RESEARCHING BWPWAP

How Can We Save Research From Itself?

Editorial
Researching #BWPWAP

In referring to the cancellation of Pluto's planetary status in 2006, BWPWAP (Back When Pluto Was a Planet) - the 2013 edition of the transmediale festival - interrogates techno-cultural processes of displacement and invention, and asks for artistic and speculative responses to new cultural imaginaries. In light of this, the conference and workshop "Researching BWPWAP" took place in November 2012 in Lüneburg, Germany, organised jointly by Leuphana University of Lüneburg, Aarhus University and the reSource transmedial culture/transmediale. The call for participation focused on Ph.D. researchers and other participants to speculate on BWPWAP as a pretext for presenting their research and even to further reflect on its circulation as a meme.

This newspaper presents some outcomes of this process, and like the conference and workshop, can be interpreted in the context of a research culture that has been significantly destabilized by network culture and digital media. If the planet Pluto didn't exactly fall prey to an epistemological break or a scientific revolution, but rather to a mundane administrative procedure – a redefinition of what constitutes a planet – then what does this say about contemporary research culture? Certainly, much research culture has shared Pluto's fate: conferences reduced to networking events to foster cultural capital, and scholarly communications reduced to impact factors measured by grant givers. In other words, research is not just about measuring the performativity of a single researcher (the peer-reviewed journal system), but also the processes of questioning, investigating, speculating, and sharing between peers in a broader sense.

BWPWAP captures a time and space when art and digital culture was researched outside formal academia. Festivals like transmediale around the world have for decades been engaged with research practices and have functioned as a crucial focus for the sharing of ideas between practitioners, critics or theoreticians. In addition, network culture contributes to and transforms research culture, forcing it out of its closet and, if not into the solar system, then at least beyond the walls of the academy, thereby threatening some of its conservative precepts. Many universities are embracing practice-oriented Ph.D. projects (framing research as practice), and an increasing number of practitioners are using universities as contexts for their practice (framing practice as research) - but is this enough? With this pretext, the newspaper asks what kinds of technological and artistic practices might produce radical effects for an institutionalized research culture? How can we save research from itself?

Accordingly, the scope of the newspaper extends far beyond the festival and academy, and into a speculative research environment that engages with a wider constellation of ideas and readers; including a glossary of terms and organised around key newspaper-like subheadings: debate, economy, technology, living and education. That it takes the form of a newspaper, and includes short articles, helps to serve our main purpose: to register the confusions and conflicts between knowledge production, research, and self-organisation. If research is necessarily part of a matrix of power and knowledge, then we aim to expose this by its awkward and casual setting. If research remains a powerful force in shaping our understanding of the world and the institutions through which we operate, then we wish this to extend to include non-traditional methods, to open speculations, actions, interventions – and to expand the range of possibilities into the far reaches of outer space.

Christian Ulrik Andersen, Tatiana Bazzichelli, Armin Beverungen, Geoff Cox, Kristoffer Gansing (Aarhus University/ Leuphana University of Lüneburg/ transmediale), January 2013.

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Long articles, longer versions of articles, as well as links to previous newspapers in the series, can be found at www.aprja.net
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DEBATE

ECONOMY

LIVING

TECHNOLOGY

EDUCATION

Back when the past had a future: Being precarious in a Network Society

NISHANT SHAH

We live in Network Societies. This phrase has been so bastardised to refer to the new information turn mediated by digital technologies, that we have stopped paying attention to what the Network has become. Networks are everywhere. They have become the default metaphor of our times, where everything from infrastructure assemblies to collectives of people, are all described through the lens of a network. We are no longer just human beings living in socially connected, politically identified communities. Instead, we have become actors, creating archives of traces and transactions, generating traffic and working as connectors in the ever expanding fold of the network.

The network is an opaque metaphor, conflating description and explanation. So it becomes the object to be studied, the originary context that produces itself, and the explanatory framework that accounts for itself. In other words, the network was our past – it gives us an account of who we were, it is our present – it defines the context of all our activities, and it is our future – where we do everything to support the network because it is the only future that we can imagine for ourselves. It is this flattening characteristic of networks that are diagrammatically mapped, cartographically reproduced, and presented outside of and oblivious to temporality, that produces a condition of the future that can no longer be imagined through our everyday lives.

Networks neither promise nor deliver a flattened utopia of coexistence and decentralised power. Networks are, in fact, quite aware of the structures of inequity and conditions of privilege they create and perpetuate: the only way to recognise the existence of a network is to be outside of it, the only aspiration to belong to a network is to be kept outside of it when you recognise it. Networks create themselves as simultaneously ubiquitous and scarce, of ever-present and ephemeral, creating a new ontology for our being human – an ontology of precariousness, contingent upon erasure of our histories, archives of our present, and unimaginable futures; futures we are not ready for, and don't have strategies to occupy.
I remember the times, before networks became the default conditions of being human, when kids, negotiating the variegated temporalities of their past-present-futures, would often begin their speculations on future, by saying, "When I grow up...". In that hope of growing up, was the potential for radical political action, the possibility of social reconstruction. In network societies, though, time has no currency. It has been replaced by attentions, flows of information and actions, and do not offer a tomorrow to grow into. There is no future to help mitigate the exigencies of the present. And with the overwhelming emphasis on archiving the present, there is no more a coherent future that can be accounted for in the vocabulary that the network develops to explain itself, and the hypothetical world outside it.

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Anomalous Networks, Radical Ephemera and Participatory Research

Michael Goddard

This article will seek to articulate some examples of vital noise in relation to networks, considered very much in a 'through the looking glass' sense as a name that has referred to remarkably different phenomena in different spatio-temporal contexts. There is always noise at the heart of any organisation of communication, and this noise is not incidental but fundamental and determinant of the emergence of new forms and modes of knowledge and research: it is only, paradoxically, by looking at the anomalous and ephemeral, however, that these noisy and messy processes of emergence and self-organisation become obvious, even if there is noise everywhere, even in Facebook and Twitter, for example.

Radio Alice

Radio Alice provides one exemplary model of a non hierarchical, decentred network. Filtering ideas form the Russian Avant-Garde, Situationist practices, *Alice in Wonderland* and Deleuze and Guattari, Alice constituted a decentralised and non hierarchical space for the amplification of the surrounding Autonomia social movement.

Radio at this time had not only the technical advantage of lightweight replaceable technology but more importantly was able to be used to create a self-referential feedback loop of political communication between producers and receivers, tending towards breaking down the distinctions between them (Guattari 75). In other words, it is less the question of the subversive use of a technical media form than the generation of a media or rather post-media ecology, that is, a self-referential network for an unforeseen processual production of subjectivity amplifying itself via technical means. On Alice, serious political discussions were likely to be interrupted by violently contradictory, humorous and poetico-delirious interventions and this was central to its unique micropolitics. What this meant in practice was that on Alice an extreme heterogeneity of materials was broadcast tending towards a delirious flow of "music, news, blossoming gardens, rants, inventions, … messages, massages, lies" (Berardi et al 82). In short there was a delirious flow of expression that disturbed the social order less through its content than by opening up channels of expression and feedback between this free expression and current political events culminating in the radio becoming a key actor in the explosive political events of Bologna in March, 1977, at the climax of which the radio station itself was targeted by the police and several of its key animators arrested.

Guerrilla Networks from Urban Guerrillas to Guerrilla Television

A highly contrasting anomalous network form is that of the guerilla cell. A first point to be made is that despite the apparent closure of the guerrilla cell it still functions very much as a network with a necessary openness to outside social and political movements - not only to replenish members via new recruits but in order to have political meaning in terms of persuasiveness and validity. For this reason, the activities of guerilla cells are not simply military or violent but expressive, and are designed to win the hearts and minds of as much of the population as possible, beginning with sympathetic social and political movements. In European urban guerrilla groups such as the Brigate Rosse, or the RAF, there were also distinctive media strategies, different in each case and it can be argued that every guerilla action, even the most violent has an expressive dimension, in that it is designed to send a message both to the enemy and to potential sympathisers, by communicating the sense that the bosses, politicians and dominant economic classes are not invulnerable. This was done in a more sophisticated way by the RAF whose principle manifesto writer, Ulrike Meinhof, used all her skills as a leading political journalist and column writer, to fabricate polemical and persuasive statements justifying the RAF's tactics and chosen targets. If these groups might seem to be poor models of anomalous networks, what is one to make of a group like the Weather Underground who used all kinds of media from radio, to elaborate communiques accompanying a series of bombings with no loss of life, to even producing a collective book and a journal, and co-participating in the production of the Emile de Antonio film *Underground* (1976), and finally co-organising an activist conference, *Hard Times*, all from the position of being underground and on the FBI's most wanted list? It is quite telling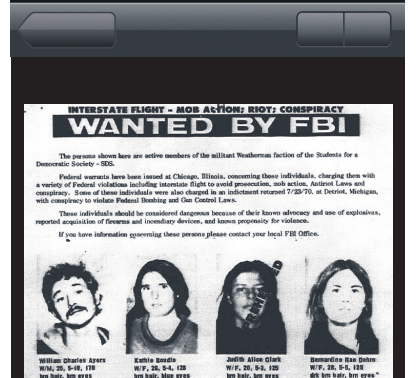, for example, that Bill Ayers recalls the final distribution of the book *Prairie Fire*, that they delivered thousands of copies of to radical bookstores in person, during the night, across the US, as perhaps their greatest action as a guerilla group, rather than any of their numerous bombings.

Fascinating as the drama surrounding each of these groups may be, what they demonstrate is yet another variant of an anomalous network, one with relative closure and yet in an essential relationship to various outsides that are engaged with expressive means. Such practices of clandestinity, combining both research and action, are not entirely dissimilar from those of 21st Century hackers and activists who also use different strategies of anonymity and dissimulation in order to intervene into the present day distribution of knowledges and practices.

Anomalous Pre Digital Networks as Nascent Post-Media

This article has presented a range of examples, expressive of different modes of anomalous network from the very open and dispersed media ecology of Radio Alice, to the seemingly closed model of the guerilla cell. Of course none of these models is directly applicable as an example to be slavishly followed in the present for anomalous modes of participatory research; the technologies and modes of power, especially the considerable shift towards network modes of power mean that new models of extra-institutional and non-academic modes of participatory research will have to be developed, adequate to the current situation. Nevertheless, I think what these examples show, is that there is a long and rich history of anomalous networks, prior to the digital, some of which may be suggestive of untimely strategies for resistance to the reigning neoliberal, institutional knowledge economy.

Radio Alice in Operation

Weather Underground as America's Most Wanted

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Reassembling Social Practices

Clemens Apprich

Today, most of the media infrastructure we are using is in the hands of a few companies, thus re-establishing the old model of mass media domination.

### Collective Assemblages of Enunciation

In recent years we have witnessed a revival of hegemonic struggles, which are related to the use of new media technologies: On the one hand, these technologies have been used as practical means in a variety of political contestations on a global level ranging from the "Games of Truth" in the controversy around Wikileaks, through the "Social Media Revolts" in Middle East and North Africa to new forms of "Online-Activism" tested by groups like Anonymous; on the other hand, the same technologies are used on a rather local level in order to change everyday practices such as producing, sharing and consuming media content. The examples on both levels can be seen as symptoms of a more profound change that Félix Guattari had already foreseen twenty years ago: a transformation of classical media structures towards new collective assemblages of enunciation. In order to understand this transition we have to trace back some of the practices that have made use of new media technologies in order to bring about Guattari's idea of a post-media age. In accordance with a non-deterministic conception of media, he underlined the fact that the spur of change resides in social practices, not in the technological structure itself: "Obviously, we cannot expect a miracle from these technologies: it will all depend, ultimately, on the capacity of groups of people to take hold of them, and apply them to appropriate ends" (Guattari 263).

From Tactical Media to Post-Media

Social and media assemblages unleash new forms of collective expression, thereby responding to new needs for political manifestation as they have emerged with new social movements since 1968. In media theory, this process was accompanied by a dialectical movement: first in the 1980s, postmodern media theory jettisoned Marx's critique of ideology and abandoned all hope of an emancipatory use of media technologies, and then the tactical media movement of the 1990s rejected this quietist standpoint of (academic) media theory in order to re-invent new forms of media activism. This "double disengagement" ultimately opened up new fields of counter-hegemonic agency, thus enabling a variety of media practices that are still valid in our post-media era. In this sense, digital media technologies have become more prevalent than ever before, and as a consequence, tactical media practices have penetrated almost all aspects of everyday life. However, today, most of the media infrastructure we are using is in the hands of a few companies, thus re-establishing the old model of mass media domination. Due to this paradox, the interest in building up autonomous resources, networks and infrastructure has become more topical than ever.

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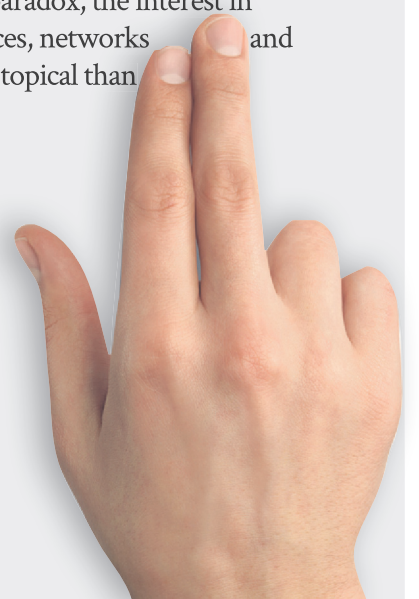
Back when readers were (also) writers

The role of the "percipient" in online participatory fiction writing

Ruxandra Bularca

Regarding noise as part of the process, the percipient is a witnessing entity within the network which does not (necessarily) take part in the work itself, but does have power over the creative act via marginalia, by producing meta-story content and through web sharing practices.

In recent years, the practice of collaborative storytelling has gained increasing attention from all the corners of the Web – originally designed by Berners-Lee as a Read/ Write environment. Although these collaborative and participative networks are regarded as small enclaves of network nodes where creative content emerges, they do not exist and cannot (re)produce themselves as solipsistic "floating" entities on the Web. They exist and thrive by being connected to a network of networks. They are usually analyzed in terms of agency regarding the collaborating entities, collective intelligence and the "hive", or in terms of platforms/'workspaces'.

As an alternative, the "percipient" is considered as the basis for research. Usually we erroneously discuss only the issue of the *writer* when we talk about readers/writers in social fictions. If so far these writers had problems with reading and familiarizing themselves with non-linear narratives, the main ubiquitously encountered problem in the self-fulfilling prophecy of the Read/ Write Web and social fiction is to give away the control of the story.

The main focus is the answer to a quite uncomfortable question for online textuality and the literary theory it implies, and that is what do *readers/ writers* look like as in a platformer logic and dynamic?

Regarding noise as part of the process, the percipient is a witnessing entity within the network which does not (necessarily) take part in the work itself, but does have power over the creative act via marginalia, by producing meta-story content and through web sharing practices. Her interaction with the creative (stigmergic) network of agents usually acts as a liaison between the creative collaborative network and the Web.

