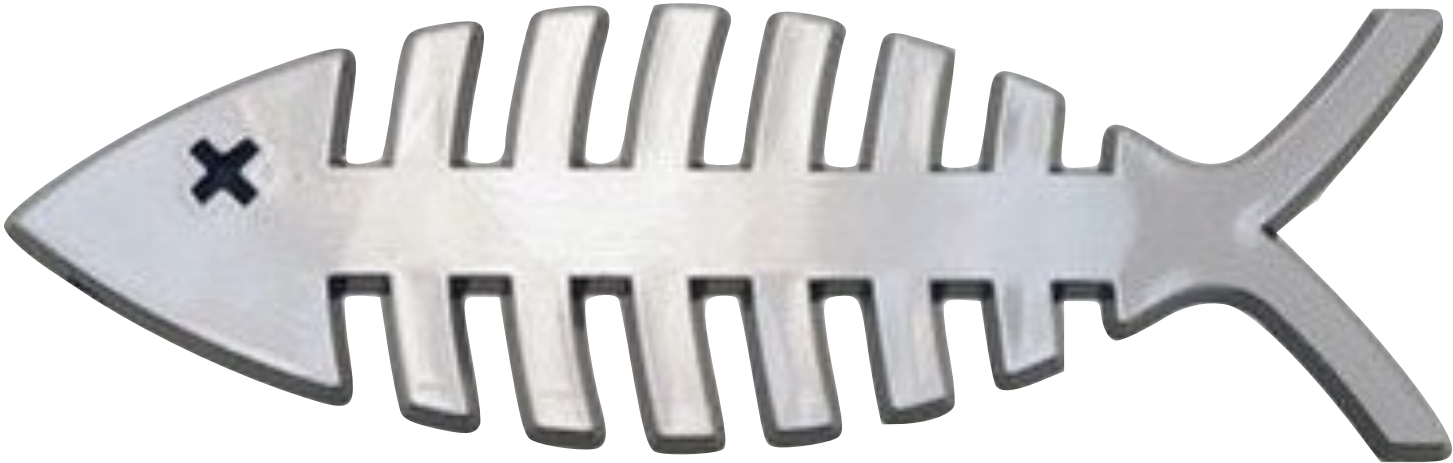
Fish icons made into actual vehicles



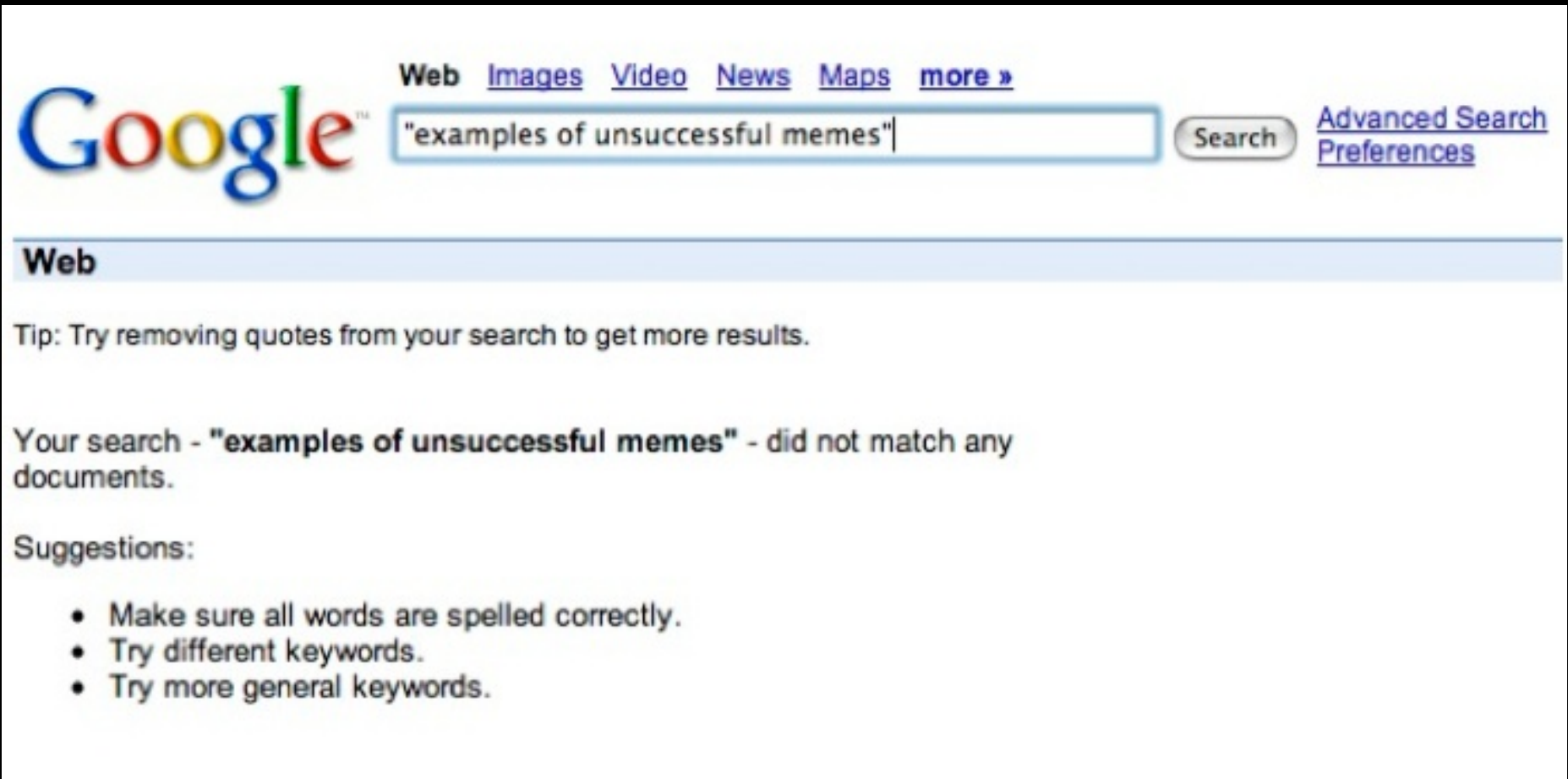
The active life of memes, or...



