

Danyelle Graham

Topic: Desire and Psychoanalysis

Focusing Question: "How desire affected Voldemort psychologically and therefore lead to his overall demise?"

Storey, John. *Cultural Theory and Pop Culture: An Introduction*. Harlow, England: Pearson Longman, 2009. Print
According to Lacan we are born "into a condition of lack" where at first we were whole (The Real), but after encountering The Imaginary and The Symbolic we are no longer whole and therefore desire is the desire to become whole again (return to The Real). He says that we go through 3 stages. First we realize that there is another part of ourselves that's whole which is a result of the second stage where we start assigning meanings and therefore we are no longer in The Real but now The Symbolic. The third stage involves using "signifiers" to become whole again but they are constantly changing because it is impossible to become whole again.

According to Zizek, fantasy outlines our desires but doesn't not fill the void (make us whole). Fantasy also forms from experience. We are impressionable and aren't born knowing what we desire but rather for example he says that when don't know we want something until we see and when we do fantasies are formed. Desire regenerates through fantasy.

Belsey, Catherine. *Culture and the Real: Theorizing Cultural Criticism*. London: Routledge, 2005. Internet Source.
Lacan speaks The Thing about an "object of the drive" and the drives being sex and death. The Thing as he describes it is something "constructed retroactively, to occupy the space of pure loss that is left by the erasure of the real." He also speaks about object a. This is similar to The Thing but is more an object that can fulfill our desire and make us whole, it does not exist but we will look for it through everything we desire. For example falling in love. It is not the person we love but the object a that we think manifests inside of them. He also mentions that the real and object a should not be confused.

Deleuze's Conceptions of Desire (Journal Article)

Plato talks about desire as being classified either productive or to be acquired. If desire is something that needs to be acquired then it is a lack, "the lack of an object." Deleuze's take on desire is that it is productive. It is not something that is brought about because of a lack of an object but rather it is something that is lacking a subject. Desire is what makes us human and doesn't arise because we need something but rather desire "derives the needs." Deleuze describes desire as real and a positive process of production.

These sources, so far, are the ones that I want to base my thesis on. I want to use Lacan and Zizek's theories of desire because they can relate back to Voldemort and his quest for power and immortality (these being his The Thing or what he believes his object a is manifested in). I want to include Deleuze because he presents a contradicting argument on what desire is and can bring contrast even though his theories don't directly relate to my argument. I also wanted to use Hegel's theory and found articles supporting his views on desire but I don't completely understand what Hegel's arguing apart from it being something pertaining to filling the void or "the lack" through self-knowledge in order to have self-understanding. Therefore I might just subtract that argument all together and one contrasting point should be enough. I also found an

article which talks about how desire is related to power, which could directly relate to Voldemort's situation but because it incorporates Deleuze's views it might not be beneficial and therefore I might exclude it. The reason my sources are credible is because they comment on /include work from well-known contributors to philosophy and psychoanalysis. All my sources have been found using FSU library databases except for the second book I used, *Culture and the Real*, which I found through a Further Reading.

I'm still in search of articles relating desire to acts of evil or power, something specific to Voldemort's case because I think it would provide a more credible example, instead of me making assumptions just referring to desire only. Also specifying examples from the books hasn't been difficult but pinpointing exactly where they are has been a challenge. Most of examples include horcruxes (soul splitting), murder (and specifically who), quest for the elder wand, manipulation (death eaters) and sacrificing people for his gain (Kreacher and Malfoy).

Overall, I want to argue that, even if we are born into a state of lack and need objects in order to fill a void, we should not make that consume us but instead be content with how we are. Voldemort would be an example of how desire (possibly through fantasy) has caused him to behave the way he did and not because he is an evil sadist bent on causing destruction and chaos.

Additional Sources

Bignall, Simone. "Deleuze And Foucault On Desire And Power." *Angelaki: Journal Of The Theoretical Humanities* 12.1 (2008): 127-147. Academic Search Complete. Web. 8 Oct. 2013