

CRITICAL THEORY

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The Desert of the Real

Read *Simulacra and Simulations* by Jean Baudrillard. He describes the movement that has brought us to the current situation: "It is rather a question of substituting signs of the real for the real itself; that is, an operation to deter every real process by its operational double, a metastable, programmatic, perfect descriptive machine which provides all the signs of the real and short-circuits all its vicissitudes...just as prisons are there to conceal the fact that it is the social in its entirety, in its banal omnipresence, which is carceral." Please do struggle with this somewhat dense and difficult text and offer your understanding of the **desert of the real** and the **carceral nature of society**. You will not be able to do so this assignment effectively without some degree of comprehension of Baudrillard's argument.