Extinction



Examples of Unsuccessful Memes



The image shows a screenshot of a Google search page. At the top left is the Google logo. To its right are navigation links: [Web](#), [Images](#), [Video](#), [News](#), [Maps](#), and [more »](#). Below these is a search input field containing the text "examples of unsuccessful memes". To the right of the input field is a "Search" button. Further right are links for [Advanced Search](#) and [Preferences](#). Below the search bar is a horizontal line, and under it, the word "Web" is displayed in a light blue bar. Below this bar, a tip reads: "Tip: Try removing quotes from your search to get more results." Below the tip, a message states: "Your search - **\"examples of unsuccessful memes\"** - did not match any documents." Below the message, the word "Suggestions:" is followed by a bulleted list of three items: "• Make sure all words are spelled correctly.", "• Try different keywords.", and "• Try more general keywords."

Google™ [Web](#) [Images](#) [Video](#) [News](#) [Maps](#) [more »](#)

[Advanced Search](#)
[Preferences](#)

Web

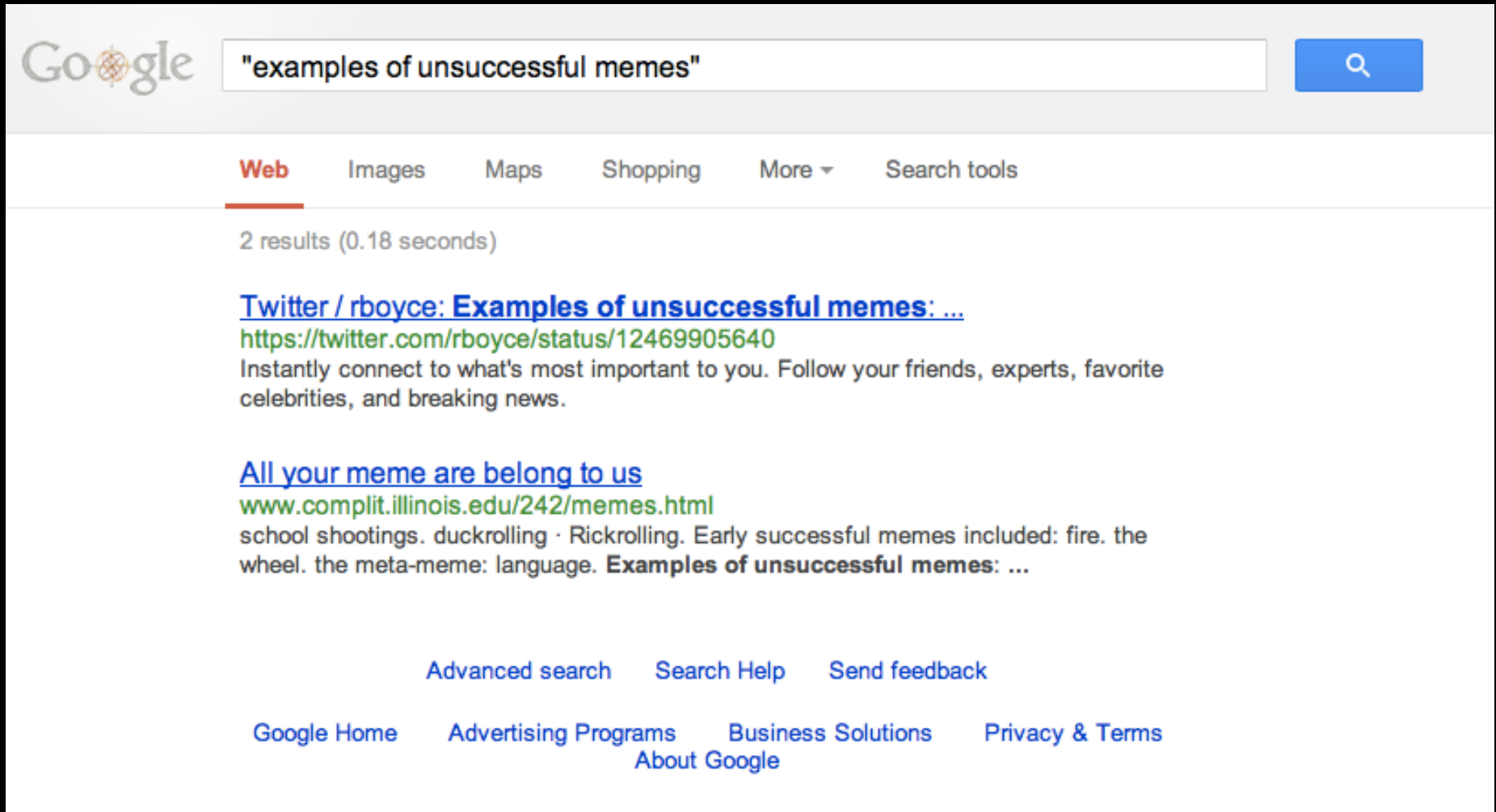
Tip: Try removing quotes from your search to get more results.

Your search - **"examples of unsuccessful memes"** - did not match any documents.

Suggestions:

- Make sure all words are spelled correctly.
- Try different keywords.
- Try more general keywords.

Examples of Unsuccessful Memes



The image shows a screenshot of a Google search interface. The search bar contains the text "examples of unsuccessful memes". Below the search bar, the "Web" tab is selected. The search results show two entries. The first entry is a link to a Twitter post by user rboyce, titled "Examples of unsuccessful memes: ...". The second entry is a link to a website titled "All your meme are belong to us", which discusses school shootings, duckrolling, and Rickrolling, and lists early successful memes like "fire" and "the wheel".

