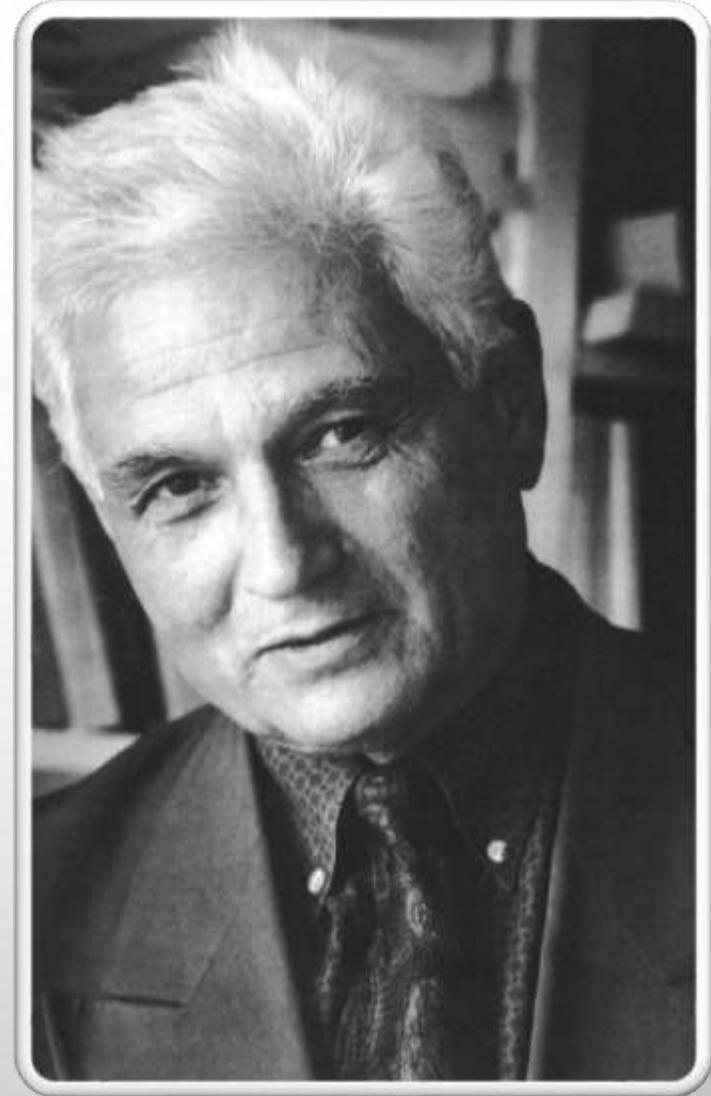
The background of the slide is a light gray gradient with several realistic water droplets of various sizes scattered across it. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance.

POST-STRUCTURALISM (DECONSTRUCTION)