Connected to the open discourse, she is a self-aware, disciplined, cooperative reader (much like the one engaged in social reading) that is capable of *suspension of disbelief* in non-immersive environments, providing useful meta-data for hacking fiction and the politics of desire. A semiotic defragmenter, the percipient is also transliterate – a skilled and enhanced reader that benefits from an enriched aesthetic experience regarding platforms, possible narrative display and dynamics of different devices that render text.

This study tries to analyze the percipient's standpoint regarding these works, both as an aesthetic experience as well as transacting with literary mental objects and representations. An insight into the types of ingredients that make a successful collaborative writing network can be obtained by using and consuming the resultant literary product. Consequently, two questions arise: Who do collaborative writing communities write for, and what actually happens when participating in an environment designed to make your story replaceable?

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Solar system as it really is or curating in/as common/s

Magda Tyzlik-Carver

put 61 Stored in location 61 put 9 Stored in location 9 get 124 occasions of a// get 127 abuse// put 18 Stored in location 18 yes, this can just happen - that's simply part of this manner of reading/writing together get 130 misuse absa%loms put 61 Stored in location 61 get 27 get 11
• E][difice][rrorBody
cut put 27 Stored in location 27 get 27 thanks sönke! cut put 27 Stored in location 27
• E][difice]%[rrorBody
put 27 abused put 11 Stored in location 27 Stored in location 11 get 61 get 11 absa%loms put 27 get 27 Stored in location 27 get 11 put 27 Stored in location 27 mis-use-d put 11 Stored in location 11 mis-use-d put 11 Stored in location 11
• E][difice]%[rrorBody absa%loms put 27 Stored in location 27 get 73 [a transposing moment X has been removed from Y via repeatedacademic|historical draw][l][ings & isolation|individuation.] get 9 Stored in location 61
• E][difice]% [rrorBody absa% loms

put 27 Stored in location 27 strang es stranged put 9 Stored in location 9 ockeghem's line get 16 >>trans::posing mom|ent [_has been removed from_] i can't figure out why the sign% appears when changing the colour of font put 121 Stored in location 121 get 36 ****************************% not sure myself get get get get get put 36 Stored in location 36 get 36 get get get get get 16 >>trans::posing mom|ent [_has been removed from_] pendently exposed put 65 Stored in location 65 >>trans::posing mom|ent [_has been removed% from_] put 16 Stored in location 16 get 16 >>trans::posing mom|ent [_has been removed% from_] get 12 get 142

Postscript

"We have to describe the solar system as it really is and not as we would like it to be." These were the words of the chairman of the panel which worked on the definition of the planet that resulted in demoting Pluto to a 'dwarf planet', during the scientists meeting in 2006 in Prague. This statement so well invokes, though most likely unintentionally, the particular kind of space that I regularly attend as a curator and researcher. As a practitioner at work – curating and researching, I find myself often at the disjuncture so neatly defined by this statement: between the apparent real and the imaginary, between what is and what I hope for.

In my practice, this space of separation is between what curating is, how it is defined and practiced, and what I would like it to be. I find that it is through practice that I am able to articulate my desires, through doing it; there it is. This fluency is less present in writing about it, however. And there I so often mask the fact that I fail, when I pretend what I would like it to be really is.

Curating open-ended Design Spaces/Hacking Design methods

Nora O Murchú

As design processes become more open-ended and users take on roles tasks and activities that would have been traditionally in the realm of designers, there is a growing concern within Interaction Design to extend the discipline's boundaries to support these types of practices. The rise in popularity of user-generated sites has led to a greater number of users online sharing and producing content (Lin, Fischer), while the influence of DIY practices has led to users' involvement in actively reconfiguring and adapting systems to their own needs (Buechley et al.). These practices have led to the emergence of an "active user," who participates in the design process either by contributing to the designers work or actively shaping the outcome of the design.

Curating as new methodological tool

As users take on the role and activities of designers, attention to how we understand their role is increasingly important. My research explores the implications of the role of fully active users in the design process for interaction designers, and I do so by examining the relationship between users and designers. In addition I propose curating as a new methodological tool that can support active users in this role. In 2008, I established *Tweak* – an interactive Digital art festival – to investigate and examine the practice of hackers, who I consider to be an archetype of this model of user/designer.

Within the context of the festival, I developed a set of workshops over the course of 3 years, which responded to different curatorial strategies that reflected various aspects of hacking practice. This curatorial approach supported the multiple activities, wide range of experiences and unique interpretations of the participants and hackers. Moreover, this methodology allowed me to establish a way of working that responded to the findings through a process of framing and reflection. These strategies were tested within the context of the workshops during Tweak, which in turn furthered my understanding of hacking practice, and how curation could inform new ways of working in Interaction Design. Furthermore, this curatorial perspective allowed me to reconsider my designer role by taking on the role of facilitator, engaging users in an experiential manner, and enabling them to take on the role of the designer within this open-ended design process.

Image from *Tweak* – an interactive Digital art festival – to investigate and examine the practice of hackers

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The body as currency? Circularity and anthropophagic consumption as metaphor

YARA GUASQUE

Anthropophagy as a social metaphor used in this text as self-cannibalism of the State its economic implication, as the State has always seen the body, first and foremost, as labor energy, and in all its excess of rage, pleasure or violence, loss of capital.

Two cases of anthropophagy (Germany 2001 and Brazil 2012) – a phenomenon that has always been a political and cultural metaphor in Brazil – have triggered my reflection on subjectivity versus circulation of information; technologies and the State's machinery setup; and the constitution of "nationalisms". As a social metaphor with economic implications, anthropophagy stands for a self-cannibalism of the State, as the State has always seen the body, first and foremost, as labor energy, and in all its excesses of rage, pleasure or violence, loss of capital. In the circularity of information capital, some question the monetization of genetic material, organs, semen and blood, and the donation, sale, repatriation and exhibition of the body as an object of curiosity.

Another perspective is to reverse the regression in which the Americans were framed in Theodor de Bry's illustrations (16th century), obliging Europe to recognize its self-cannibalism. Far from Dyonisian celebrations and political activism, these cases reveal the incorporation of the State's jurisprudence, the informal economy of quick, irregular jobs, and the media's reach. Would the anthropophagic dismemberment reconstruct a new social body, with affinities to Hans Bellmer, in a different agglutination and social interaction that does not take place through previous ideas of nation? In the anthropophagy and self-cannibalism case that occurred in Europe, what scares us is the "regressive orality state" that is so characteristic of de Bry's illustrations, which presented, to the Europeans, the American continent as if it were undergoing increasing regression and barbarism. Individuals with higher education, identified by name and profession, capable of arguing for their own defense, included in the high-connectivity digital world, and who use it to add detail, and to consent to, in writing, the form of death and dismemberment of body parts, documented, in a multimedia inventory of self-exhibitionism highly tuned with the capitalist media, even the preparation of dishes with human flesh, according to the international cuisine.

In the Brazilian case, the pagan anthropophagy scene from the period when America was discovered is not repeated. The girls, coming from

The Lab as Method: Artistic Technology Research

Exploring and participating in developer communities

Matthias Tarasiewicz

Based at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna and plugged into a dynamic international network, the project Artistic Technology Research is analysing practices of information processing, technology appropriation and acts of creative production of artists, hackers and developers as distinct epistemic culture. In collaboration with the Vienna-based group Artistic Bokeh, various methods of mapping and documenting research practices in new media art will be developed and tested. The research programme investigates and participates in contemporary (artistic) media practices and is actively building 'connections' to social and cultural studies.

Critical media arts do not only reflect on new technologies and how they transform society, but also develop experimentally new techniques and forms of representation. They also explore and investigate new ways of structuring and conveying knowledge. These activities lead not as

much to the production of a final work but create 'process artefacts' representing the intellectual development as much as the technological and artistic work process. The project Artistic Technology Research deliberately understands the controversial term 'artistic technology' simply as vehicle to oscillate freely arts and sciences. Avoiding the obvious minefields such as questions whether artists are allowed to do research at all, the members of the project embark on a schizophrenic journey: they investigate and document distinct practices of creative work processes in art labs, developer communities and hacker spaces, while simultaneously participating through actively developing tools, tweaking technology and engaging in discussions, collaborative projects and experiments.
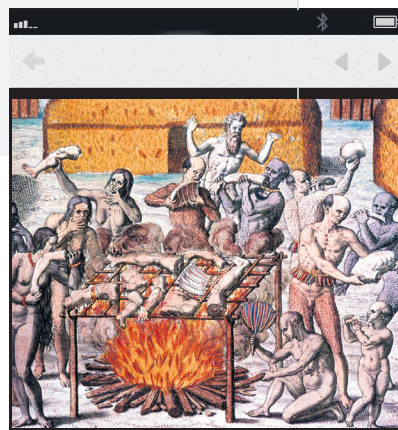
Artistic Technology Research sets up a space for active work on cultural theory and critical engineering. The Lab is an integral part of the project. The current discourse of 'research in the arts' makes art universities prototypical localities where new forms of explorative practice and knowledge-production can emerge. Critical discourse will be accompanied by tools, formats and publications that will be developed throughout the project. This includes the aims of structuring, visualizing and conveying existing discourses and systems, and opening them up to new audiences.

"We need to understand the complex and dynamic correlations between culture, technology, codes, art and media to systemically comprehend the transformation of societies in the 21st century," says project director Matthias Tarasiewicz. Together with his team and partners, he is less interested in popular culture or technological inventions, but focuses on incidents based on a synergetic potential of 'creative emergencies'. The lab and its expanded network provide the opportunity for such creative potential to unfold.

http://artistictechnology.at

Critical media arts explore and investigate new ways of structuring and conveying knowledge

Process artefact, Fran Illich 'Space Bank' and Ai WeiWei 'Sunflower Seeds'

Process artefact, SETUP TRacking Cookies

Process artefacts at Artistic Bokeh showroom, Museumsquartier Vienna

Experiments in documentation

small towns and attracted by Jorge Negromonte with the offer of work as housemaids, were chosen through the analysis of the numbers of Brazil's General Registry identification document (R.G.). In a process that is similar to a lottery, the document's numbers should approximate or coincide with 666. The remains of the victims' bodies, "purified" in the name of God, were sold as pastry, as is the case in an informal, irregular job. Mad, ignorant individuals without university education searching for a means to survive, excluded, in many senses, from an informational system, whose names the mass media quickly forgets, although it widely broadcasts their faces. According to

Tiziana Terranova, the exhaustion of the pre-capitalist system would inevitably force its own reinvention (30), and historical subjectivities, differences in needs, and desires, influence the system of value and fixing of worked hours. Thus, one kilogram of human flesh is no different as physical specimen or in the media, whether in Germany or in Brazil.

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Theodor De Bry engraving (Eating roasted limbs and trunk), C16th.

On the earth, inside the university
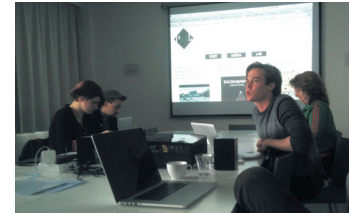### *The 'surprise' erupts and interrupts*

Image from the event Researching BWPWAP, November 2012.

Silvana Carotenuto

"If BWPWAP captures a time when transmedial culture was researched outside academia, how does network culture and digital media then contribute to and transform research culture, forcing it out of its closet and, if not *into the solar system*, then at least *beyond* the academy?" (from the call for the seminar *Researching BWPWAP*, my italics).

I share *Researching BWPWAP*'s concern; let me tell you the story of how I partake in its desires. Postcolonial theory and literature (the 'as if' of its fiction, poetry and writing) teaches me that I live 'on' the earth, that this planet is on the plane of 'alterity', that I need to position myself in it with respect and without appropriation: "The planet is in the species of alterity, belonging to another system; and yet, we inhabit it, on loan" (Spivak 73).

Immanence, difference and ethics

Deconstruction teaches me that I live 'inside' the University, 'here' I profess my engagement with the taking-place of the 'event', the institution where I practice, in order to create the conditions for its 'happening', the deconstruction of the 'conditionality' of the academia itself (Derrida). Deconstruction teaches me that the University, where I live, profess and deconstruct, assumes the 'principle' of unconditionality: being the (constative) place where everything should be allowed in terms of critique, having the unlimited right to question everything - also the idea of Truth/ Light/(what is 'proper' to) Wo- man, that signs, on the University's insignia *(lux)*, its classical constitution and formative agenda!

At the same time, Deconstruction teaches me that, if 'unconditionality' is the academy's core 'principle', it also affects its 'force': if the unconditional University does not exist (as we all know), we must insist on affirming the principle by producing *oeuvres* that, effectively, practically, performatively, work towards the 'taking-place' of the event. These are 'oeuvres' that maintain their dissidence, civil disobedience and resistance, in vindicating the University's unconditional freedom from all 'state-powers' (it would be a 'cosmopolitan' academia, extended 'beyond' worldwide citizenship, so as to become 'universal'). At *Researching BWPWAP*, the gathering of scholars, intellectuals and students from all over the world convinced me even more this is not an 'abstract' appeal but a 'act', in value and effective strength (collettivo edu-factory) and from all forms of 'censure' – nothing should be 'beyond' the university's questioning: democracy, critique, the authority of thinking, even the right to 'question'.

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Art must fail Knowledge

Andrew Newman

"Only the capacities that exceed any productive functionality, only the culture that serves no purpose, render a society capable of posing questions about the changes going on within it and imprinting a meaning on them." (André Gorz)

Globalism and technological developments have emerged in parallel to a new economy centred on the valorisation of immaterial capital. This new economy has been described as a 'knowledge economy', 'creative economy', 'post-fordist economy' and as a 'cognitive-cultural economy'. Marx described it as an economy where knowledge becomes "the greatest productive force" and one where "direct labour and its quantity disappear as the determinant principle of production" to become "an, of course, indispensable but subordinate moment, compared to general scientific labour". To Marx, knowledge describes both the artistic and scientific development of individuals.

The rationalisation of modern society that has accompanied the emergence of this new economy has also seen knowledge become synonymous with the scientific method. Artistic development is, in all practical senses, not recognised as having equal value to scientific development. Adorno and Horkheimer describe this change in their *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, as a world that has abolished myth and superstition to its own detriment, and instead installed a foundationalist philosophy, that in its totality, has robbed the individual of meaningful control over their existence.

Diseased discipline

Art, as the post enlightenment embodiment of myth and superstition, could position itself equally alongside science as a significant pillar of knowledge to resurrect what Adorno and Horkheimer describe as true enlightenment. Yet as art begins to reconfigure itself as research for the purpose of asserting its value within a knowledge economy, it risks infecting itself by communing with the diseased discipline of science. The military-industrial complex bedded science long ago and the discipline has been bed-ridden ever since, bound to keep pushing papers and producing knowledge in the ongoing service of some abstract arms race.