Google

"examples of unsuccessful memes"

Web Images Maps Shopping More Search tools

2 results (0.18 seconds)

[Twitter / rboyce: Examples of unsuccessful memes: ...](#)
<https://twitter.com/rboyce/status/12469905640>
Instantly connect to what's most important to you. Follow your friends, experts, favorite celebrities, and breaking news.

[All your meme are belong to us](#)
www.complit.illinois.edu/242/memes.html
school shootings. duckrolling · Rickrolling. Early successful memes included: fire. the wheel. the meta-meme: language. **Examples of unsuccessful memes: ...**

Advanced search Search Help Send feedback

Google Home Advertising Programs Business Solutions Privacy & Terms
About Google

Examples of Unsuccessful Memes



"examples of unsuccessful memes"



All

Images

News

Videos

Shopping

More

Settings

Tools

1 result (0.34 seconds)

^[PDF] [Utilising social media for HIV/STI prevention ...](https://ecdc.europa.eu/.../Utilising-social-media-for-programmes-to-prevent-HIV-STI-...) - ECDC - Europa EU

<https://ecdc.europa.eu/.../Utilising-social-media-for-programmes-to-prevent-HIV-STI-...> ▼

Jul 13, 2017 - Further **examples of unsuccessful memes**. Source: quickmeme.com [homepage on the Internet]. Knightdale, North Carolina, USA; 2017 [cited ...


In order to show you the most relevant results, we have omitted some entries very similar to the 1 already displayed.

If you like, you can [repeat the search with the omitted results included](#).

Examples of Unsuccessful Memes



Examples of Unsuccessful Memes



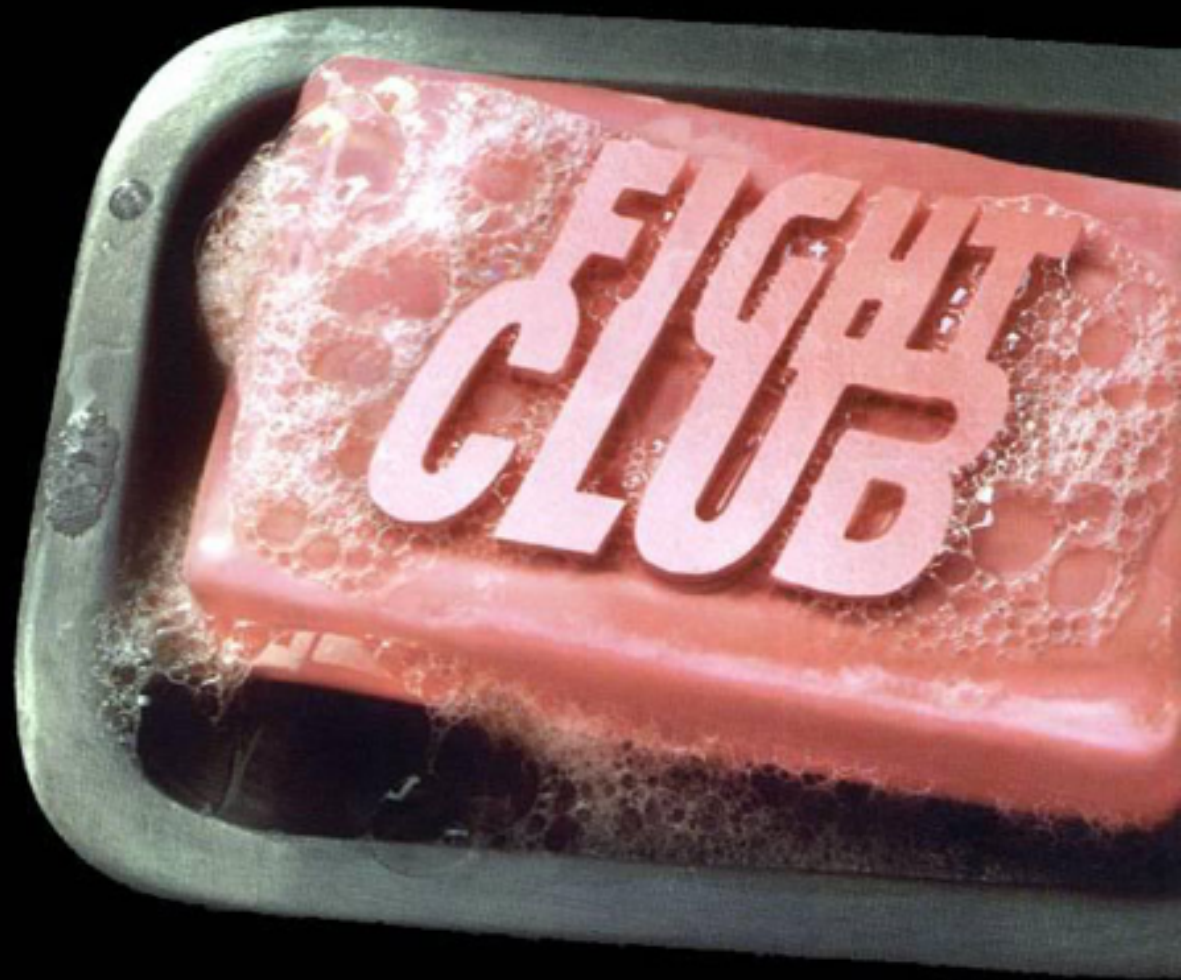
stop trying to make fetch happen.
it's not going to happen!