LITERARY THEORY

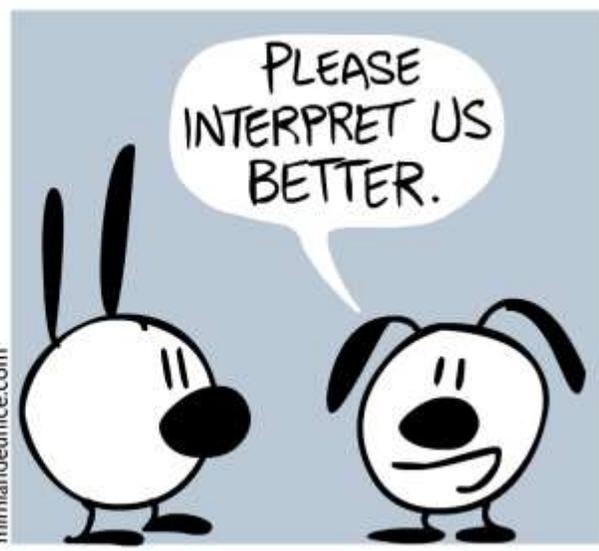
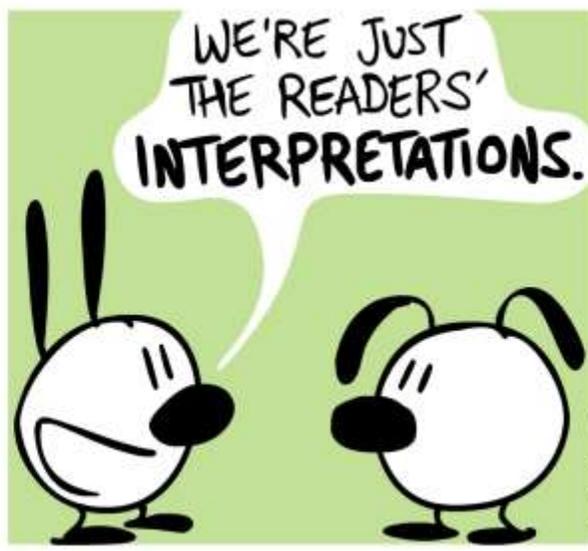
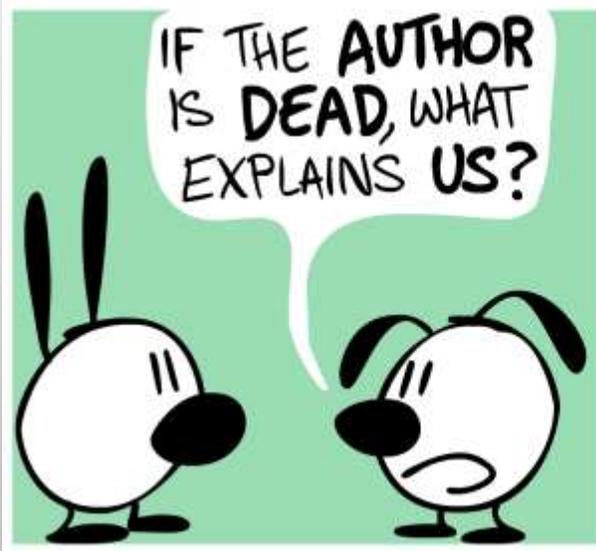
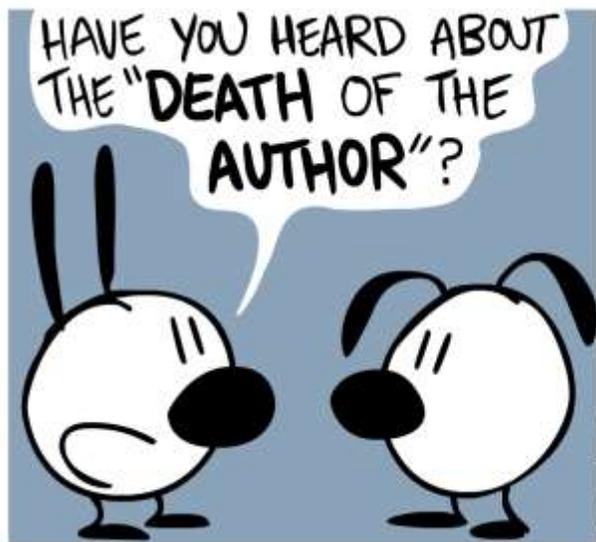
JACQUES DERRIDA (1930–2004)

- “Structure, Sign and Play” (1966)
- *Of Grammatology* (1967)
- In 1967 Roland Barthes also published his article “The Death of the Author”



The image features a light gray background with a subtle radial gradient. In the top-left and bottom-right corners, there are clusters of realistic, 3D-rendered water droplets of various sizes, some overlapping. The central text is in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

DECONSTRUCTION IS A STRATEGY





“THERE IS NO OUTSIDE-TEXT”

”

OF GRAMMATOLOGY (1967)