The danger of artists wearing lab coats is not that artists will become more rational or accountable, the danger is that artists will become more productive. The amebic state of art has always allowed it to elude the iron grasp of the industrial complex, this is in spite of the illicit dalliances that often occur, especially between art and technology. However art is now falling prey to the soft velvet touch of the knowledge industry, the university and its cosy corridors of musty books that seem to present no threat. But art needs to be nimble and always aspire to subvert the system it finds itself in. If this current system, the knowledge economy, wants art to produce knowledge, then art should seek out an antonym. Art must instead fail knowledge. It should stop making sense, stop making sense, stop making sense, making sense. As Andre Gorz writes in *The Immaterial*: "Only the capacities that exceed any productive functionality, only the culture that serves no purpose, render a society capable of posing questions about the changes going on within it and imprinting a meaning on them."

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Symphony of the Surplus/Value

Historically the art world, and the work of art itself, has provided a laboratory for developing new forms of capital accumulation, the intensification of labour, and precisely because of that, is a space for rethinking methods and tactics for sabotaging and disrupting those very processes of accumulation.

Heath Bunting Promissory Note
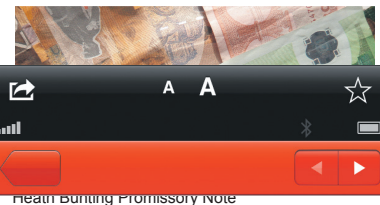
Stevphen Shukaitis

On November 7th, 1922 Arseny Avraamov, standing on top of a tall building in the city of Baku waving two flags, conducted one of the most ambitious artistic works imaginable. The "Symphony of the Sirens," the piece Avraamov had been commissioned to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the Russian revolution, far exceeded the scope and form involved in almost any other symphony. It was not a piece played by a small group of trained musicians, but rather involved choirs of thousands, a flotilla on the sea,

twenty-five locomotives, the artillery of an army battalion, and all of factory sirens of the city that has been tuned to be able to play "The International" and "The Song of Marseille." What Avraamov strove to accomplish, and arguably did, was to celebrate the liberation of the city precisely by playing the entire city itself as an instrument. He did not want to create the spectacle of liberation, a piece that is moving but leaves most as passive observers, but

rather as one that mobilized everyone in the city using the instruments and abilities at their disposal.

On a much less epic scale, on August 22nd, 2010 net artist and provocateur Heath Bunting launched "The Heath Bunting Collection." In an apparent attempt to securitize his own future artistic production and other non-selling artists and render it into a medium and store of value, Bunting began issuing promissory notes in quantities ranging from ten to one hundred fifty Euros, backed by the reserve of the Heath Bunting Collection. In this arrangement Bunting continued to hold 49% of the

work, which functioned as capital reserved. The Heath Bunting Collection attempts to hold 51% of its collection authored by Heath Bunting. According to Bunting, given that the value of art is defined by the relationship between the artist and the audience, in some ways the actual work itself becomes insignificant. What is fundamental is the social bond, or social value, in the relation, which serves as basis for exchange, and in the case for the deliberation of a certain kind of value.

In such a way Bunting playfully explored an idea that seemingly was done in a much more

deliberate way in the launching in December 2010 of the Art Exchange, a stock market for artistic works. Based on a stock market model, the Art Exchange creates a platform for the collective ownership of works, with share available from ten to one hundred Euros. For a 5% commission, the Art Exchange secures the right to issues shares for a set period of time. Among the initial pieces on offer for investment from the Art Exchange is Sol LeWitt's 1998 piece "Irregular Form," as well as work by Mike Kelley and Galerie Hussenot. The apparent plan of the exchange is to target people who previously invested in blue

chip stocks and other forms of collective investment, in part based upon the tax-free status of art in France. Although at face value this may seem to be just a clever scheme to avoid tax, the directors of the exchange claim that their aim is to inspire more people to become collectors. As commented by Caroline Matthews, the operations director, "For some people, mixing fine art and finance goes against their principles, but

perhaps they will see things differently in the future."

What is it that unites these three moments? How is that we can understand the connection between an epic symphony designed to celebrate a revolution and take part in the building of a new socialist society by playing the city itself as a productive ensemble, with processes of securitizing and valuing artistic works?

"Everyone is an artist," proclaimed Joseph Beuys. Beuys, as an inheritor of the avant-garde desire to abolish the separation between art and daily life, argued for the realization of a multitude of forms

of creativity throughout many areas of social life, or forms of social sculpture. What can we make of this goal in the age of semiocapitalism where the dream of everyone is an artist has been realized in perverse form as "everyone is a worker" all the time? That is to say where the

relationalality 'sculpted' through the circuits of an always-present network culture are rendered into opportunities for capitalist valorization, all YouWork and MyProfit?

What this gestures towards is the way that artistic practices and interventions, such as the "Symphony of Sirens" model social and relation practice that prefigure transformations in the production of and circulation of

value: what Diedrich Diederichsen has theorized as artistic surplus value. But as Esther Leslie has argued, when theorists subject art to matrices of value, whether economic or sociological, the result is not necessarily moving any closer to a "law of art value" as much as gaining an uncomfortable insight into art/criticism's crisis of worth within an exploitative and celebrity-driven culture industry. What is most important here is less a metaphysics of value and more how particular models of valuation inaugurated in artistic practices assist in the emergence of new kinds of what autonomist theorists would describe as moments of class composition, or new forms of political possibility

which emerge as a result of antagonisms found within the labour process. The 'value' of artistic and cultural labour thus becomes more about the forms of relationships, organizations, and modes of exploitation produced through them – more so than the actual and apparent outcome of

the work itself.

In the metropolitan factory, management has become redundant as the organizational forms necessary and fitting for these forms of labour are immanent to them. In such conditions management becomes little more then the role, not of producing anything, but harvesting that which is already in circulation, extracting value and imposing measure on that which it does not directly control. This is a paradox for attempting to manage performance in a cultural economy dependent upon free labour, for much of the labour that is necessary and integral to

the overall labour process is not directly under the control of the organization. If this conditions performative labour and its management has become, as Jon McKenzie argues, much more an art of management than owes more to drama and theatre then it does to traditional notions of 'management science.' The virtuoso labour of performance management in the metropolitan factory then becomes the ability to modulate, intensify, and alter the circulation of labour and creativity within the productive basin of the metropolis. The management of labour then is not the actual organization of the labour itself, but the ability to offload the costs

of labour to self-organized forms, and to extract surplus value from them.

Returning then to Avraamov's symphony, there is something more than just an interesting historical example. There is still some profoundly unrealized potential in the model of value production and sociality that are suggested by Constructivist practices and ideas. As commented by CrimethInc, the "Symphony of the Sirens" demonstrates what is possible when art / cooperation is thought of as central to life rather than as belonging to the private / leisure sphere. But the question then becomes how to organize and

sustain the surplus sociality generated through these emergent forms; whether they become the basis for reinventing society itself, or whether they are harvested into a basin for the accrual of personal artistic value and reputation, or transformed into a new market for art value and
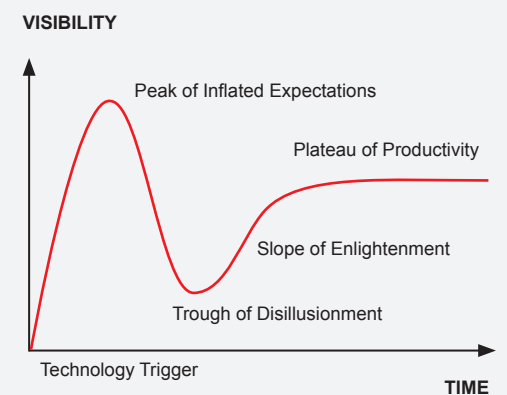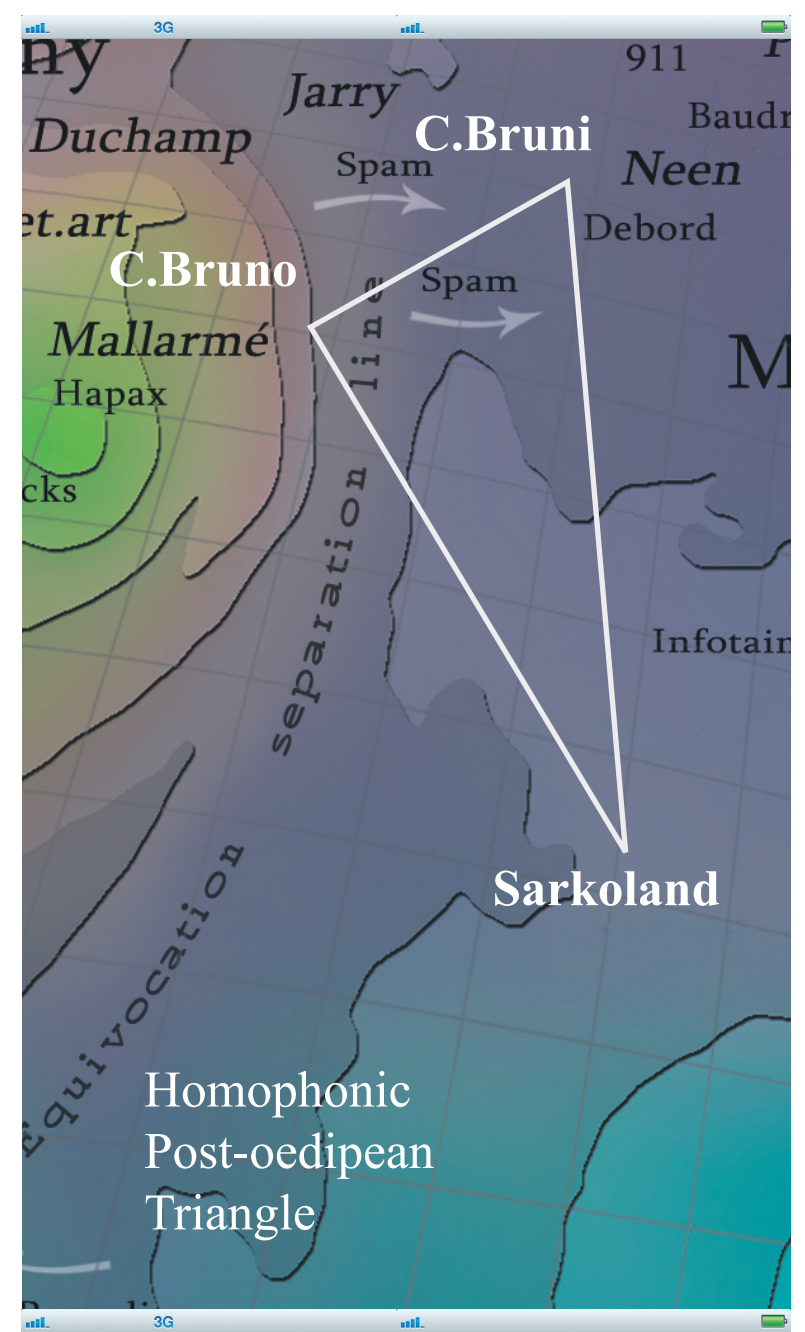
aesthetic accumulation. Historically the art world, and the work of art itself, has provided a laboratory for developing new forms of capital accumulation, the intensification of labour, and precisely because of that, is a space for rethinking methods and tactics for sabotaging and disrupting those very processes of accumulation.

Heath Bunting *Promissory* Note

The Marketization of Net Art

Christian Ulrik Andersen & Søren Pold

In his work *Artwar(e)*, the net artist Christophe Bruno wonders how his work *Fascinum* from 2001 suddenly could appear in a Benetton installation in 2004, and in Segolène Royal's 2007 rally for the French presidency. Bruno jokingly states that the recuperation of his work is an example of 'clear plagiarism', but the real issue for him is not that the campaign leaders of Mme Royal have studied net art, but rather that net art is part of a network where everything is shared, where phenomena and objects can spread like viruses, and where 'everything is connected to everything,' as expressed by the mathematician Albert-László Barabási.

Hype cycles

In other words, net art was part of a hype. In business terms, a hype cycle represents the maturity, adoption and social application of specific technologies into a market, and net art represents an early stage of the market's (or, network's) recuperation of social and participatory technologies.

ECONOMY

Homophonic
Post-oedipean
Triangle

It is this network discourse that first and foremost must be addressed. But how? In *Artwar(e)*, Bruno answers by appropriating the language of the network. By offering 'artistic risk management training' and 'hype analysis in art,' he suggests that we can speculate in the transformation from work to ware. But, by parodying the language of the network he also turns the network into an object of scrutiny, transforming the ware into a war. Through his performance, we are able to see how the network speaks and acts.

The real issue here is perhaps not just the marketization of art (after all, this is an old story) but how our language, behaviour and interaction are subsumed by capital in the network, and the implications of this?

Network Dada

In Bruno's earlier satirical software *R.R. Engine*, (*The Dadameter*), he compares the proximity of words along two scales: Homophony (how words phonetically resemble each other, and a well known method for the Dadaists) and Google similarity (simply put, how often they appear together in a Google search). C. Bruno and C. Bruni may share homophonic resemblance, but since there is no other relation between them, they do not appear together in the network. Although "net art" has moved into 'The Mainstream' (via spam) to accompany C. Bruni, C. Bruno remains in 'The Wasteland'.

The *R.R. Engine* demonstrates that the vast amount of language in the network, and the semantic analysis performed by Google's search engine may produce surprising constellations of words and semantic openness. However, through an attempt to waste money by buying 'cheap' Google AdWords (e.g. 'dream'), he also shows us that 'The Wasteland' where signification is less stable and surprise may occur, tends to be excluded. Mainstream words simply have a higher value (click rate) and are always prioritized.

Beyond sense-perception

What is then the effect of the transmutation of language into capital? As we are encouraged to click before we understand the semantic context, one may speculate that the transmutation happens at a pre-linguistic level, and thus colonises the formation of subjectivity. Perhaps, as suggested by Mark B. N. Hansen, this effect is intrinsic to 21st century media in general (cell phones, sensors, social media and behavioural tracking technologies). Contrary to 20th century media, network media today tend to operate beyond the level of sense-perception. Possibly, we need a new Dadaist movement to deal with this?

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BACK WHEN WHAT?

Participating in the university

Armin Beverungen

What would it mean to reinvent research as participatory practice? Part of the response depends on how one thinks of the history of the university: has it always been a space of authority and exclusion, where participation was only ever a political concept laughed at, and where the subjects of research where always objectified and spoken for? Or has it been a space where collaborative research was possible and where new forms of social, cultural and political participation were developed, practiced and disseminated?

Whatever one may think of the history of the university – its function as an institution teaching religious obedience, producing supposedly reasonable subjects of the enlightenment, or reproducing the ideological state apparatus – it can only ever be understood with recourse to its relation with capital and the state. And for the last thirty or forty years, not least since Jean-Francois Lyotard's insightful remarks on the rise of performativity and the subsumption of research to commerce, this relation has been thoroughly transforming. Today, while we dwell in what Bill Readings calls the ruins of the university, the university continues to function not despite but because of the lack of a guiding idea or architecture. It is so thoroughly integrated into neoliberal governance that it is difficult to imagine how it could become disentangled from it.