Mememes & *Fight Club*

- ✦ *Fight Club* as a meme
 - ✦ "The first rule of x is..."
- ✦ *Fight Club* depicts a struggle against *ideas*
 - ✦ Weak masculinity in an era of safety and comfort
 - ✦ Evolution has stopped because no Darwinian competition
 - ✦ Must restore vitality

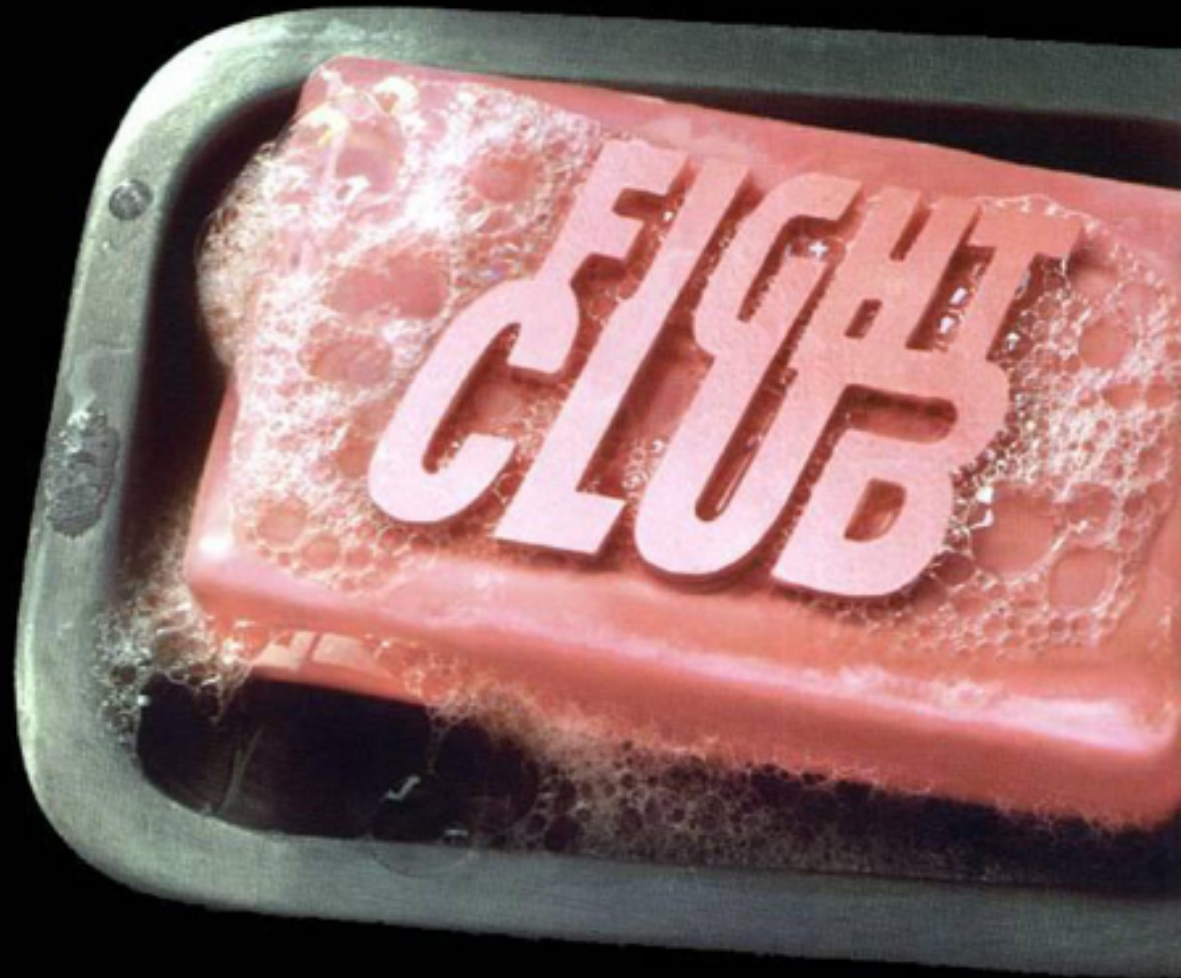


MARX.
NIETZSCHE.
FREUD.



Fight Club & Modernism

or, why you have to read Marx, Nietzsche and Freud (and a little Darwin wouldn't hurt) in order to understand *Fight Club*



Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)

- ✦ The origin of *morality*
 - ✦ At first, health, utility, power: good vs. bad
 - ✦ Aristocratic values (10)
 - ✦ Slave morality based on *ressentiment* (see 14-15)
 - ✦ Priestly mode hates power, creates "slave morality"



Aristocratic values:

Good:

Health

Power

Dominance

Action

Simplicity

Superficiality

Stupidity

Eagles

Bad:

Sickness

Weakness

Submission

Reaction

Complexity

Interiority

Cleverness

Lambs

Slave values:

Good:

Sickness
Weakness
Submission
Reaction

Complexity
Interiority
Cleverness

Lambs

Evil:

Health
Power
Dominance
Action

Simplicity
Superficiality
Stupidity

Eagles

Aristocratic values: ancient Rome

The knightly-aristocratic value judgments presupposed a powerful physicality, a flourishing, abundant, even overflowing health, together with that which serves to preserve it: war, adventure, hunting, dancing, war games, and in general all that involves vigorous, free, joyful activity.

Priest/slave values: Judea, Christ

The priestly mode of valuation presupposes, as we have seen, other things: it is disadvantageous for when it comes to war! As is well known, the priests are the *most evil enemies* – but why? Because they are the most impotent. It is because of their impotence that in them hatred grows to monstrous and uncanny proportions, to the most spiritual and poisonous kind of hatred. The truly great haters in world history have always been priests; likewise the most *ingenious* haters. Human history would be altogether too stupid a thing without the spirit that the impotent have introduced into it.

Ressentiment

The slave revolt in morality begins when *ressentiment* itself becomes creative and gives birth to values: the *ressentiment* of natures that are denied the true reaction, that of deeds, and compensate themselves with an imaginary revenge. While every noble morality develops from a triumphant affirmation of itself, slave morality from the outset says No to what is "outside," what is "different," what is "not itself"; and *this* No is its creative deed. This inversion of the value-positing eye – this *need* to direct one's view outward instead of back to oneself – is of the essence of *ressentiment*; in order to exist, slave morality always first needs a hostile external world.