JACQUES DERRIDA



TIME FLIES LIKE AN ARROW

- TIME (SUBJECT) FLIES (VERB) LIKE AN ARROW (ADVERB)
- TIME (VERB) FLIES (OBJECT) LIKE AN ARROW (ADVERB)
- TIME FLIES (SUBJECT) LIKE (VERB) AN ARROW (OBJECT)

- The mother says that the daughter does not have to eat the cake
- **The mother** says that the daughter does not have to eat the cake
- The mother **says** that the daughter does not have to eat the cake
- The mother says that **the daughter** does not have to eat the cake
- The mother says that the daughter does **not** have to eat the cake
- The mother says that the daughter does not **have** to eat the cake
- The mother says that the daughter does not have to **eat** the cake
- The mother says that the daughter does not have to eat **the cake**



“

THE HOUSE IS BIG

”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?



“

I DON'T BLAME YOU

”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?



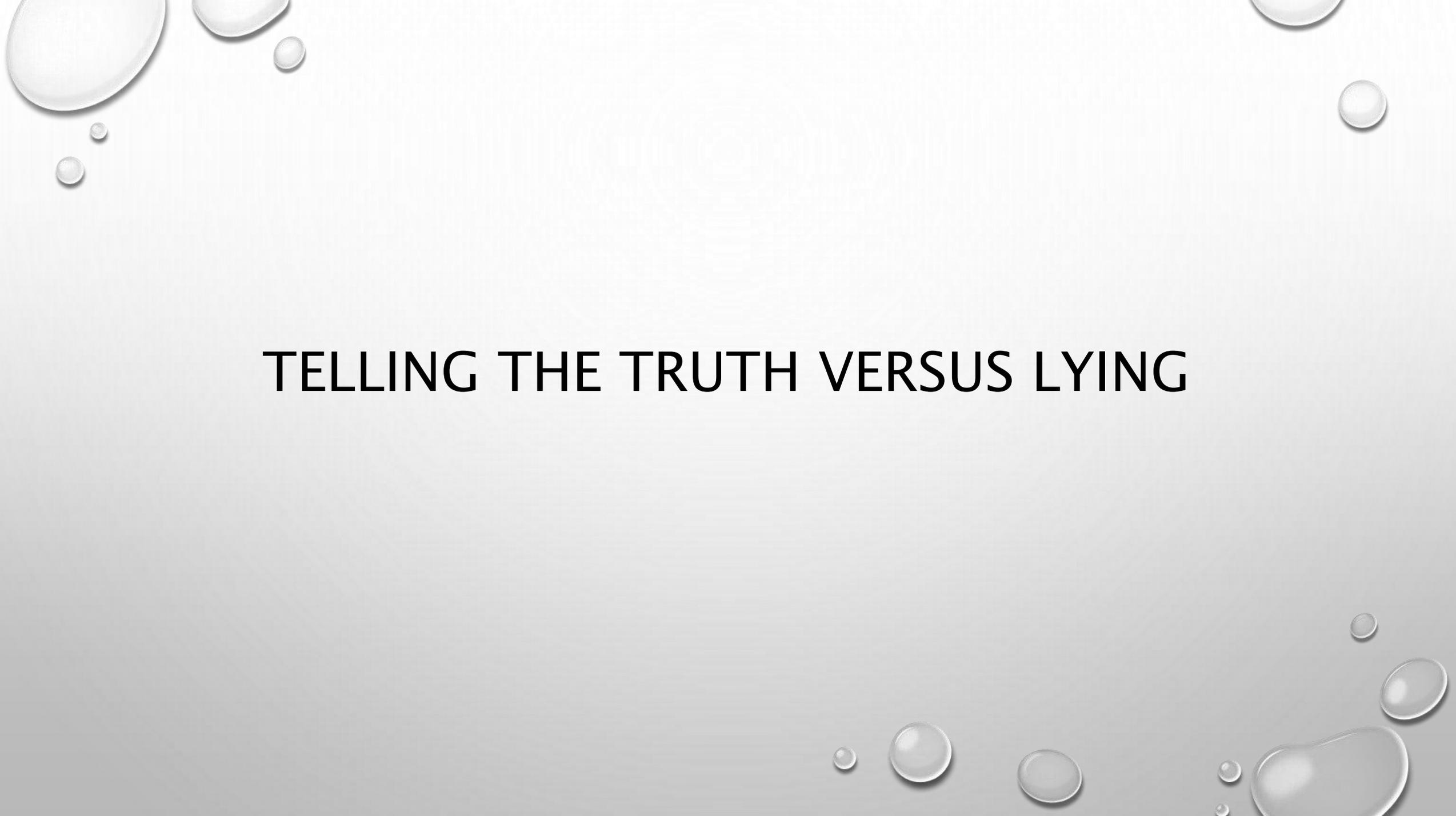
“

I AM A LIAR

”

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?



The background features a light gray gradient with several realistic water droplets of various sizes scattered in the corners. The droplets have highlights and shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

TELLING THE TRUTH VERSUS LYING

DECONSTRUCTION

- Deconstructionists felt that structuralism was not bold enough
- The relation between the signifier and the signified is not stable
- Binary oppositions create a hierarchy between a privileged and an unprivileged sign

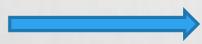
DIFFÉRANCE

- 1) Signs are understood through difference but... how can you define difference?
(to differ)
- 2) Meaning is postponed/delayed (to defer)

The relation between the signifier and the signified is not stable

- One signifier has a signified but then the signified becomes the signifier of another signified and this can go on forever and ever

Lion





Binary oppositions create a hierarchy between a privileged and an unprivileged sign

- Good VS Evil
 - Beautiful VS Ugly
 - West VS East
 - Light VS Darkness
 - Male VS Female
 - PRESENCE VS ABSENCE
- 

The concept of truth

New Criticism → **T**ruth

Structuralism → Truth

Deconstruction → ruhtt

WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF DECONSTRUCTION?

- Attack the western thought that there is a transcendental signified, a point of reference, a final interpretation
- Attack the notion of center (they decenter)
- Show that the way we perceive reality is a construction
- So, can someone define “objectivity”?
- Basically, deconstructionists may become really annoying