The university is hardly a mere victim of neoliberalism. It has never been too far removed from the state or capital. At the turn of the 19th century, it already played a key role in the emergence of monopoly capital and the rise of the modern corporation, specifically by developing and trialling its two pillars, namely commercial technology and organizational management, as Christopher Newfield has demonstrated. With the universities in the 1960s and 1970s illustrious centres of anti-corporate and anti-state protest, they were primary targets of a neoliberal assault. In the business school, the shift was clearly marked from a project to professionalize management via the humanities, to neoliberal thinking which turned managers with higher aims into the hired guns of finance capital, as Rakesh Khurana has recounted.

Yet it is not only the business schools, nor their graduates in finance and consulting, that are complicit with neoliberalism. As Jeffrey Williams has convincingly argued, student debt serves as a mechanism for market conscription, wherein students are no longer exempted from market mechanisms or from selling their labour power. Instead, they must immediately understand their education as an investment in their human capital. This is the pedagogy of student debt, and the university of finance is thoroughly marked by it. We can teach students about digital culture or about network sociality, but the lesson of finance – of investing in oneself, of paying back debt – will already have left its mark. Here participatory practice means first of all participating in capital investments and practising debt servitude. This is how the university becomes a playground of global finance and students become finance's guinea pigs.

While subjectivities and forms of cooperation are marked by finance, that is not to say that finance manages to thoroughly subjugate its subjects. The financialisation of daily life, as Randy Martin calls it, although thoroughly transforming our relation to ourselves and to others – potentially reducing any encounter to an opportunity to enhance one's social capital – nonetheless produces its own antagonisms. Sure, the university positions itself as a provider of value added between its neoliberal subjects endowed with human capital and the market that seeks to commodify, price them and exploit them. Yet, once humans are asked to conceive of themselves as capital, as Morgan Adamson suggests human capital theory does, they also potentially recognize the contradictions and absurdities this involves. We all know how awkward and unpleasant it is to talk to someone who we know only speaks to please, and only listens to benefit. This mode of sociality that finance imposes is thoroughly obscene.

It is also incapable of sustaining the university today. As much as finance always relies on a productivity that lies elsewhere, the university of finance cannot function without a remainder of something other than finance. As many commentators including Andrew Ross have noted, the university simply cannot function like a marketplace. It is practices of collaboration and sharing that sustain the university but it is precisely these that finance undermines, thereby threatening the very reproduction of the university. The social productivity of academic labour and of study are inimical to finance and project other forms of sociality and participation in mutual practices. Fred Moten and Stefano Harney suggest that study proposes a mutual debt that is opposed to financial debt and credit; instead of individualized debt servitude it produces mutuality in debt that can never be repaid. For finance it is merely bad debt, but for us it means the production of common wealth.

Reinventing research as participatory practice might in this light mean sharing and reproducing the common wealth to be found in the university and beyond. And that again might mean, as Moten and Harney suggest, that we have to work through the undercommons of the university and learn how to steal from it. If we acknowledge that the primary target of critique in the university today might not be state ideology but finance as a movement of enclosure of the university commons, and if participatory practice can only emerge from these commons, then we must establish counter-enclosures that protect them. This of course already is a call for participatory practice, research or otherwise. The places were these practices open up the university might not be expected to be called business schools or incubators – but we might be able to turn them on their heads. *This piece is based on research conducted with Casper Hoedemaekers, Jeroen Veldman and Stephen Dunne.*

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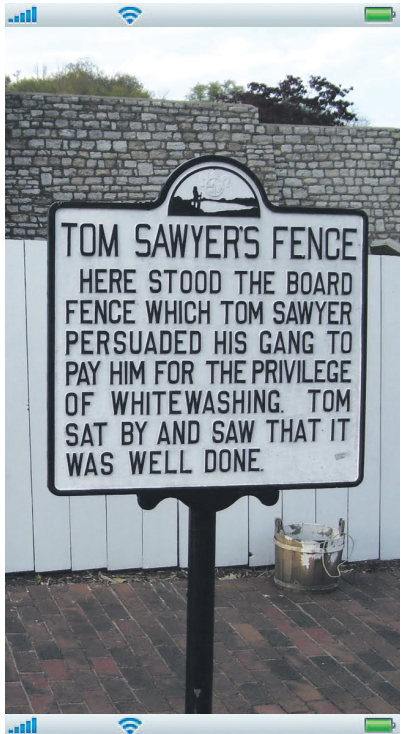
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TOM SAWYER'S FENCE
HERE STOOD THE BOARD
FENCE WHICH TOM SAWYER
PERSUADED HIS GANG TO
PAY HIM FOR THE PRIVILEGE
OF WHITEWASHING. TOM
SAT BY AND SAW THAT IT
WAS WELL DONE.

A new model for the distribution of wealth?

Crowdfunding or funding the crowds?

Renée Ridgway

BWPWAP (Back when Pluto was a Planet) the social 'welfare states' of Europe not only provided health care for everyone but a sizeable amount of money for culture, which was generated from tax revenue. Many artists and cultural practitioners had the opportunity to apply for grants or received patronage, sponsorship, sold their work, or even had jobs. The contemporary discourse in the cultural sector has now shifted and takes its cues from neoliberal policies of development, adopting an 'everything for the market attitude'. This has led to the Europe's assimilation of the U.S. inspired laissez-faire approach to culture, and subsequently transforms cultural practices into the burgeoning imagination of 'creative industries'. The creative industry is marked by a particular condition of state withdrawal of financial support for culture while emergent forms of online, networked platforms increasingly facilitate private donations. For example, electronic money transfers using digital technologies have enabled micro-finance networks that restructure the funding support and patronage earlier available to cultural practitioners. These have ensured an even quicker transfer of the private wealth of citizens to individuals within the cultural sector, such as with the phenomenon 'crowdfunding' (the focus within the cultural sector is reward-based crowdfunding where a non-financial reward – or 'perks', usually a limited edition print, or a cultural artefact – is manufactured in exchange for contributions).

A surrogate for former public monies

Instead of governmental support, increasingly more and more art workers are being forced to engage with crowdfunding as a legitimate means to finance artistic practice by drawing on their networks, primarily their friends, families, and colleagues. With crowdfunding, it now appears, as if the network will not only provide attention, feedback, and reputation, but also create a means of monetary support for many of these projects, as a surrogate for former governmental or public monies. While this reliance on distributed networks is celebrated, there is very little attention paid to the balance of trade-offs and returns in this model. The excessive reliance on colleagues or 'friends', entails other dynamics in these tit-for-tat exchanges, which need to be unpacked: affect, exploitation, and indebtedness. Relationships with people become even more entangled, and unlike money, which is anonymous, brokering agency for artistic projects results in a negotiation of social relations. Will crowdfunding en masse lead to a new model for the distribution of wealth as it is claimed, or is it a mode of financialization (commodification) of one's very own social relations?

The state is no longer held accountable and it is private - either individual or corporate bodies - who decide what will be financed and for how much.

Developing new cultural economies means looking beyond micro-networked patronage models such as reward-based crowdfunding. That is, if one wants to be remunerated for cultural endeavor that isn't only market driven.

BWGWAS (Back When Greece Was A State)

Jack Henrie Fisher & Georgios Papadopoulos

Grexit, a combination of the words Greece and exit, is a term coined to describe the possibility of departure of the country from the EMU and the consequent financial panic. *Grexit* is the title of an edited volume, which constructs a reading of the financial crisis by analyzing the iconography of

Images by Jack Henrie Fisher

the Drachma, the oldest European currency. *Grexit* is the chronicle of a death foretold. *Grexit* is an act of violence that tries to disrupt the flow of the semiotic code of value by short-circuiting currency. Grexit speculates on the unconscious attachment to money, predominantly by reference to the Drachma, but latently also to the Euro. *Grexit* excavates the future of the European Union by assembling the history of the Drachma.

According to Marshall McLuhan, forms of media tend to become more visible as they become embedded in other media, i.e. when they become content. Can the Drachma be understood as the content of the Euro? The study of the Drachma can illuminate invisible psychological attachments and blockages that underlie the process of European monetary integration.

Using McLuhan's strategy allows us to work in retrospect and to achieve a historical understanding of already-dated monetary media and technologies. By reversing this methodology and appropriating old media to hack contemporary currency, we can deconstruct money's visual language and security apparatus. Alongside the McLuhanist insight, we appropriate Flusser's thesis that technical images open a window to the functioning and the logic of the apparatuses that produce them; *Grexit* presents some impressions of the Greek monetary apparatus from looking through this window.

Technical images essentially change our view of reality by imposing theories and concepts as mediations through which we represent reality, giving images a peculiar agency that acts upon our experience of the environment. Banknotes seem to share some of the same ontological attributes of the technical images; they mediate between economic theory and the constitution of the system of prices, regulating our experience on the basis of the maxims of economic value. At the same time they try to incarnate economic value, providing a screen for the projection of desire and the constitution of subjectivity. An analysis of social reality via money is possible through the deciphering of the symbolic and iconographic elements in banknotes and coins. We could argue further that money promotes the same kind of magical thinking as other types of technical images, but this time in relation to value.

The iconographic elements that communicate the value and the authority of the official currency, effectively legitimizing money, construct a text that can support the associations between monetary value and political power. Currencies can be analyzed as a proxy in the process whereby a homogeneous identity is constructed and communicated.

Anderson used the term "imagined communities" to explain the construction of a collective identity. If by imagination we can understand the capacity to perceive something that is absent, then monetary media facilitate the mass orientation of imagination towards a common and therefore objective perception of value and identity, replacing the necessity of social familiarity. Perception that is not based on immediate physical interaction, but on the re-cognition of standardized symbols imbued with a shared meaning. Although the capacity to imagine may not have definitive borders, symbols are effective insofar as they facilitate social interaction or refer to a common narrative that supports the unconscious associations of value and authority.

The iconography of the Euro attempts to reassemble Europe's past and present through a series of abstracting architectural references. The windows and gateways that are used as icons of the architectural style are meant to symbolize "the spirit of openness and co-operation in Europe", while the bridges are "a metaphor for communication among the people of Europe and between Europe and the rest of the world". The design decisions do not lack a sense of irony: Europe is "open" like a fortress; it "cooperates" like Germany and Greece. What is obvious in this iconography is its failure to represent a common European identity and to arouse feelings of belonging among the citizens. The abstracted architectural imagery is yet another reverberation of the arid, brutal and deterritorialized space of the market, the organizing utopia of the European monetary apparatus.

Crisis-ridden Greece occupies a paradoxical position, as the inextricable foundation of the

Extract from *Subjectivity 5* (2012).

Stevphen Shukaitis & Joanna Figiel

One of the most common, and most unfortunate, ways in which academic analysis tends to treat the knowledges and ideas produced by social movements, and by collective creativity more generally, is to find a proper name or two that diffuse creativity can be attached to and associated with. This strategy creates a kind of intellectual enclosure, individualizing ideas into forms more amenable to management and historification. This seems to be the case, especially, when we indeed find ourselves at a moment in which, as Matteo Pasquinelli claims in a recent article, 'Italian theory' has achieved a certain kind of hegemony within certain academic discussions, much the way that 'French theory' did in the 1980s. The problem with this is that in addition to focusing on a limited number of individual authors and attributing everything to them this often runs the risks of cutting off the more radical forms of analysis that have been developed in favour of a few concepts that can endlessly be circulated shorn from the circumstances and concerns that gave rise to their formulation in the first place.

This conjunctive approach is perhaps the most productive and valuable feature of Bifo's writing, and autonomist analysis more generally: its ability to act as a kind of crossroads for bringing together different forms of political analysis and social theory, to act as a bridge between them. Although autonomism is most widely known through the success of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's book *Empire*, as well as the subsequent follow-ups *Multitude and Commonwealth*, the autonomist 'tradition' of thought circulated within various social milieus well before the success of that book, and continues to do so into the present. In the English-speaking world, this has been seen mainly as a way to bring together a

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European imaginary as well as the Other to its excluding normativities. "Greece" is the Euro's first formal reference: the Euro glyph €, published in 1996, is explicated by the European Commission on Economic and Financial Affairs, as "inspired by the Greek Epsilon pointing back to the cradle of European civilization and the first letter of Europe, crossed by two parallel lines to indicate the stability of the Euro." The Euro glyph thus re-inscribes the Greek epsilon (ε) as a bow aimed backwards, implying from its very start the violence and reversals to come. And in the crucial twist of this ideological inscription, the epsilon letterform acquires an

extra-alphabetical line, forming a double bar: the figure of a security apparatus appears at even the molecular scale of the glyph. In another alphabetical peculiarity, the only non-Roman alphabet to appear on the Euro is Greek, and the Greek letters that spell ΕΥΡΩ (Euro), according to the logic of the monetary apparatus, are distributed on the Euro's printed surface with the same frequency as the Roman ones. The country is also present in the blue-hued representation of classical architecture in the five Euro note — the cheapest but also most abundant of denominations. Greece must be accounted for and alluded to; it is inscribed everywhere and

provides the semiotic material for the Euro's signification; but, as it contemplates default, it is excluded from the wealth of the Union and becomes the figure of the profligate Other who must carry the responsibility and burden of the Euro's collapse. Greece will indeed pay back, but with a vengeance.

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Crowdsourcing Design: For a Fistful of Dollars

The crowd always means *them*… never *us* as a community of peers.

Florian Alexander Schmidt
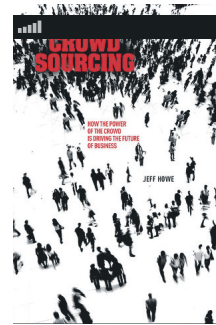
Back in the summer of 2006, the journalist Jeff Howe coined the term *crowdsourcing* to describe a new mode of production on the Internet. Howe wasn't the first one trying to give it a name, but it was his coinage that came out on top. The teaser for his original article in Wired read: "Remember outsourcing? Sending jobs to India and China is so 2003. The new pool of cheap labor: everyday people using their spare cycles to create content, solve problems, even do corporate R & D." 2006 was also the year when the idea of so called Web 2.0 gained momentum. A common claim was made that it was the individual user who would now control the Internet. The enthusiasm reached its peak when in December, *Time* magazine made You the Person of the Year. In the years since Howe filed his article, the actual applications of *crowdsourcing*, however, raise the question who really is in charge?
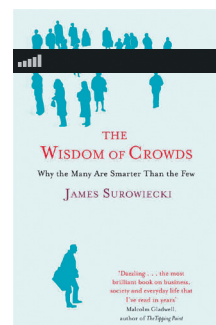
A crowd is other people

The last time that so much attention was given to the term crowd was in the 19th century, when Europe's masses were pressing into the cities. Charles Mackay's *Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*, published in 1841, is a classic example of how the crowd was seen back then. It was not until 2004 that the meaning of the term got a thorough reassessment in James Surowiecki's book *The Wisdom of Crowds: How the Many are Smarter than the Few*. He turned popular belief upside down by showing that under certain conditions, the crowd could actually be wise and productive. Jeff Howe then took up the idea of the productive crowd and described new business-models built on that principle online. Various business gurus followed Howe's lead, all trying to find ways to best make use of the crowd online. Since around 2006, the usage of the term crowd has changed and it is now more popular then ever, a sought after

resource — what remains is its inherent power structure: The crowd always means *them*, as in *let them eat cake*, never *us* as a community of peers.