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)

- ✦ Nietzsche is *radical*
 - ✦ Critique of fear and mediocrity (22-23), offers alternative: a subject beyond morality
 - ✦ Explicitly anti-democratic (30)
 - ✦ We are at the end point of morality; must go beyond good & evil



- ✦ “Don’t deal with it the way those dead people do” – move beyond safety, security; fear creates mediocrity
- ✦ “If our fathers bailed on us, what does that tell you about God?” – God is dead; no authority to tell us what is right
- ✦ “fuck damnation, fuck redemption” – a world beyond good and evil
- ✦ Losing everything = freedom

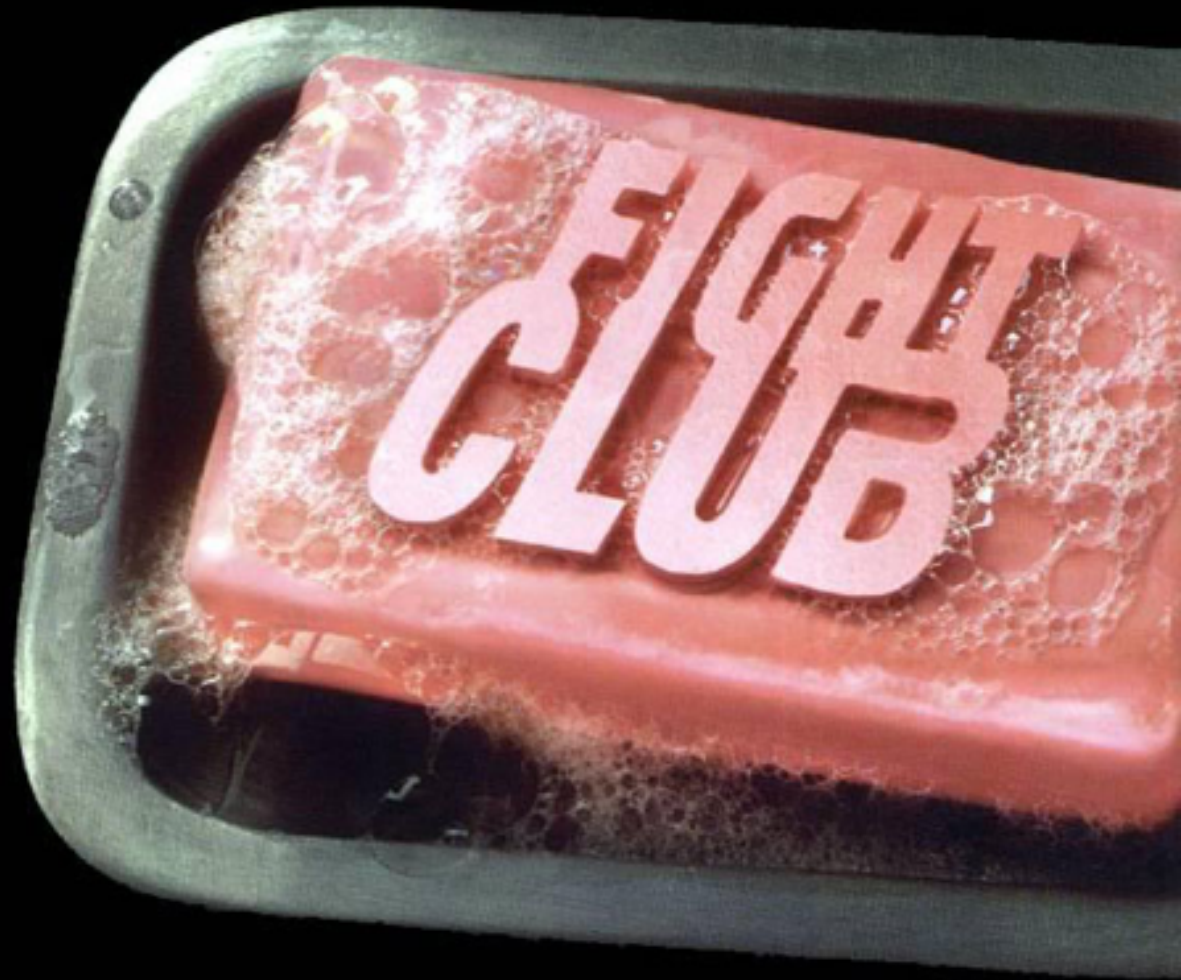


Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)

- ✦ No teleology? Aims “beyond good & evil”
- ✦ Messianic, does not define the beyond
- ✦ Joyous and humorous (the “gay science”); destructive but creative

