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Desire is a concept all individuals are familiar with but is only understood as an instinctive “want” for something, both tangible (such as money, material items) or intangible (love, power). It has been theorized as either irrational, should be limited and kept to a minimum or a positive force. Irrespective of how it is defined desire should always be controlled. In Harry Potter series, Lord Voldemort is an example of productive desire channeled into the wrong outlet. In this essay I argue that desire isn’t brought about because we are missing a key element that make us “complete”, rather it is productive and should channeled toward social development otherwise it can have damaging effects. If unbeneficial desire is practiced to a point where it is allowed to completely consume one’s life it can be self-destructive therefore every individual should have a basic understanding of how to manage their desires and to ensure that output it produces is positive.

Understanding desire is complex because it doesn’t have one specific meaning but rather it depends on how one interprets what has already been conceptualized and therefore how they allow their new perception (of desire) to affect their lives. The most common philosophy of desire it is the lack of an object. This theory first came about as Deleuze states when we were forced to choose between production and acquisition as a way of categorizing desire. If perhaps desire is placed on the side of acquisition then desire becomes something that needs to be acquired and therefore is seen something we lack. (Deleuze and Guattari 26). French psychoanalyst, Jaques Lacan also refers to desire in this way. He states that lack is an

inescapable condition that occurs upon leaving The Real (when we were whole and only a being) and entering The Symbolic (where language and meaning are introduced, we then become object and subject) (Storey). Therefore desire is “is the desire to find what we lack ourselves whole again” (102) or “we are driven by a desire to overcome the condition” which is what Lacan argues and claims to be impossible. However instead he says we use signifiers as a mean to fill the void but since we are in an inevitable condition the signifiers will be ever changing but will have no impact (104). Lacan assigns a name to these signifiers, The Thing. He describes the Thing as being “constructed retroactively, to occupy the space of pure loss that is left by the erasure of the real, the Thing marks the place where the real was” (Belsey 47). The Thing then becomes the object a (an more explicit representation of the thing). The object a would be the component that manifests itself in the signifiers if it existed. (49). Therefore in my opinion Lacan believes that we will forever desire in order to fill a void and desire serves no other purposes.

Deleuze on the other hand says differently. He approaches desire as production instead of acquisition. He claims that desire is productive and that exists in reality because the products are real and that instead of the subject lacking an object to bring about desire he infers that desire and the object are the same and what is missing is the subject (Deleuze and Guattari 26). He also goes on to say that desiring-production and social production are correlated, ultimately social production is conditional desiring-production (29). He also goes on to say that even some of the most “deadly forms of social reproduction” and then refers to fascism as an example of this (29). However he refers to fascism as perversion of desire (Gao 418). Therefore under certain condition desire as a social producer if distorted can lead to dangerous reproductions (Deleuze and Guattari 29). But desire specifically should not be judged based on morality and ethics (Gao 417)

Therefore I've come to my own conclusion that desire can be interpreted in one of two ways, as stated before, either something experienced through "lack" or as something socially productive. Identifying with desire as acquisition essentially means that one would constantly feel empty without what they desire and therefore time is spent obtain possibly useless pleasure. But if that same desire is invested into something more socially beneficial can aid social growth (either negatively or positively).