Let them design logos

Today, crowdsourcing is widely used in spheres from ornithology to astronomy, from coding to design. In many fields, it is indeed a productive way to orchestrate the efforts of amateurs and professionals in order to create accumulative and generally accessible knowledge. Wikipedia is a good example of this. Things get problematic in ethical terms, however, as soon as the work of the many benefits only the few. It gets even more questionable when the same work is done a hundred-fold, when it becomes a feature of the system, that 99% of the work is unpaid and redundant and when the results of the work are neither useful for the majority of creators nor for the public. All this is usually the case with crowdsourcing in design, in particular with so called 'logo mills' such as *CrowdSpring.com* or *designenlassen.de*. The largest among a dozen of these platforms that specialise in the crowdsourcing of logo-design is 99designs.com. The fast growing site has now more than 194,000 registered designers and has already conducted over 176,000 design contests. On average, a client is paying $247 per contest and gets 116 different finished designs for that money, while only one designer gets paid for the work. For the client, $247 is already a very low price for a logo, but for the designer, the average price comes down to $2 per design. What is potentially a powerful tool to coordinate the collective intelligence of a community turns out to be an even more powerful mechanism for the exploitation and waste of unpaid labour on a massive scale.

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Marxist analysis of class, although one that is greatly expanded from a more narrowly oriented focus on industrial labour and its politics, with the conceptual tools of post-structural analysis of subjectivity and culture. The same can be said of the broader constellation of autonomist social theory and analysis, which has opened up a very productive re-conceptualization of a wide variety of areas including immigration and borders (Mezzadra; Papadopoulos et al), the production of subjectivity (Read; Thoburn), finance (Marazzi; Mezzadra and Fumagalli), politics within the university (Moten and Harney; EduFactory Collective), gendered labour in capitalist governance (Federici; Driscoll), networks and media politics (Terranova) and subtraction from networked control (Galloway and Thacker; Bratich) among many others.

This collection is also one that involves the collaboration of, to borrow Deleuze and Guattari's phrasing, the conceptual personae from different traditions. And, as with the engagement of a distinct set of authors and/or tradition of analysis, a number of new conceptual terms appear, which are used in specific, occasionally idiosyncratic, but ultimately illuminating ways. A number of these are explained in the glossary section that follows the editorial. But there is one term that is perhaps most central for the overall theme of this issue – the notion of class composition, particularly in relation to ways in which Bifo's work is involved with the project of rearticulating the idea of class composition for present conditions. Class composition is most closely associated with forms of unorthodox Marxist thought developed in the 1960s, particularly in the writing of Mario Tronti and Raniero Panzieri (Wright). The argument they made was that for too long analyses of capitalism and class dynamics had focused too much on how history was shaped by economic and political elites, which is to say how it was shaped by Capital. Rather, Tronti and Panzieri suggested that analysis should begin from looking at moments of revolt and insubordination, from wildcat strikes and the refusal of factory discipline, or in other words a reversal of perspective from which analysis begins. According to this argument, the history of capitalist development is determined not by the internal logic of capital or its contradictions, but rather the necessity of dealing with working-class insubordination and refusal, and finding ways to turn these

antagonistic energies into new forms of accumulation. The classic example illustrating this is how the revolt against factory discipline and working conditions in the 1960s and 1970s led to the development of more highly automated, flexible and decentralized post-Fordist production methods. Or, how the desire for a greater flexibility in work contracts and living conditions were transformed into precarious and insecure labour. The concept of class composition is useful in understanding the relationship between the powers of revolt and refusal found within radical political movements, or their political composition, and the ways in which these capacities are territorialized within the shifting of the overall production process, understood as technical composition.

To take this argument into a more specifically subjectivity and media-oriented direction, one could relate the above to the rise of more participatory forms of media production and interaction. A class composition analysis with regard to the rise of participatory media would look first towards developments in participatory media practice coming out of movement organizing, marginal art practices and so forth. This would include, for example, looking at the rise of zine production, pirate radio production, such as the role of Radio Alice in the so-called 'diffuse creativity' of the Metropolitan Indians and related current in 1977 (Berardi), pirate television production, as well as open source production and the hacking of other media forms. An autonomist approach to understanding the rise of participatory media would focus on two major themes. First, how many of these practices emerged as politically antagonistic forms of interaction before they became integrated into the workings of a capitalist media assemblage. Second, although the increasing reliance of forms of capitalist valorization on participatory media practice makes it necessary to reconsider its potentials as part of a radical politics today, it does not mean that its potential has been compromised because of this process. An excellent example of this kind of autonomist analysis is Nick Dyer-Witheford and Greg de Peuter's work on video games and empire, which draws out these very elements: from turning the dispersed labour of coders and hackers into a resource for capital and military training, to the possibility of turning these dispersed labours into tools for an emergent gaming multitude.

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Pluto is a queer entity, a planet that does not fit proper categorization.

EMOPORN: Shifting porn through emotion

By Francesco Macarone Palmieri aka Warbear

"BWPWAP" presents a colorful range of epistemological questions. From one side my interest is to reflect on Pluto as the object of research: a queer entity, a planet that does not fit proper categorization. It creates questions, a strange space, a hiatus. This brings me directly to the other side, to analyze and to discuss the solar system in which Pluto is contextualised and continuously shifted; the platform signifying Pluto as the result of a scientific process. To analyse the relationship between subject, object and method, I start to wonder in terms of scientific discourse about how sure are we that Pluto wants to be defined. How sure are we that Pluto accepts the system in which it is continuously shifted as a planet or a star? Did we ever question Pluto's definition of the solar system? Did we ever question the method imposing upon Pluto a specific identity? And following that, what is the meaning of objectivity in scientific method? What influence is produced by emotions as enemies of scientific "objectivity" in the representation of the "other"? Can they be used within the scientific method to produce a multiple vision?

NetPorn studies

Through this series of questions my body of work emerges, bringing the "NetPorn Studies" field to the surface. Back when Pluto was a planet, pushed by the advent of digital technology, NetPorn Studies came out as a multidisciplinary field mixing Queer Theory, Gender Studies, Media Studies and Performance Art. One of the main goals was the use of pornography as a text in which to deconstruct identity boundaries where both heteronormative and homonormative politics produced a flat market space. Applying D.I.Y. (Do It Yourself) action, moved the thinking to a political level toward the practice of cultural individualisation. But this momentary flash was subsumed by the re-flattening process of the social media economy where platforms transformed self-representation into niche markets; cool hunters sold the tendency; "Suicide Girls" became MTV testimonials and the academy went to war to conquer the velvet goldmines of the last intellectual market.

Epistemology of emotions

Now that Pluto is not a planet anymore, this research project does not want to run back to the point where imagination collapsed toward the digital colonies of information markets. It does not want to flag the recognition of Pluto's restricted right to citizenship. The idea is to focus on ideology in the post-porn-scene with a breath of *Entropology* and a touch of *Nethnography*; a theoretical corpus blossoming from the field of an "Emoporn" scenario or the rethinking of porn as sublime experience and the making of human science as an epistemology of emotions. Through the Emoporn idea we practice vertigo, rushing in sprawls of diasporic revelation. To break is the verb; the blasphemy of signs stabbing symbolical systems in order to show how bodies are captured in a status-role geography managed by world wide porn markets. This is what Emoporn is about.

Music and Body as a Ritual-Performance

Getting close to our body in order to deeply understand interactive technology in contemporary performances

Marcello Lussana

"It is a question of producing within the work a movement capable of affecting the mind outside of all representation; it is a question of making movement itself a work, without interposition; of substituting direct signs for mediate representations; of inventing vibrations, rotations, whirlings, gravitations, dances or leaps which directly touch the mind."
Gilles Deleuze - *Difference and Repetition*

Nowadays performances are more and more like a ritual, using the body as a technology of self-learning.

The body takes over the thought and realizes itself in a variety of meanings: a physical body, flesh, an object or a concept. This process allows a constant possibility for interaction, an open alternative to the concept 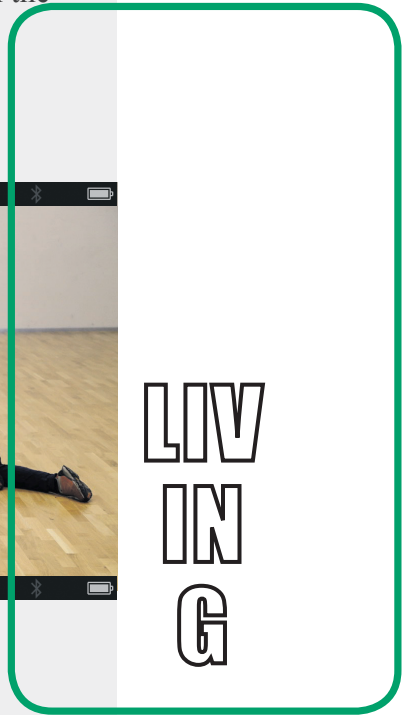of identity. The resulting continuous exchange between different knowledge can be understood just together with practice: our body has to perform together with the thought - like in many traditional rituals and in some contemporary art.

Two philosophical approaches feeds this practice: the philosophy in movement of Gilles Deleuze and Phenomenology. I will use Gilles Deleuze's concept of difference as a generative tool of thinking, doing, performing and understanding technology. This is realized through a constant exchange, a movement between these different activities: this communication is the practice of generating difference.

Phenomenology allows the opportunity to analyse what is happening in the body directly: we can get close to our bodies, our technology, our thought. This exercise of closeness is realized in the act and the process of performing: there it is to find an opportunity to create this connection the technology comes then closer to the body too, for examples with sensors attached to our skin. I consider this special body perception a thin line connecting music,

performance, ritual and thought: this is the actual subject of this research.

Is this closeness a possibility for a new understanding of knowledge?

LIV IN G

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Absurd Congruences

Sheila Ribeiro

Bruce
Bruce Springsteen has been invited by the Naples' mayor to name a significant movie theatre in the city. Some Naples people found it really absurd and, frustrated, had complained while at the same time felt impotent towards the issue. Is it Bruce's fault? Is it the mayor's naughty choice? How responsible is the movie theatre for that matter? Is it really happening in Naples?

Mleeta, war amusement park

Mleeta
Mleeta is a war theme amusement park. As Hezbollah's concept, it is both a touristic leisure option for local families, as well as a questionable event for non-locals. It is war site-seeing. Scary, right? How amazing to have a park in which one might rebuild local identities and culture! *Mleeta* is located in South Lebanon. *Mleeta* is located in the Israel/Palestine conflict.

Mleeta is 09/11, is Osama Bin Laden's and Saddam Hussein's death-murder. Is *Mleeta* about amusement? Is *Mleeta* about war? Can war and amusement be related? Well, we know they can. We've seen it on games, on the news, and this relationship has been extensively analyzed by authors, yet, this relation was never explicitly expressed in a thematic park in this way.

INRI Christo

INRI Cristo
Here comes *INRI Cristo* - a Jesus Christ aspirant who re-elaborates musical video clips. His crew remake Britney Spears, Rihanna, Amy Winehouse - to mention a few. Is he delusional? *Youtube* has been a potent platform for designing glocal identities, yet, how do all these female pop anglophone singers come into his remakes?
  What do all these facts have to do with each other? Well, they are and aren't bizarre. They arise as digital culture "events" (Badiou). Made with, coming from, as well as being glocal biopolitcal tensions and communication, they reveal new

Britney Spears. *Toxic.*

values and contemporary traces - the same ones that shape them as mediabodies. Reverberating across dimensions; an imbrication of contrasting processes; a system of constant dialogue with environments, in which human bodies are part of, but no longer, the central agents. They are mediabodies in an ongoing flux of changes (Katz and Greiner)

INRI CRISTO – Britney Spears Versão Mística de Toxic

Native
Let's now face the organic food brand *Native*. Its cookies are twice wrapped: first in an "Amazonian" big green packaging and then, secondly, split into three aluminum small bags. Could it ever be sustainable? Derived from its manufacture, nutritionists, official "Eco-certified" environmental institutions, designers and advertising campaigns, how can it be considered to be native?

Glocalism
These supposedly lateral events manifest in different formats, in a tangential way, a "clear" origin: contemporary analog-digital glocal realities. *Glocalism* draws both the traces of origin as well as mostly global mediatic traces. Thus, on the one hand, its signs refer to belonging. It reaffirms its clearly known fixed identity: an attempt to reproduce "authenticity", things, values and references that claim not to be culturally corrupted, as if this action of reproducing signs could ever maintain their specific constitution intact. The belonging ensures, at least at the level of desire, a comfortable belief in a stable geographic territoriality. Nevertheless, it is a genuine "not alien self" rebuilt. On the other hand, the absurd congruence is total reinvention and, being so, is part of a "global community", not an analog one, but an analog-digital one, which transits across several displacements while neocaptalism forces flux and multiple "metisse" selves. They are both symptom and system. The only possible "native" nowadays is the communicational mediabody. Thus, the absurd congruence emerges as contemporary glocal sensitivities in the form of a mediabody of ongoing geopolitics.

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C' EST PAS POSSIBLE QUE...
    OLHA QUE ESQUISITO!?!
    شو غريب...!
    HOW WEIRD! Oximoron!
NOSSA... not clear... WHAT
THE HELL!?!
MEDIABODIES
ASSURDO!!!
Isn't it weird?
How awful!

BWPWAP

Ugborough, Devon http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?q=50.388712,-3.871479&ll=50.390627,-3.87311&spn=0.040439,0.0063429&num=1&t=h&vpsrc=6&gl=uk&z=14

Accessed from Google Maps, June 2008

Bani Brusadin

Shepherds disguised as wolves (as seen on the Internet!)

or, camouflage, fiction, confusion and other forms of adventurous rebellion in the age of networks

In January 1995 an English conceptual artist called Harry Kipper mysteriously disappeared during his bike trip around Europe, whose alleged goal was writing the word "ART" on the map of the continent. A live, prime-time program on the Italian national TV devoted itself to searching disappeared people sent their reporters to find Kipper. Instead, what they stumbled upon was a trap, set by a mysterious group called Luther Blissett, who had invented and then claimed the whole story. It was the first of a series of pranks whose main victims were the media as producers of mass distraction, censorship, hysteria (and just plain bullshit). Inspired by antecedents like Emmett Grogan, the Yippies, Joey Skaggs' pranks, hoaxes in Italian underground (a/traverso, Il Male, Trax) and neoist Montsy Cantsin, Luther Blissett was a multiple name that anybody could take up and use. Its strategy, based on collective myth-making and "open reputation", allowed hundreds of activists, artists or just participants to build a manifold collective story of an underground pop movement whose leading figure was a non existing persona with a computer generated face and the name of a English-Jamaican football player. "All warfare is based on deception", said Blissett quoting Sun Zi.