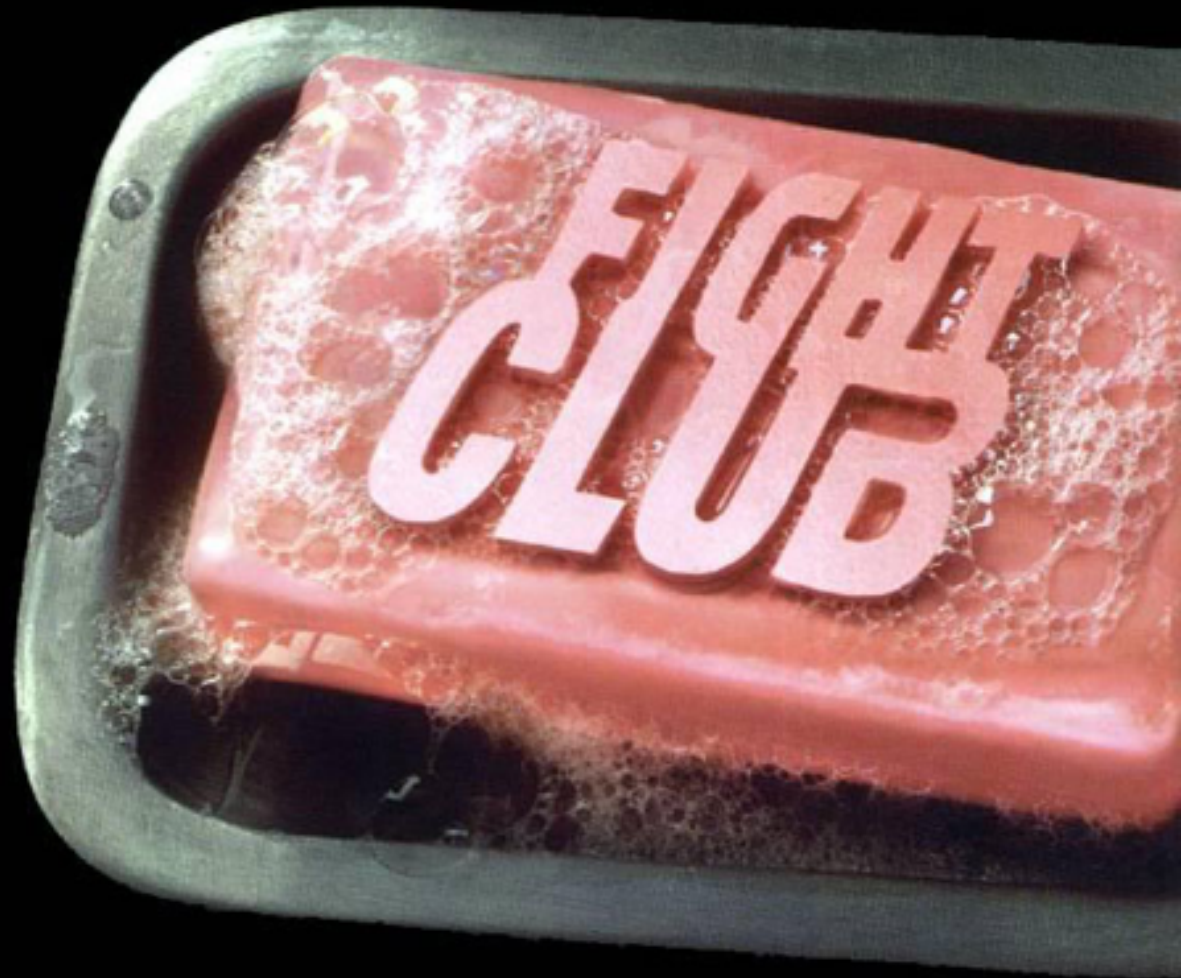


MARX.
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Fight Club & Modernism

or, why you have to read Marx, Nietzsche and Freud (and a little Darwin wouldn't hurt) in order to understand *Fight Club*



Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

- ✦ We are all Freudians
 - ✦ The Freudian slip; the “psychopathology of everyday life”
 - ✦ A Freudian slip—in bed; the “psychoanalytic stance”
 - ✦ The unconscious
 - ✦ We can’t have self-knowledge; I don’t know most authentic part of me



Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

- ✦ The Uncanny
 - ✦ *Heimlich is Unheimlich*
 - ✦ The familiar (home, family) conceals the unfamiliar ("family secrets" or "skeleton in the closet")
 - ✦ Unfamiliar conceals strangely familiar (projection)
 - ✦ Return of the repressed



Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

- ✦ Uncanny things:
 - ✦ the double, the *Doppelgänger* [17-19]
 - ✦ projection (23)
 - ✦ automata and dolls that come to life [9-15, 16]
 - ✦ involuntary repetition (21-22)