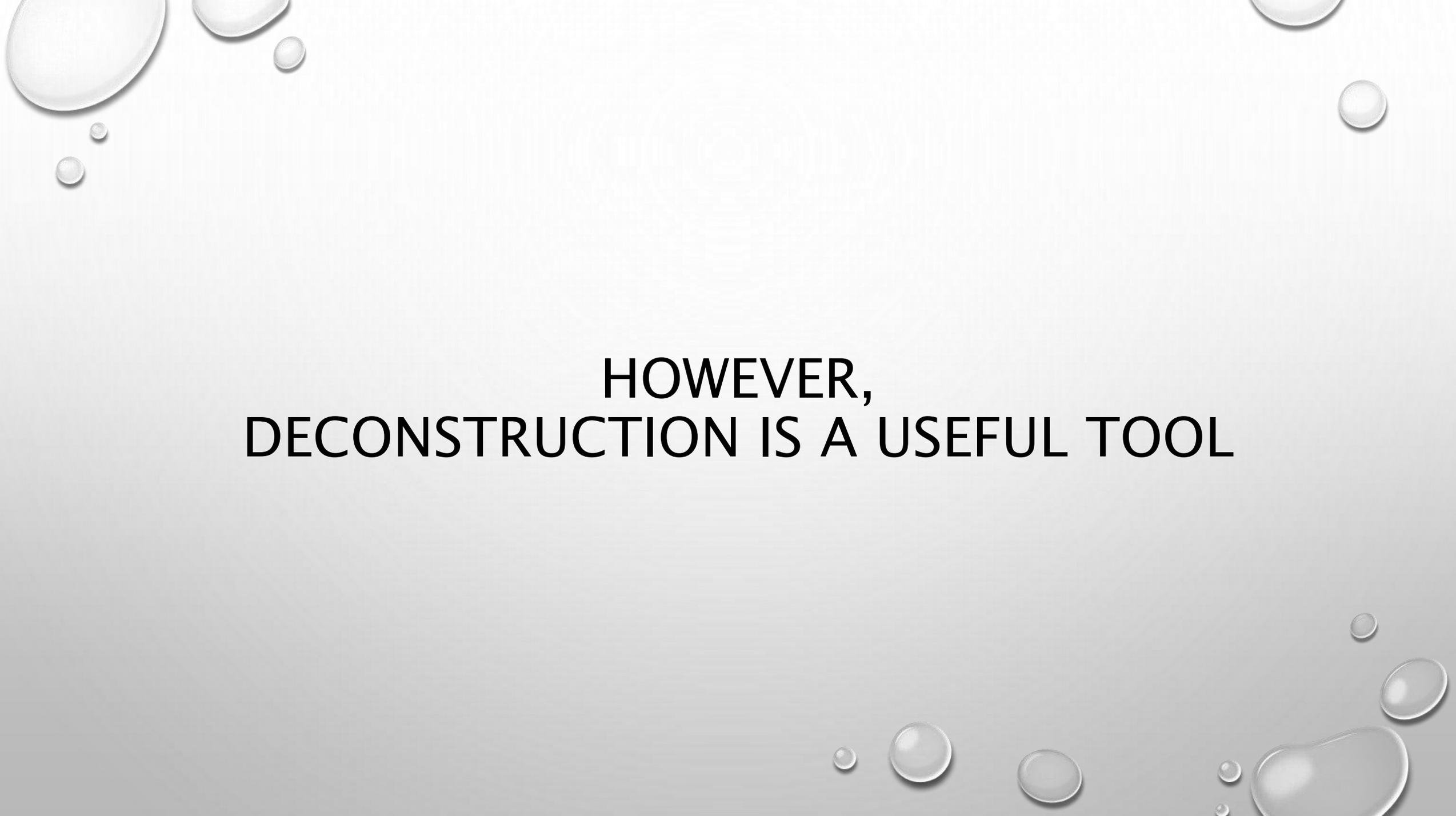


WHAT DO DECONSTRUCTIONISTS DO?

- First they explain what appears to be the meaning and then... they tell you that it's not. They destabilize everything.
- What do they do it? They look for inconsistencies
- They find other possibilities
- They change the order of binary oppositions not to prioritize one over the other but to expose the arbitrariness of the opposition and the blurred lines
- They do all this by (most of the times) writing complex and (for many people incomprehensible) texts
- Deconstruction is an endless play

