Ethics within Postmodernism

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The Value of Decon/Postmodernism Criticism

- Breaking down Universalism
  - Deconstruction p. 94
  - Recognizing Inter-dependency or contingency
- Breaking down the Self
  - Foucault
  - Nealon: "Any ethical system that undersatnds the other as simply like the self will be unable to respond adequately to the other's uniqueness and singularity; indeed, such a reduction amount to a kind of subjective colonialism, where all the other's desires are reduce to the desires of the "home country."

The Value of Decon/Postmodernism Criticism

- The Enlightenment subject, colonial self & Hegel
  - So the Enlightenment subject, "in order to find himself," turns not inward to the tautological unity of the cogito, but rather outward to the diversity of the other(s); such a subject "loses himself" in order to secure the higher dynamism of an evolving, adventuring appropriation that can confront and conquer ever-newer forms of otherness.
  - Deconstruction p. 93
- The Hegelian Cogito
  - *I desire to appropriate, therefore I am*

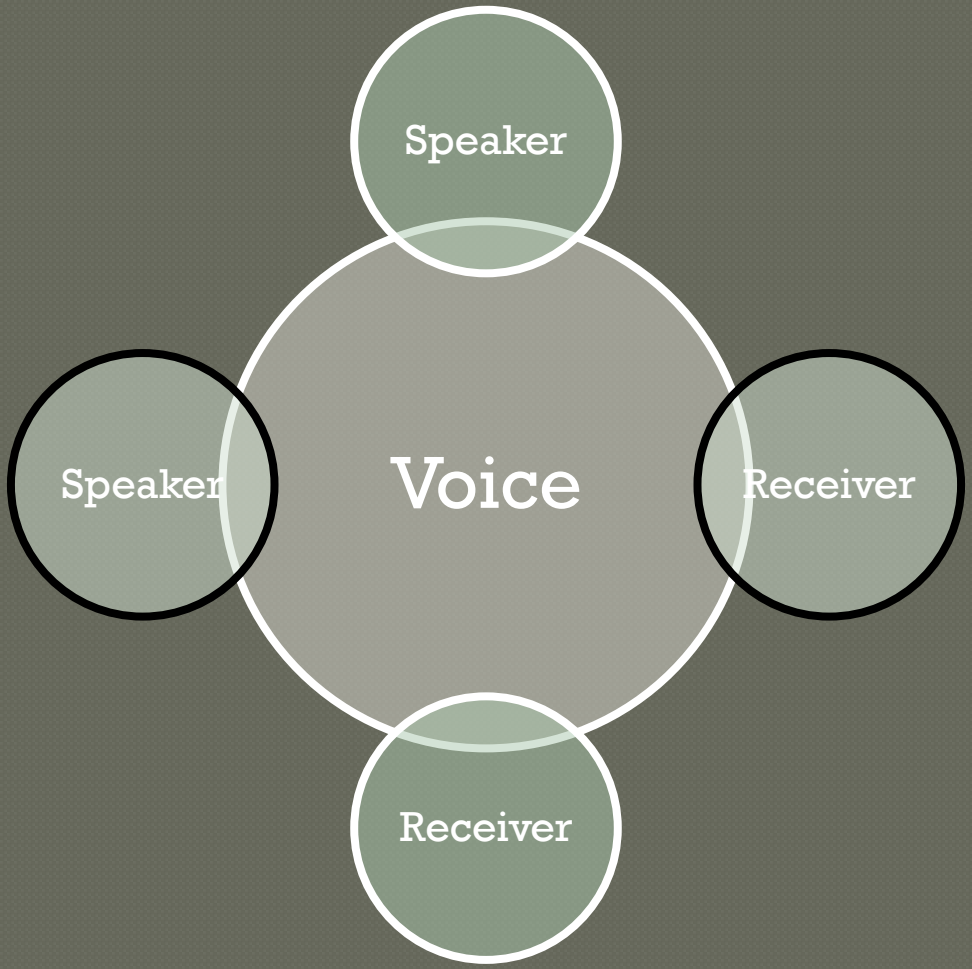
Postmodern Ethics

- Early post-structuralists and postmodernists vs. late postmodernists
  - Death of the subject
  - How far do we take deconstruction? (Derrida & diferance, or Foucault and an author)
- "Ethical platitudes are worth little unless they translate into material actions and obligations among subjects in specific contexts. In short, it seems that ethics can't live with the subject, but can't live without it either"

Postmodern Ethics

- Dialogical ethics- Voice
  - "Voice becomes such an attractive concept because it is not tied essentially to one point of view; rather, one must learn to find one's own voice and hear the voice of the other within a common social context. It is precisely in the movements of seeking, listening and answering that intersubjective ethics of response might be born. And this points to the distinctly ethical character of dialogics: if social space is understood as a rich dialogue of voices rather than a fight for recognition and domination, then the other is not necessarily a menacing or hostile force."

Dialogism



Questions and Concerns

- "Common social context"
  - Lyotard denies that intersubjectivity implies a already agreed upon set, of basic rules. Is this true?
  - Would such rules be an "amphitheatre"? Exclusivity?
    - Zizek & Haubermas- "They are involved in a pragmatic contradiction, since they violate the ethical norms which sustain their own speech community"

Questions and Concerns

- Zizek cont.- "What if that which appears as an inconsistency , as the failure to draw all the consequences from one's ethical attitude, is, on the contrary, its positive condition of possibility? What if such an exclusion of some form of otherness form the scope of our ethical concerns is consubstantial with the very founding gesture of ethical universality, so that the more universal our explicit ethic is, the more brutal the underlying exclusion is?
- Buddhist universal indifference-apathy?
- "The Christian motto "All men are brothers," also means that those who do not accept brotherhood *are not men*."

Questions and Concerns

- Zygmunt Bauman: "A postmodern ethics would be one that readmits the other as a neighbor, and ethics that recasts the Other as a the crucial character in the process through which the moral self comes into its own."
- When Freud and Lacan insist on the problematic nature of the basic Judeo-Christian injunction to "love thy neighbour," they are thus not just making the standard critico-ideological point about how every notion of universality is coloured by our particular values and thus implies secret exclusions; they are making a much stronger point on the incompatibility of the Neighbour with the very dimension of universality."
- "Being loved makes me feel directly the gap between what I am as a determinate being and the unfathomable X in me which causes love"

Brain explosion.