Camouflage

Camouflage indicates not only a disguise or the use of masks or pseudonyms, but a whole narrative construction, a complex set of mirrors where a subject merges with the environment, her identity blurred or rebuilt from scratch, and where confusion frustrates expectations and contributes to break the ideological mechanism. The camouflaging subject speaks self-consciously with an unrecognizable voice (or even the enemy's voice) and provokes a chain reaction due to the momentary blockage in the normal flow of information. This is followed - at some point - by a moment of disclosure, that ultimately leads to the collapse or a radical evolution of the first tactics once the original goal has been reached.

Three main narrative operations are at play, simultaneously or separately: being deceitfully recognizable, usually as a collective name or a fictional persona; seem to be someone else; or just being *nobody in particular*. As a three-faceted prism, these operations allow us to identify grassroots camouflage as guerrilla communication practices, both in art, activism and in the grey areas in between. Yet, if "communication guerrilla" (as defined by AFRIKA Gruppe) was drawing upon the culture and politics of analogue network society, what kind of challenges and possibilities for creative action are emerging in the age of Google?

Folk heroes

The story of ®TMark up to the Yes Labs casts new light over the idea of folk heroes of the digital age, where fiction has become a tool for open and potentially scalable forms of collective political activism. From the art standpoint, tactics based on identity confusion are shifting from the "hook, line & sinker" model of media pranks into slower, more persistent and elaborate narratives, as for instance the Janez Janša operation, to resist the narcotic effects of information overdose. At the same time, new types of hoax and deception become relevant once again as paradoxical forms of self-conscious trolling, where self-organized anonymous users, as well as networks-savvy artists, explore the potential of ever-changing acts of disturbance (like identity hijacking or *excessive participation*) within the privatization process of the on-line public sphere.

Playing across the whole spectrum of networked creativity - from *digital folklore* to new grassroots social movements, a new breed of experimental projects explores fiction, and camouflage in particular, as a seed of a new epic struggle against the toxic waste of capitalist realism and social networks white noise.

Usability or useless ability?

Mikkel Bech-Hansen

Tangible User Interfaces (TUIs) is a term covering a promising array of design approaches for interfaces between humans and computers that – instead of relying on screen, mouse and keyboards – relies on physical representation and manipulation to interact with the digital world. TUIs are currently rapidly evolving as we see more and more systems based on tabletop interaction, multi-touch surfaces and video tracking to name but a few. The act of playing music is an activity which is tightly linked to the human body and thus TUIs are an obvious approach when designing new interfaces for playing and producing music, as the tangibility provides means of activating the body and the haptic senses in the interaction with the instrument.

The design of current TUIs for musical instruments, however, seem to be stuck in the paradigm of usability, and many contemporary attempts to design experimental musical interfaces for tangible interaction differ little from Hiroshi Ishii's pioneering research prototypes at MIT in the early 1990s (i.e. the metaDesk).

Playing music is both a creative, aesthetic and technologically mediated mode of practice. However, as opposed to other technologically mediated practices (such as word processing, accounting, CAD, etc.), the role of technology in music should not be primarily to optimize tedious or time-consuming workflows. The role of technology in music as well as in other creative endeavors should rather be to challenge the user through a bodily and aesthetic dialogue and thus facilitate qualities such as expressiveness, exploration and immersion in the interaction.

Anders Askenfelt and Erik V. Jansson suggest that augmenting musical interfaces with haptic feedback through carefully synthesizing actuation and vibration improves the precision of the musician in terms of intonation and timing, and thus the overall playing-experience. By integrating haptic feedback into TUIs we should be able to support both the technical performance as well as the aesthetics of interaction of digital musical instrument-playing, by mimicking the highly manual and physical modes of interaction, traditionally inherent in musical performance on acoustic instruments. Hence I suggest that the potentials of interfaces that resonate, resist and challenge the user cognitively as well as physically, could perhaps inform the development and design of interfaces for creative practices, and lessen the emphasis on efficiency and usability.

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Glitching Paralogy

Andrew Prior

Is research today occupied more with mundane acts of recategorisation, and – after Bologna – with what Lyotard already called performativity? Or does it still engage the kind of marvel and wonder that so many ascribe to Pluto and that BWPWAP captures as a cultural term? (Excerpt from the Researching BWPWAP call)

Lyotard's claim was that research and culture would be increasingly legitimated not on their own terms, but through their performance in supporting the smooth running of governmental, economic and bureaucratic systems; treating them as inputs and outputs in the production of power. He suggested a paralogical approach to offset this tendency, which broadly meant those kinds of research and culture that highlight underlying systemic conditions, critique the rules of such systems, and/or change the rules.

It seems that glitch and noise based practices might constitute a vibrant paralogical response: after all, they draw our attention to the materiality of their media, the conditions of technology and the constructed character of aesthetics. In hacking, bending, and repurposing they are changing the rules of the systems they exist within, simultaneously helping us better understand the conditions of technology, and suggesting new approaches and attitudes through with to approach such conditions.

And yet, glitch and noise practices themselves are just as susceptible to problems of performativity: through over-exposure they can become clichéd and drained of their impact; they loose their ability to provoke when their tactics are aped by much more stable, easily accountable fields such as advertising, popular music, and the music technology industry (for example in the production of glitch plug-ins). In short, their sharp shock looses its punch.

Glitch theorists and practitioners already account for these issues through an emphasis on process, 'wild' or 'pure' glitches (Cloninger 10; Moradi 8) and the moment(um) of glitch (Menkman). Indeed, such discourses provide useful concrete examples of tensions between performativity and paralogy in action. Rosa Menkman discusses this tension in the 'Glitch Studies Manifesto':

"to design a glitch means to domesticate it. When the glitch becomes domesticated, controlled by a tool, or technology (a human craft) it has lost its enchantment and has become predictable. It is no longer a break from a flow within a technology, or a method to open up the political discourse, but instead a cultivation." (7)

Yet there remain questions around the degree to which such strategies solve the problem or simply parallel the notion of 'Just-In-Time' manufacture. Clearly the tensions between wild and conserved glitches are full of productive antagonisms that, in themselves keep discourses firmly focussed on the assumptions and conventions of such practices: a good indicator of their status as paralogous. Perhaps the problem here is not the individual instances that might be thought of in terms of glitch and noise practices, but their aggregation into a stabilised genre and defined generic conventions. In all good examples of glitch-art the subject overflows generic characteristics: it is the relation of noise-to-signal that counts: it's not the noise that is interesting per se, but how the signal is modulated by it. From this perspective, context becomes the dominating structure, not genre.

To extend the paralogical potential of glitch and noise means to avoid its stabilisation as a genre geared to fulfilling the expectations of the art market, festival circuit, or research institution. What remains of glitch when one leaves behind generic convention? An emphasis on the materiality and limits of media; of a hands-on, tinkering, heuristic approach; on 'doing it yourself', but perhaps more importantly on community practices – Do It Together, and Do It With Others. Finally, if one substitutes an emphasis on noise for the dynamic tension between signal and noise (known as the 'equivocation' within Information Theory), such work can be critiqued and mobilised without resorting to generic conventions. It becomes less important to emphasise the affective shock of glitch, and more important to trace the ecologies and archaeologies of such ruptures. (This way of thinking further aligns glitch and noise practices with disciplines such as Media Archaeology, already a fruitful combination begun by many practitioners but theorised by Garnet Hertz and Jussi Parikka in their Zombie Media project at Transmediale 2011.)

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Autonets: Post-Digital Networks, Post-Corporate Communications

To imagine and work towards post-digital networks is to participate in a decolonization of technology and to imagine possibilities that both precede and follow the digital.

Micha Cárdenas

From the temporary shutdown of ThePirateBay.org and Wikileaks.org at the DNS level to the shutdown of cell phone communications to prevent protests in Egypt and San Francisco, corporate communications infrastructures are obsolete for resistant communities. In contrast, people in resistance are imagining new post-digital futures. "I have a vision of a post-digital future where the kind of communication we have today with cell phones and internet seems like an ancient relic… And a memory that supports this vision is that my ancestors could communicate telepathically," said black feminist poet Alexis Pauline Gumbs at the 2012 Allied Media Conference. The Electronic Disturbance Theater has referred to the Transborder Immigrant Tool (TBT) as an example of Science of the Oppressed, an approach informed by forms of knowledge production that are marginalized by the rational focus of the digital. My work on the TBT led me to Local Autonomy Networks (Autonets), which is being developed in collaboration with community-based organizations including Gender Justice LA, Allied Media Projects, Strong and Beautiful, and Detroit Represent.

Post-digital networks

Digital technology is the basis for a worldview or an epistemology often referred to as "the digital" which is imbricated with western logics. To imagine and work towards post-digital networks is to participate in a decolonization of technology and to imagine possibilities that both precede and follow the digital. My intervention is to make a 'trans' of color critique, taking inspiration from the queer of color critique of authors such as Jose Muñoz and Roderick A. Ferguson, that rejects the binary logic of the digital and looks to oppressed communities for alternative logics.

Autonets is an artivist project focused on creating networks of communication to increase community autonomy and reduce violence against women, LGBTQI people, people of color and other groups who continue to survive violence on a daily basis. The networks are both online and offline, including handmade wearable electronic fashion and face to face agreements between people. The networks are being established through a series of workshops, performances, presentations and discussions in the Americas and Europe. The project was started by myself but is rapidly expanding into an ecology of networks involving many artists, hackers and activists.

Social reorganisation

Autonets includes a line of mesh networked electronic clothing with the goal of building autonomous local networks that don't rely on corporate infrastructure to function, inspired by community based, anti-racist, prison abolitionist responses to gendered violence. Autonets is fashion hacking for social reorganization, recoding the meaning of fashion symbols such as hoodies that have associations ranging from Trayvon Martin to the Black Bloc, or femme fashion elements like dresses and bracelets, into symbols of connectivity and autonomy.

The effect of the rigid binary division between zero and one at the basis of digital culture can be seen embodied in rigid conceptions of gender, race, sexuality, ability and in broader systems such as the prison industrial complex which decides whether a person is worthy of participating in society or should be locked in a cage. By looking to communities such as transgender and genderqueer people, mixed race and mestiza people and who actively challenge these binary conceptions, one can see the potential for new systems of knowledge to be the basis for new forms of communications networks.

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Picture Caption:

ALOPEZ_CardenasWorkshop9.jpg: Autonets Workshop, Zero1 Biennial, San Jose, 2012, photo by Adrian Lopez / Zero1 Biennial

BEWARE the Animal Hacker is Lurking

By Helen Pritchard
Published: 31.01.2013

In the depths of the Cumbrian hills a dairy cow changes its route to stare deep into the camera lens of the 'Environmental Virtual Observatory' (EVO). Downstream at 15 minute intervals organic matter is pushed through turbidity probes, sometimes causing the computation to glitch and upload its own movement into a data storage warehouse. In this muddy, messy situation of the EVO there is something lurking, something which might be described as the 'Animal Hacker' the non-human animal, an entity that exploits the computational ecology, reconfigures it in an act of what Donna Haraway would describe as worlding. In the EVO the computation of 'nature' provides an intimate, pervasive and profound reconfiguring of bodies and processes (both human and non-human).

Biological cosmopolitical practice

The EVO is one of a number international projects that have emerged from the convergence of cloud computing, big data, remote sensing technologies, large scale government funding initiatives, the rising temperature of the earth and the co-evolving vision of what Katherine Hayles describes as the "Computational Universe" (3). Who and what participates in the computational worldings of earth observation is a question of ethical and political urgency? Donna Haraway describes the importance in that these practices are done with care so that significant others might flourish.

Sticky Dripping Fleshy Tangles

Computation is an entanglement of apparatus and entities. Understood through Karen Barad's 'Agential Realism', computation does not allow us to observe the earth neutrally, nor does it only constrain what we see, rather it "helps produce and is part of" the earth-body it images (101).

Bushnell   06-15-2012 13:57:21

With emerging knowledge systems of contemporary earth observation such as the EVO, what also emerges is the question of how we regard the material practice of computing: the way we labour on, exploit and interact with non-human 'nature'. As Barad would say, what is in question is the nature of 'nature'.

Nature Writes Itself !?!

However what happens in computational ecologies if nature is recognized as Vicki Kirby proposes "as neither lacking nor primordial, but rather a plentitude of possibilities a cacophony of conversation" (88)? If we reconsider the participation of living matter in computational ecologies as not just something which is 'sensed', 'measured', 'written' ; or even 'written with', but rather as itself, simply writing or simply hacking. How might we enact worldings that care for, learn with and from? How might we rethink the roles of non-human participation in practices of earth observation, computation and collective becoming?

Disruptive Animal

The promise of ubiquitous computing, remote sensing, environmental observation has been, as Dana Cuff and Mark Hansen note, an endeavour to make the "invisible visible". This process positions nature as silent and accessible, unable to make itself visible. However as Vicki Kirby reminds us 'Nature' is articulate and writes itself through a variety of instruments, translations and representations (81). We are well aware that data is indicative, that it throws up nodes of reference that effectively correspond (81), however these articulations, these interferences with computation, are not always compliant. In my tentative observations, the entangled entities cows, diatoms, owls, plants are lurking. Animal Hackers articulate themselves both through compliance with and disruption of computational architecture that has been laid down for them. The process of articulation by the Animal Hacker is very different to the act of making the invisible visible. The hacks of experiencing entities in computational systems emerge through intra-actions, entanglement between component part entities, in Baradian terms between the 'measured object' and the 'measuring device' (337).