Uncanny Things: The Double



Uncanny Things: The Double

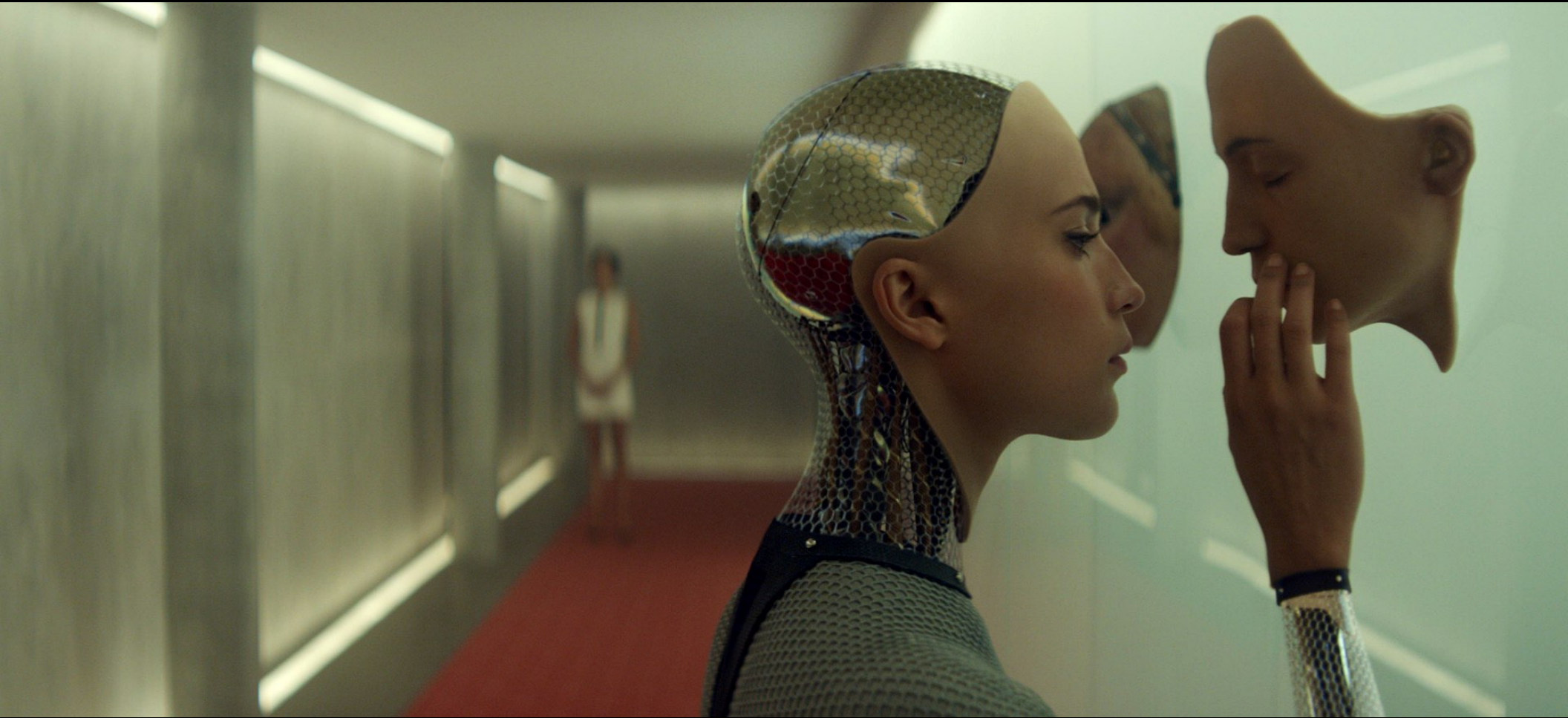


Uncanny Things: Automata

CHUCKY



Uncanny Things: Automata



The Uncanny: Projection

A patient once stayed in a space and benefitted greatly by it. He had the good sense, however, to attribute his improvement not to the therapeutic properties of the water, but to the situation of his room, which immediately adjoined that of a very accommodating nurse. So on his second visit to the establishment he asked for the same room, but was told that it was already occupied by an old gentleman, whereupon he gave vent to his annoyance in the words: 'I wish he may be struck dead for it.' A fortnight later the old gentleman really did have a stroke. My patient thought this an 'uncanny' experience.

