

# Editorial

*Do I Drive or Am I Driven? Can I Break What I've Been Given?*

*'... it may rather be supposed that he is the driver of a runaway tram, which he can only steer from one narrow track on to another; five men are working on one track and one man on the other...'*

- Philipa Foot, 1967

*'You can't escape yourself.'*

- The Substance, 2024

*#### TRAIN ≠ as in teach (as in pass on, as in cause to know) ≠ as in point (as in camera, as in gun) ≠ as in control the direction of growth #### as in many moving in the same direction ##### as in a chain of connected events ##### as in that which we drag behind us ##### as in a trail of explosives, awaiting a light ##### TRACK ≠ as in a path created by repeated use (as in habit, as in history, as in not by design) ≠ as in a circular course on which to practise speed (as in competition, as in escape) ≠ as in marks left by movement #### as in the line that means having been, having gone ##### as in how any action leaves a scar (as in trace) ##### as in prescribed route ##### (as in the question of choice) ##### as in to follow, as in to hunt down ##### as in a song, encoded, remembered, to be played again and again and again #####*

Do we tend toward destruction as much as preservation? Is what we want always what hurts us? In Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, he proposes that our 'death drive' counters our drives for advancement and 'survival'. But how much do these tendencies interlink, overlap, haunt each other, run in each other's grooves? Two seats in the same carriage. The train nestled in the index of the track. Love into loss into love into loss. Fear into want into fear into want into fear.

Philosophy's 'Trolley Problem' (originating with Philippa Foot) imagines the ethics of being active or passive as a problem of train tracks. Should the hypothetical someone holding the lever switch the tracks or not? Is it better to save many or worse to destroy one? To act on belief or to admit to not knowing the right answer? Can it be both? Can it ever not be both? Does the track always loop? Of course it's a trap. When we talk about killing it can't be about numbers. To sacrifice one person to save five is essentially the same as sacrificing 1000 to save 5000. Or 1,000,000 to save 5,000,000. It becomes ridiculous to still claim some moral high ground. And contemporary society is nothing if not a search for some moral mountain from which we can look down and condemn everyone else.

Trains and tracks, movement and control. How much do we really have over where we're going, how we get there, how fast we're moving, who's sitting next to us, and what we can bring on the journey? Are we rushing through the world or is it moving past our window? Are we going or being taken? When the path is made, is it we who decide to walk on it? When the sentences are written, can we hear between the lines?

Train defines track defines train requires track requires train resists track resists train. Are we always half at the wheel, half frozen in the headlights? Running toward as in running away? Trying to remember as in trying to forget? Is it all a matter of perspective? Can we live with the two versions: what we said and what we didn't say? How much danger do we have in our own pockets? Will 'our own dogs eat us alive'? What if the only thing we know is the question? Next: Legion.