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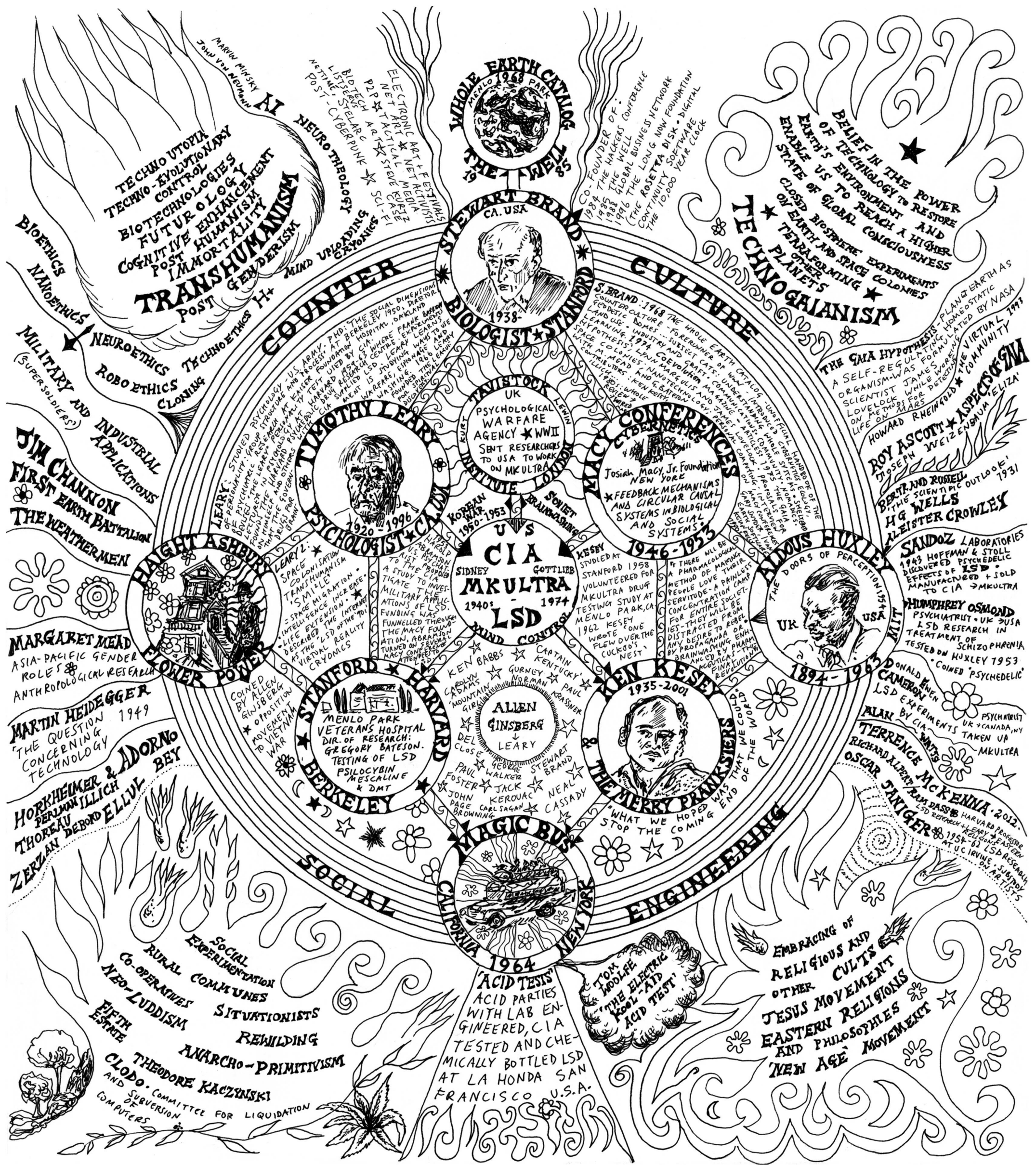
Image by Suzanne Treister

Image by Suzanne Treister

Towards an Evil Media Studies (extract)

Matthew Fuller & Andrew Goffey

Evil media studies is not a discipline, nor is it the description of a category of particularly unpleasant media objects. It is a manner of working with a set of informal practices and bodies of knowledge, characterised as stratagems, which pervade contemporary networked media and which straddle the distinction between the work of theory and of practice.

Evil media studies deliberately courts the accusation of anachronism so as to both counter and to enhance the often tacit deception and trickery within the precincts of both theory and practice.

• stratagem one: bypass representation
• stratagem two: exploit anachronisms
• stratagem three: stimulate malignancy
• stratagem four: machine the commonplace
• stratagem five: make the accidental the essential
• stratagem six: recurse stratagems
• stratagem seven: the rapture of capture
• stratagem eight: sophisticating

machinery
• stratagem nine: what is good for natural language is good for formal language
• stratagem ten: know your data
• stratagem eleven: liberate determinism
• stratagem twelve: inattention economy
• stratagem thirteen: brains beyond language
• stratagem fourteen: keep your stratagem secret as long as possible
• stratagem fifteen: take care of the symbols, the sense will follow
• stratagem sixteen: the creativity of matter

Further Exercises

There is perhaps as little chance of providing a definitive catalogue of evil media strategies as there is of coming to a well-regulated distinction between good and evil. Cunning intelligence has, since Ancient Greece, slipped into the interstices of publicly sanctioned knowledge, requiring an equivalently wily intelligence to decipher. For Nietzsche, the breakdown of any self-evidently discernible distinction between good and evil was precisely the province occupied by sophistry: another good reason to take inspiration from these maligned outsiders of Western intellectual history. The indiscernability and secret antagonism of good and evil is not a cause for lamentation or reproach: indeed requiring as it does that we rethink our approach to media outside of the (largely tacit) morality of representation, it allows us to explore digital or networked media forms without the categorical distinction between theory and practice.

Of course it is not just the theory/practice distinction that finds itself challenged within digital media. Distinctions between material and mental, between work and leisure, between the accidental and the necessary are equally challenged. If there is anything approaching a theoretical claim to be advanced here, it perhaps concerns what recent theories of work have called the new revolutions of capitalism: the novel types of political subjectivity which emerge from such analyses need to consider the wisdom of passing over into these paradoxical strategies of the object.

//written for *The Spam Book*, Jussi Parikka and Tony Sampson eds. Hampton Press, New Jersey, 2009//

Full text online:
http://www.spc.org/fuller/texts/towardsevil/

Matthew Fuller and Andrew Goffey's book *Evil Media* was published by MIT Press in 2012. See http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/evil-media-0

TECH NOLOGY
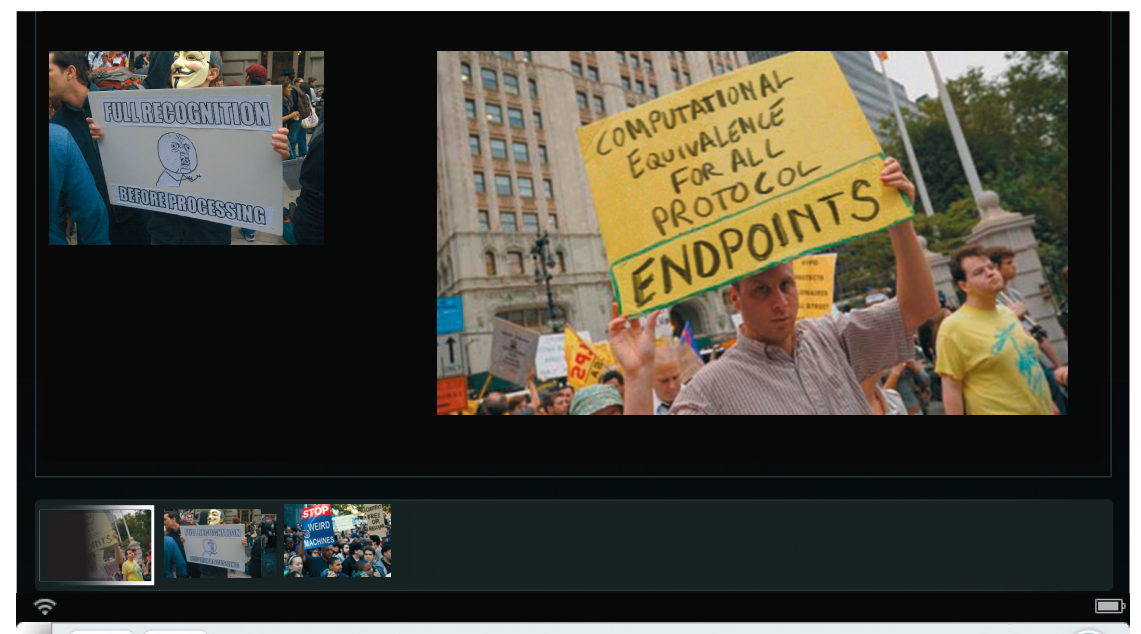
Coding Undecidability

Geoff Cox & Robert Jackson

The politics of computation is located in its *decidability*.

All efforts made to secure, censor and control software into platform appliances (the iPhone, iPad paradigms), prevent the user from knowing which processes are running or being blocked. These appliances are foreclosed to maintain profit.

The AppStore and Amazon Kindle Stores, enforce the rentier logic of ⟶ DRM-protected mp3s, movies or a Kindle ebooks within computing where owners earn income simply from the act of ownership itself. Agreements are struck without recourse to democratic processes and discursive norms whilst the marketplace blithely dictates laws, and assigns patents onto objects it hardly understands.

But the problem with formal general-purpose computation is that it is a flexible machine in its inception and like the ownership of common land, the control of that flexibility should belong to no-one. A theoretical Universal Turing Machine (UTM), a sophisticated set of algorithms which are 'Turing complete', simulates the mechanism of any other Turing Machine (TM). Building an appliance which controls or secures the outcome of computation is like saying: build me a TM that will not run on a UTM in all cases.
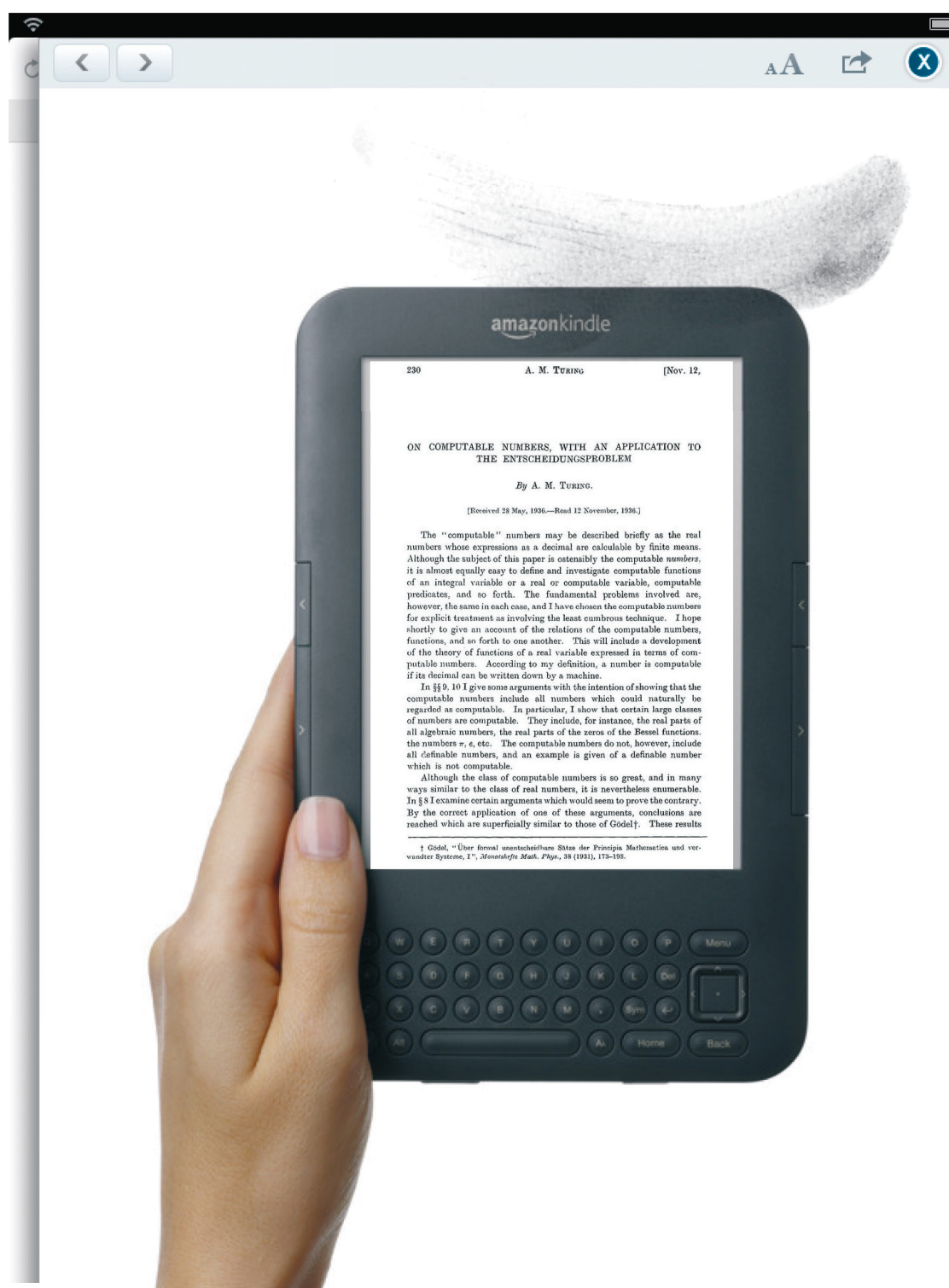
The politics of computation is located in its *decidability*. To be decidable, a formal system must decide on every input given to it, capitalism desires such a standardized "perfect" machine which decides on every action, regulates every user, secures every dissident, the universalist "archetypical capitalist machine."

Entscheidungsproblem

But the problem is exactly that; an unsolvable problem, or to be more precise a decision problem. This is the phenomena known in computer science and mathematics as *undecidability*, and in 1936 Alan Turing showed that no program could ever completely decide on another program.

The deterministic output of a program must either halt (decide a 'yes' answer - i.e. this is input malicious) or fail to halt (decide a 'no' answer - this input is not malicious). Turing showed that it was impossible to build a program that 'decided the halting problem' precisely insofar as it, itself obeyed the halting distinction of the program it was intending to check. The computational decision between 'yes or no', 'secure' or 'insecure', 'profit' or 'loss', suddenly morphs into a paradoxical tension.

It is clear then, that proprietary software operates as an ideological perversity, a fundamental level of illusion upon which freedom is constructed. It denies the existence of undecidability, and because of this, its delusional construction offers all the freedoms one wants, apart from access to the language (or code) to articulate non-freedom. All freedoms in this sense are superficial fantasies; just as freedom of choice is a "vulgar liberal notion" it disavows that ones choice has already been decided in advance.

If communicative capitalism seeks to falsely make sense of undecidable systems by making them decidable and closed, the critical role of aesthetic production today is to open up the cracks that constitute the foundation of computing and disturb the core ideological value of foreclosing open code.

Back to the Future in a Place Called America: The Ancestries and Technologies of Pre-Columbian America

GABRIEL VANEGAS

In pre-Columbian times, pre-American empires developed high and accurate media-technologies, almost incomprehensible through our Western logics and reality. Examples like accurate astronomical measurements, bio-technologies, megalithic architecture, three dimensional geometry and mathematics, among others achievements, cannot be directly translated into our understandings of what media is, what technology is, what time and body are. Therefore it is necessary to explore more generous logics that could give us a far closer comprehension of those displaced technologies. A group of Bolivian theorists and an institute in Budapest, based on archeological studies, have shown that a possible logic based in four dimensions (the Tetralectic), rather than a two dimensional logic (The Dialectic), could be one key clue in the understanding of the pre-Columbian media technologies. This approach not only gives us new understandings, but also new alternatives for inventions, following a more complex logic, already forgotten more than 600 years ago, and inherited, over 15,000 years ago.