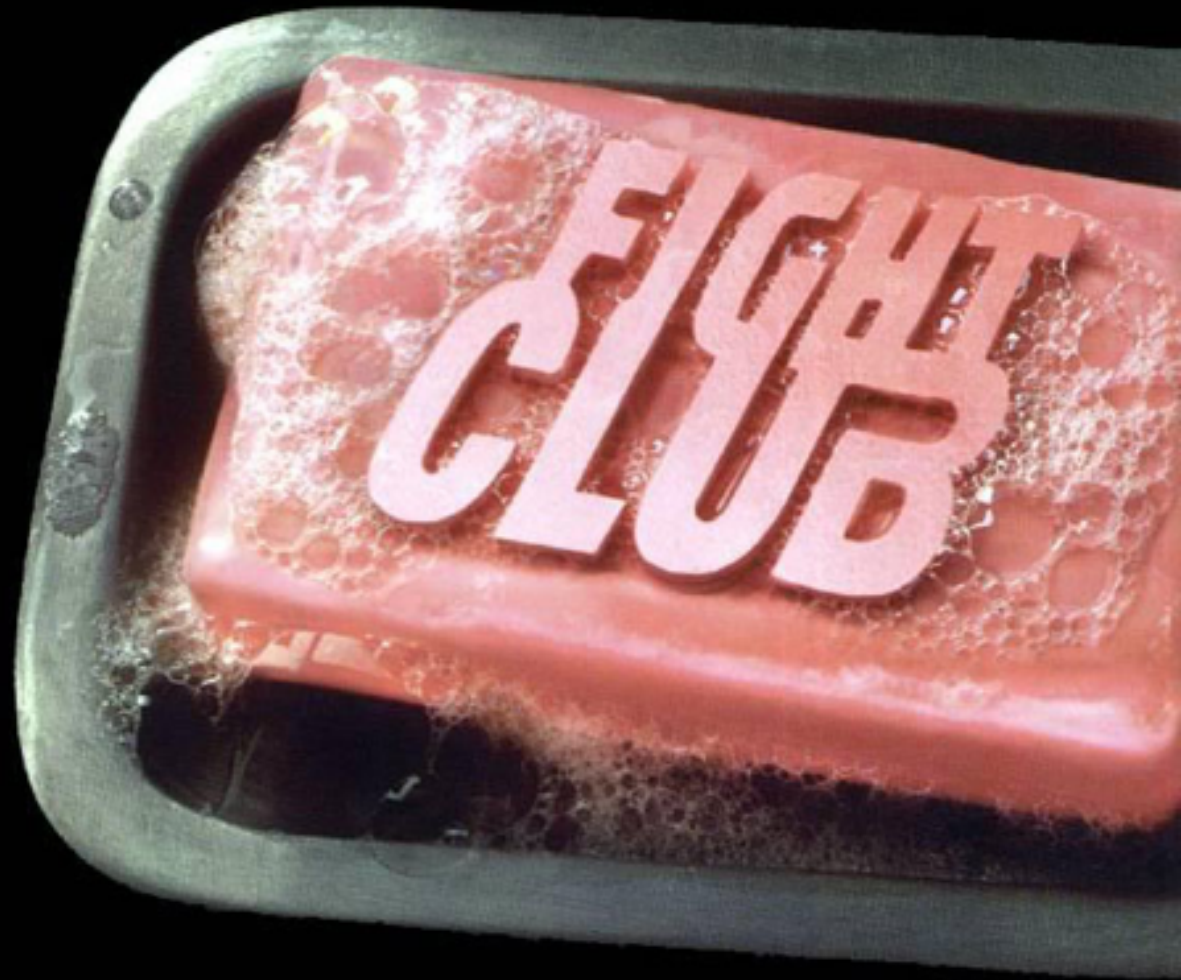
The Uncanny: Repetition

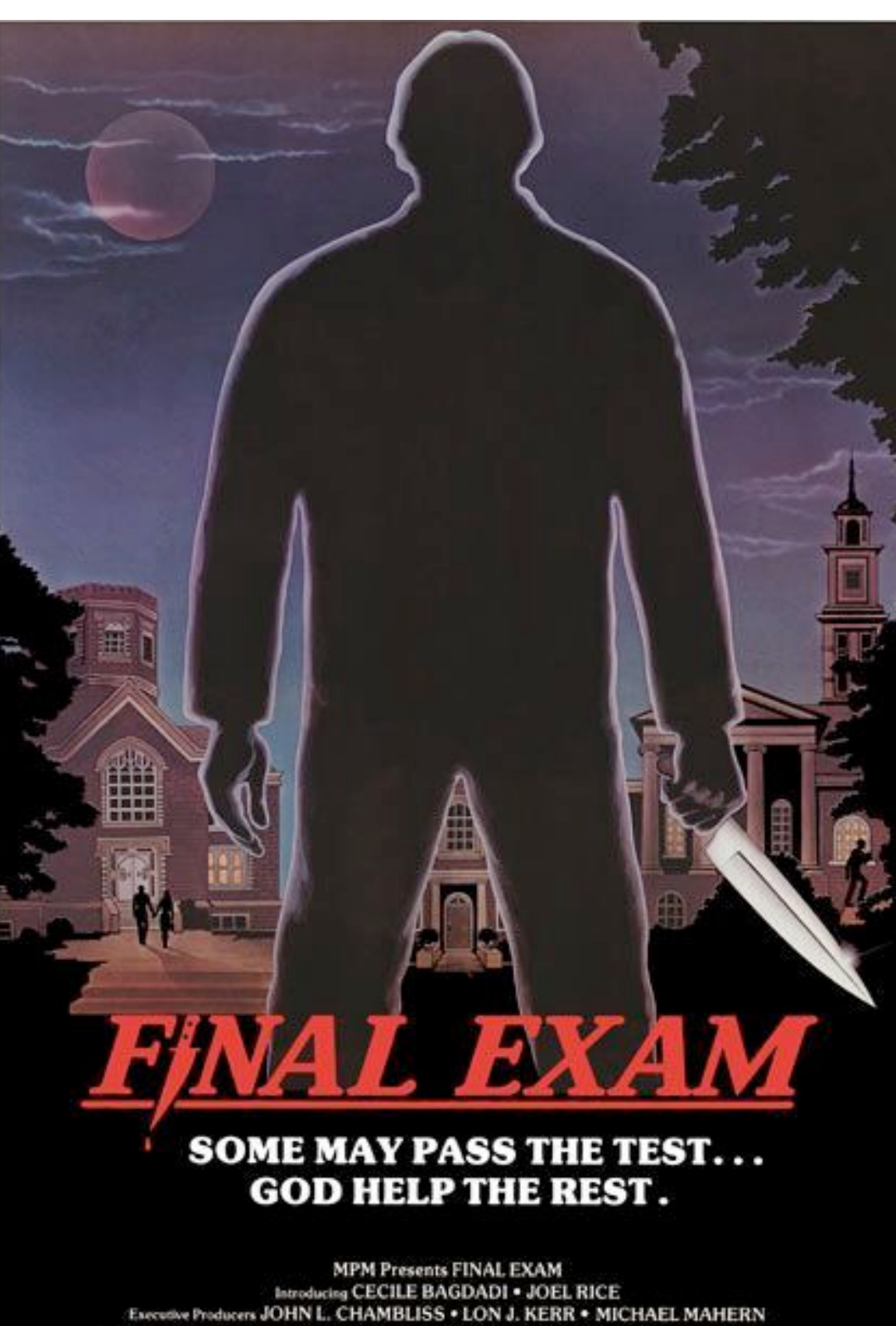
For instance, we naturally attach no importance to the event when we hand in an overcoat and get a cloakroom ticket with the number, let us say, 62; or when we find that our cabin on a ship bears that number. But the impression is altered if two such events, each in itself indifferent, happen close together – if we come across the number 62 several times in a single day, or if we begin to notice that *everything* which has a number – addresses, hotel rooms, compartments in railway trains – invariably has the same one, or at all events one which contains the same figures. We do feel this to be uncanny.

- ❖ “Do you know me?” “Who do you think I am?” “I’m not there!” – ‘Jack’ does not know himself; Freud wins, Socrates loses
- ❖ “All the ways you wish you could be: that’s me” – projection
- ❖ “People do it every day, talk to themselves, see themselves as they’d like to be” – the “psychopathology of everyday life”



MARX.
NIETZSCHE.
FREUD.





FINAL EXAM

.....

- Monday, May 6
- 7-10 PM
- Right in this room!
- 3 sections
 - Short answers to big questions
 - Short answers to small(er) questions
 - Identifications (sounds hard, but they are not)
- All material will be drawn from the readings (of course) and the PowerPoints that are on the course website

Section I: Answer with 4-5 sentences (refer to several important ideas, authors and texts). Answer all 4 questions (6 pts. each; 24 pts. total).

1. What vision of society does the “Enlightenment Project” promote?

Section II: Answer with 4-5 sentences. Answer all 10 questions (5 pts. each; 50 pts. total).

1. Briefly describe some of Whitman's principal poetic themes and techniques.

Section III: Identifications. Give author and title, if any. What features are typical of the author's style? Comment briefly on importance of passage. Answer 5 out of the 8 possible questions (5 pts. each; 25 pts. total).

1. I lost a world the other day.
Has anybody found?
You'll know it by the row of stars
Around its forehead bound.

Final question: A completely trivial question drawn from the lectures, possibly not from the PowerPoints (1 pt. each; 1 pt. total).

1. What tie did Prof. Rushing wear on the day of the second Frankenstein lecture, the one about Frankenstein movies?