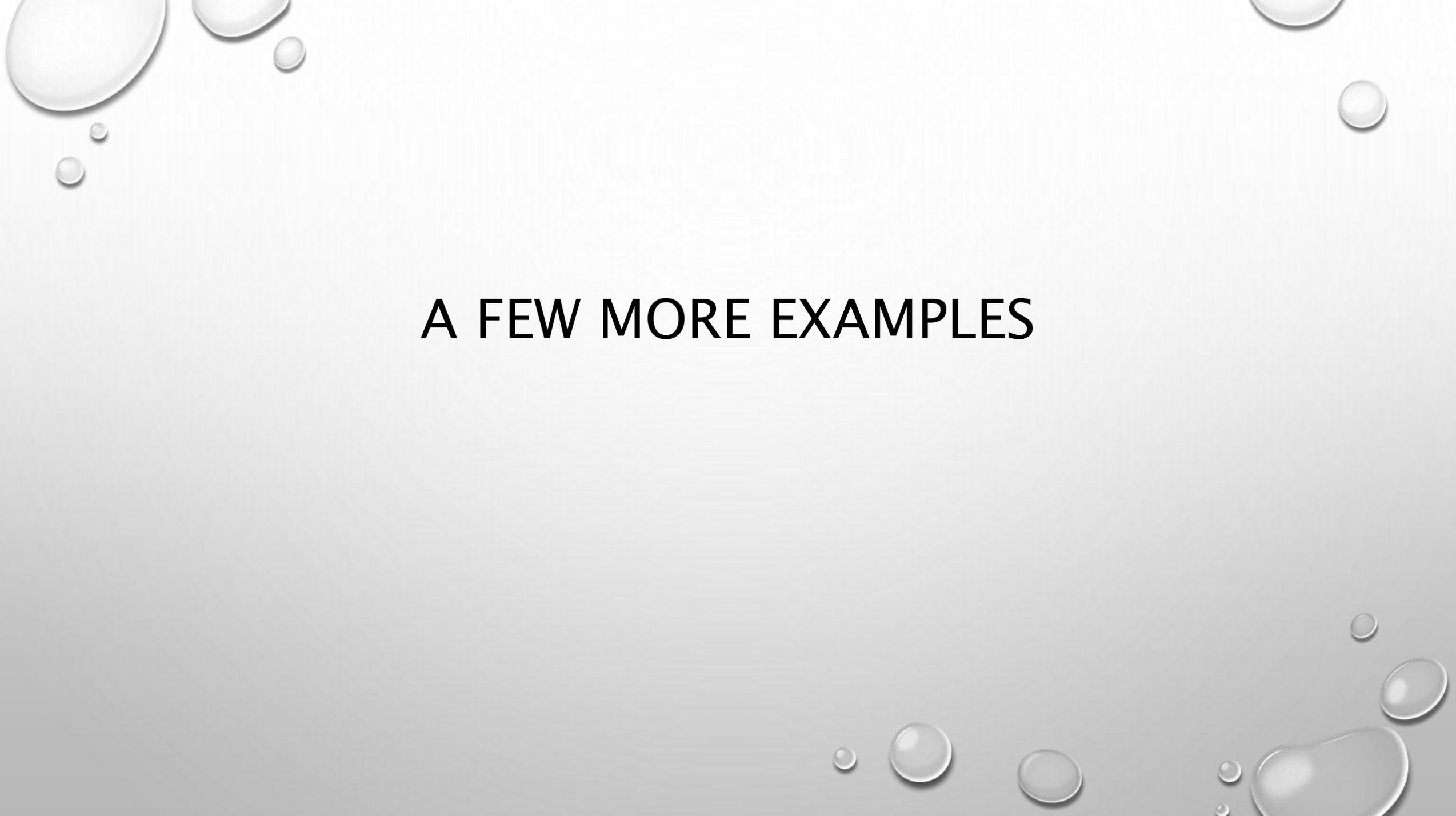
OBJECTIONS / PROBLEMS

- Post-structuralism/Deconstruction is highly controversial
- It is accused of creating a world of endless relativity
- It is accused of being incomprehensible and pretentious
- It doesn't offer answers
- It creates a paradox
- Pessimistic?

The image features a light gray background with a subtle gradient. In the top-left and bottom-right corners, there are several realistic water droplets of various sizes, rendered with soft shadows and highlights to give them a three-dimensional appearance. The text is centered in the middle of the frame.

**HOWEVER,
DECONSTRUCTION IS A USEFUL TOOL**



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A FEW MORE EXAMPLES

“In the text of ‘Young Goodman Brown,’ we find about nine pages of written words, most of them having several definitions. How is it that we read the work and perhaps assume a definite message behind each word every time we read the text? We do so because we privilege some ideas while devaluing others.”

“YOU LOOK SO BEAUTIFUL TONIGHT”



