

# Accounting for Infinite Cruelty

*Michael Eddy*

Losses: in the winter of 2014, somebody broke into a friend's house where we were keeping all our stuff. They stole my computer and hard drive, most of my identity documents

Losses	Gains	Total
a manager at the bank would not approve my signature. It didn't match the one on record. My signature changes all the time, I pleaded with her. This did not mollify		
	Economics is in are	
	something from nothing: The credit cards portrayed in the video "Infinite Cruelty, for nothing," were obtained for free, without previous contractual relations to the companies furnishing them. No annual fees. Abiogenetic beings, erupting from the depths, crying for the world	
	plastic oozing body dream: the melting of diverse objects into coalescence and indistinctness; a sort of ludic, material sadism invested in abject pornographic viscosity & blissful ignorance; the cream of oblivion	
scaphism gloss: force feeding the subject with milk and honey & smearing it on the subject's body; jamming the subject into a hollow log in a swamp; subject becomes permeated with insect larvae who burrow through skin; subject dies of madness. Very tantalizing! However, it is technically impossible to impregnate an infra-thin being with cheesy syrup		
watching the video, mother said the operators sounded like they dealt with the harasser with dignity. Mother thought the intention was to make the individuals look bad. Mother did not appreciate that they are spokespersons: the bodies for bodiless beings. (Mother did not read Luc Boltanski.) And did not recognize that the nature of the relationship is always		

Losses	Gains	Total
uneven. Even though mother had warned: don't mess with these people. They can make your life hell		
	infinite cruelty: snuff films for that which cannot die	
	self-reflexivity in art work is an unstable currency insofar as, hypothetically, too much can be revealed, for safety, for taste. But it is an anterior form of value accessible to the artist, appearing curiously enough as surplus value, especially when considering the socially oriented and relational aesthetics artists like myself who leave it untapped ;^)	
a gallerist asked, why not get a black card, like the American Express Centurion, and torture that? These are notorious for the card-as-status-symbol, for the dream of unlimited liquidity and privilege. The asshole organizer of 2017's botched Fyre Festival on the Bahamian island of Great Exuma (not rapper Ja Rule, the other one) had cut his teeth in the business of exclusivity by offering his friends an ultra exclusive black card, Magnises, and hangout NY townhouse. But the impulse wasn't to destroy something of great luxury, a form of symbolic sacrifice — the impulse was to make something from nothing. Perhaps that assumes too much, though — that there is not a vetting somewhere, a back door to my privilege that the corporation accesses at will		
	for a related piece <i>Money Wall Drawing (cloud over Malpensa)</i> , the same gallerist managed to obtain several "Bin Ladens": 500 euro notes, supposedly as scarce as the infamous terrorist,	

Losses	Gains	Total
	and beloved by international scofflaws. As the ink from paper money is rubbed and transferred onto walls to produce the drawing, the notes become worn, and their authenticity may be called into question	
the vulgarity of jamming economics into every hole, reduction of dialectics to an accounting ledger		
	in <i>Untitled Project for Pier 17</i> (1971) Vito Acconci, standing in a ruined warehouse at the end of a pier, offered to reveal to the audience "something that has not been exposed before and that would be disturbing for me to make public." This work introduced into its logic personal liability due to sharing of information. Similarly, Infinite Cruelty theoretically puts its author at risk because of the identity theft it invites. A solid art history reference, updated for the age of the roaming data body	
what risk! Sociologically speaking, the odds of an audience member trying to make Amazon purchases in my name are slim to none. I am more a risk to myself, by forgetting to pay bills and accruing interest. The claim of risk neglects other experiences of vulnerability; the video is a mere vehicle for auto-portraiture		
no matter how many silly voices one puts on, the corporation knows who you are		
	the free credit card is a veiled wager on usage and misstep. The operators slather their service with insurance offers and upgrade enticements. Subverting them is a small means of	

Losses	Gains	Total
	recuperating value, despite the obvious advantage they have over you	
for nothing: Iconoclasm is the spurt of impotence. Lashing out at the material details of financial capital is akin to criticizing the tone of polish on the overlord's toenails. Nothing is achieved		
	really tricking the corporation, overturning the rules of engagement & redefining exchange toward mutualism: when have these ever been the yardstick for artworks? By lurking in the interstices of calculative rationality, can we not embody the ambivalence in our desire to truly extricate ourselves from its grips, which is as technological and even as linguistic as it is the subfunction of hypercapitalist abstraction? Can't irony, deployed in a spirit of solidarity and sympathy, return a share of agency to our column?	
		TOTAL: The house always wins