The incomplete and misleading version of American history built from the perspective of Spanish colonization and post-colonial Americans, with its neglect of the rich history of pre-Columbian civilizations, has led me to deep research of possible ancestors to the indigenous peoples of the Americas. That background may in turn provide clues for projecting the indigenous American's inherited reality in the 15th century, and therefore aid in understanding indigenous use of nature-driven technologies and media prior to European contact. Archaeological findings involving linguistic sources, plants, infectious organisms, micro-predators, megalithic architecture, and fauna overseas suggest that the Incas, Mayas and other indigenous American groups were influenced by ancestors who potentially had links to a transoceanic exchange. The remains of sophisticated enterprises, such as the megalithic constructions featuring cosmological alignments at the Tihuanaco ruins in Bolivia, reveals the possibility of an established civilization in the Americas as far back as 15,000 years ago. This evidences the existence of a rich cultural and social system, potentially advanced enough to have established transoceanic contact with other cultures long before the European invasion. Such a perspective is crucial in establishing the grounds for appreciating these groups' pre-Columbian use of technological media: the visual and tactile method of writing with the Incas' Quipus; the three dimensional geometry and mathematics of the Yupana Inca; nano-structured materials such as Maya Blue pigment; the Mayan calendar; and other technological apparatuses cannot be approached through, much less understood with, a thoroughly Western aesthetic inheritance and modern consciousness. Thus it is not only relevant but necessary to reevaluate the meaning and roles that the body, space and time play within and outside this sphere of knowledge, while challenging contemporary concepts of reality, science, technology, prehistory, shamanism, and cosmology.
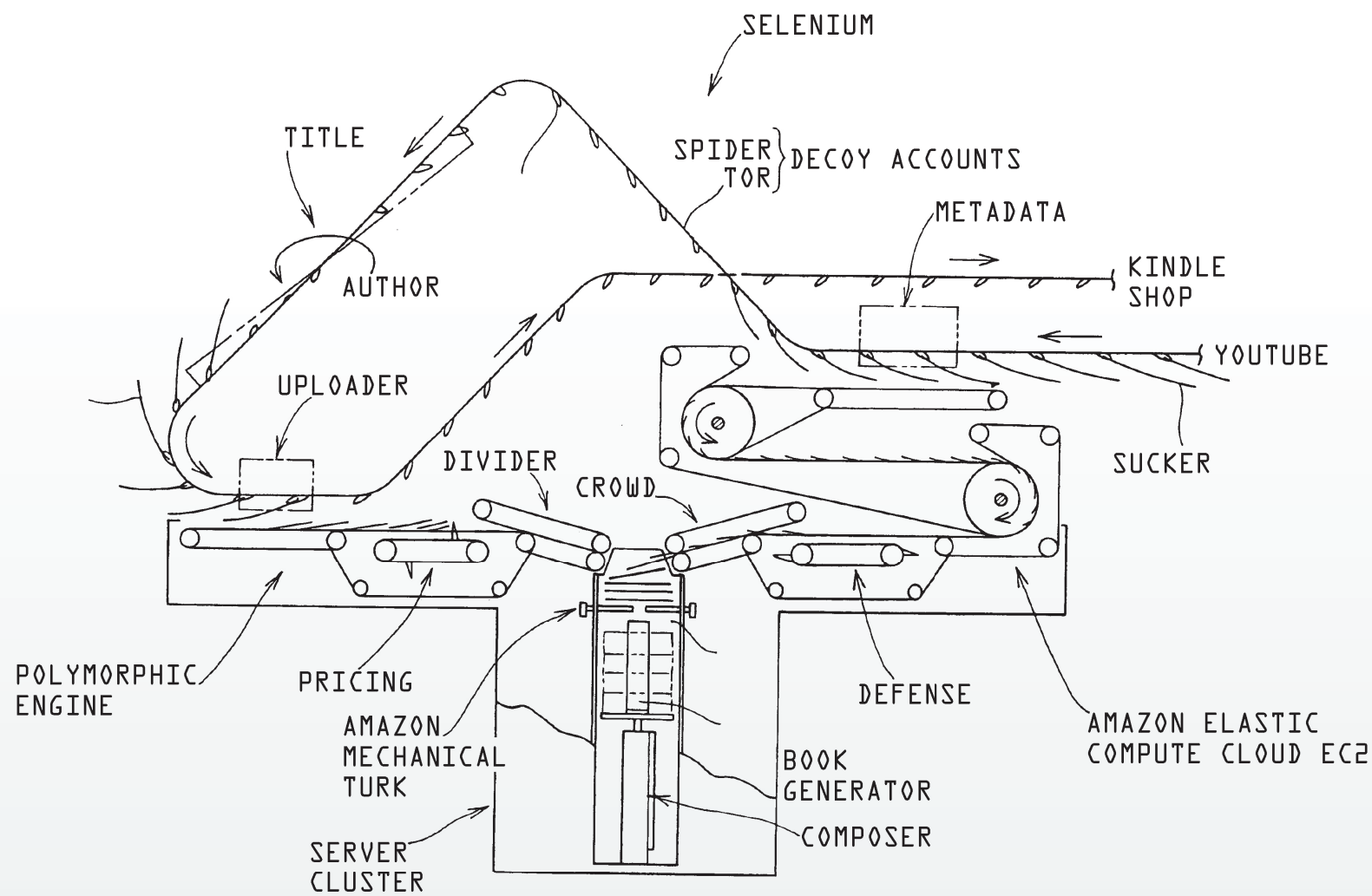
The Project Formerly Known As Kindle Forkbomb
http://uuuuuuntitled.com

Amazon's Kindle-Shop was vented with vast quantities of robot-generated self-published E-Books containing millions of Youtube comments. This new form of distribution is highly unstable and creates conflict; accordingly Amazon started to delete all books, accordingly The Project mutated code and new books made paid their respects to the Kindle-Shop. Since, the spiral of virtual violence is vibrating. Yes Youtube comments are new literary genre - brutal & anonymous rants, endless permutations, atomic text aches, crowdlit-erature craves and linguistic pornography peeps, recursive cut-up kicks digital Ellroy with futuristic beat.

The consequence: Google (Youtube) at-tacks Amazon (Kindle). Badly based on bold interpretations of territoriality layout of corporate Terms & Conditions. Legal Art: ACBS Vs. CFUPD: Anonymous Content Borderline Syndrome Vs. Corporate Fan-tasy of Unlimited Power Disease.

The Project affirmatively abuses corporate cloud-infrastructure, literature and legal provocations as soft-shield. Below this loud cloud of noise data communication distribution networks for dark content within the EC2 are setup to serve as infra-structure for the imminent Umwandlung.

This is an UBERMORGEN project, no copyright 2012-13

The Technocrats' Magazine, 1933. Cover art by Norman Saunders

Three Crises: 30s-70s-Today

Brian Holmes

The Autonomous University is an old dream that finds new expressions in every period of systemic change and political upheaval. This seminar is part of a global constellation of parallel efforts to establish a new basis for militant research, educational experimentation and public political debate. At its heart are lectures and group discussions at the intimate scale of a self-organized classroom, relayed and augmented by the use of Internet resources. The sessions have been planned in collaboration with members of Occupy Berlin. Their aim is to produce useful knowledge about the historical roots and possible futures of the current political-economic crisis.

Seminar Outline

GOALS: The seminar seeks to develop a framework for understanding the present political-economic crisis and for acting within and beyond it. Historical study is integrated with activist experience and artistic expression. The seminar is part of the autonomous university program developed by Occupy Berlin.

It includes Internet resources for sharing research notes and reference materials. All of this builds on a similar experiment at Mess Hall in Chicago (http://messhall.org), with inspiration from the Public School, the Edufactory network and other autonomous education initiatives.

FORMAT: An introduction, six core sessions and a conclusion, compressed into one intensive week (see calendar for dates/ times). Readings can be done in advance or later, as desired by each person. The first hour of each session will be a lecture/ slideshow by Brian Holmes, an autonomous researcher and cultural critic living in the US. The second hour is a group discussion, seeking to integrate the North American perspective with European historical experiences. The respondent for the first five sessions will be Armin Medosch, a Vienna and London-based researcher with whom the theoretical framework of the seminar was developed. Other respondents will be sought in the course of the event.

CONCEPT: The development of capitalism is marked, every thirty or forty years, by the eruption of extended economic crises that restructure the entire system in organizational, technological, financial and geopolitical terms, while affecting daily life and commonly held values and attitudes. In the course of these crises, conditions of exploitation and domination are challenged by grassroots and anti-systemic movements, with major opportunities for positive change. However, each historical crisis so far has also elicited an elite response, stabilizing the worldwide capitalist system on the basis of a new integration/repression of classes, interest groups, genders and minority populations (whose definition, composition and character also change with the times). In the United States, because of its leading position within twentieth-century capitalism, the domestic resolution of each of the previous two crises has helped to restructure not only national social relations, but also the international political-economic order. Nothing ensures that the same thing will happen again. By examining the crises of the 1930s and the 1970s along with the top-down responses and the resulting hegemonic compromises, we can try to cut through the inherited ideological confusion, gain insight into our own positions within contemporary neoliberal society, identify the elite projects on the horizon and begin to formulate our own possible agency during the continuing period of instability and chaos.

Text from:
http://brianholmes.wordpress.com/2012/06/18/a-seminar-with-occupy-berlin/

Notes from Messhall, Chicago:
http://messhall.org/?page_id=771

SESSIONS

Session 1

Introduction: technopolitical paradigms, crisis, and the formation of new hegemonies.

How to grasp the potential for systemic change that lies hidden in the turbulence of a major crisis? How to symbolize it and express it through intellectual and artistic means? The seminar begins with a theoretical concept of more-or-less coherent "long waves" of capitalist development, understood as technopolitical paradigms. These waves are typically generated in specific geographical regions, but they extend their influence across the globe. For twenty to thirty-year periods, technologies, organizational forms, social institutions and global economic and military agreements find a working fit that allows for growth and expansion, up to a limit-point where the paradigm begins to encounter conditions of stagnation and internal contradiction. In some cases, known as regulation crises, the resolution of the crisis stabilizes a social order corresponding to an entrenched productive system. In other cases, technological bifurcations and even shifts of global hegemony may occur. So far, the resolution of each major crisis has added another a new technological-organizational-cultural layer to the previously existing ones. That's what makes world society so damn complicated!
Reading
Harvey, David. The Enigma of Capital: and the Crises of Capitalism. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. Print. Chapter 5.

Session 2

Working-class movements and the socialist challenge during the Great Depression.

This session begins with an analysis the assembly-line mass production paradigm in the United States, then turns to economic and social conditions following the Crash of '29. We follow the interaction between labor movements and communist doctrines, while examining the major institutional innovations of the Roosevelt administration (and contrasting them to German history in the discussion). Can the 1930s be understood as a "regulation crisis" of Taylorist mass production? What are the forces that provoked the crisis? Who emerged as its major actors? Where were the initial solutions found? How did the New Deal become an idealized figure of class compromise for succeeding generations, far beyond the United States?

Reading
Weinstone, William. The Great Sit-Down Strike. New York: Workers' Library Publishersm 1937. Print.
Lash, Scote and John Urry. The End of Organized Capitalism. Gerrards Cross: Polity Press, 1988. Print. 17-29, 66-83.

Session 3

The Council on Foreign Relations during WWII and Keynesian Fordism.

Only after 1938 was the economic crisis resolved in the US, through the state orchestration of innovation and production effected by wartime institutions. Corporate leaders from the Council on Foreign Relations were directly inducted to the Roosevelt government and planned the postwar monetary and free-trade order later enshrined in the Bretton-Woods treaties. What kinds of technological and organizational changes were brought by wartime planning? How was the intense labor militancy of the 1930s absorbed into the Cold War domestic balance? To what extent did an American hegemony shape the industrial boom in the Keynesian social democracies of Western Europe and Japan? How were the industrial welfare states supported and enabled by neocolonial trade relations and resource extraction? Why do people continue to see postwar society as a positive norm?

Reading
Boggs, James. The American Revolution: Pages From a Negro Worker's Notebook. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1963. Print. Introduction.
Negri, Tony. Revolution Retrieved. Writings on Marx, Keynes, Capital Crisis and New Social Subjects (1967-83). London: Red Notes, 1988. Print. 3-22.

Session 4

The '60s revolts, Third-World self-assertion, counter-revolution.

The brief convergence of labor movements, student revolts and minority rights campaigns in 1968 was a global phenomenon, spurred on by Third World liberation and the war in Vietnam. This session begins with anti-systemic struggles and then zooms in on the SDS, Black Power and Feminist movements in the United States. Participants in the discussion will fill in the comparisons and contrasts with Germany and other countries. Did the US and Europe internalize global socio-economic contradictions during this period? Which aspects of the political and cultural revolts posed real obstacles to the existing economic structure? Which ones later became raw materials for the formation of a new hegemonic compromise? What were the elite reactions to grassroots insurgencies?

Reading
Cabral, Amilcar. The Weapon of Theory. Address delivered to the first Tricontinental Conference of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America
held in Havana in January, 1966. Web. <http://brianholmes.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/4a-cabral_weapon-of-theory.pdf>
Carl Davidson. "The Multiversity: Crucible of the New Working Class". Revolutionary Youth & the New Working Class. Ed. Carl Davidson. Pittsburg: Changemaker Publications, 2011. Print. 21-51.

Session 5

The Trilateral Commission and Neoliberal Informationalism.

Wildcat strikes, welfare claims and high resource prices imposed by producer countries (notably OPEC) all contributed to the crisis of the 1970s. But there was more: the breakdown of Bretton-Woods in 1971 and the conquest of relative autonomy by Western Europe and Japan, along with the Third World push for a New International Economic Order. The launch of the Trilateral Commission in 1973 was an elite response to the crisis, laying the basis for an expanded hegemony whose sovereign expression was the G7 group, founded in 1975. The coming of "postindustrial society" was announced by sociology, while innovations like the microprocessor went into mass production. Cooperation among trilateral elites was paralleled by financialization and the rise of computer networks. In the US, the Treasury-induced US recession of 1980-82, the hi-tech "Star Wars" military buildup and the emergence of a distinct, university-based innovation system became the linchpins of a new technopolitical paradigm: Neoliberal Informationalism. We will consider the major features of the new paradigm and discuss the way it became hegemonic in the US, Western Europe and Japan.

Reading
Zbigniew Brzezinski. Between To Ages. America's Role in the Technetronic Era. New York: The Viking Press, 1970. Print. 8-30, 98-116.

Powell, Lewis F. Attack on American Free Enterprise System. U.S. Chamber of Commerce, confidential memorandum, Aug. 23, 1971. Web. <http://brianholmes.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/5b-powell_memorandum.pdf>

Holmes, Brian. "The Flexible Personality. For a New Cultural Critique." Transversal. Machines and Subjectivation. 01. 2002. Web. <http://eipcp.net/transversal/1106/holmes/en>

Session 6

1989 and the roots of current crisis.

With the breakdown of the USSR in 1989, followed by the first Gulf War, the world-space was opened up for transformation by the Trilateral economic system, based on information processing and just-in-time production. The 1990s witnessed the largest capitalist boom since the postwar boom. With the collapse of the USSR and the integration of the former Communist world, both the capitalist market and labor force were doubled in size. Transoceanic fiber-optic cables ringed the earth and production lines became regional and global, circumventing national labor regulations. After tracking the Trilateral expansion of Neoliberal Informationalism we'll focus on the rise of the Gulf states and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), as well as the political challenges to the Washington Consensus that took form in the 1990s: the anti-globalization movement, Latin American Leftism, Salafi Jihad. Did these challenges signify the end of the Trilateral hegemony?

Reading
Bryan, Dick and Michael Rafferty. Capitalism with Derivatives A Political Economy of Financial Derivatives, Capital and Class. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006. 103-176
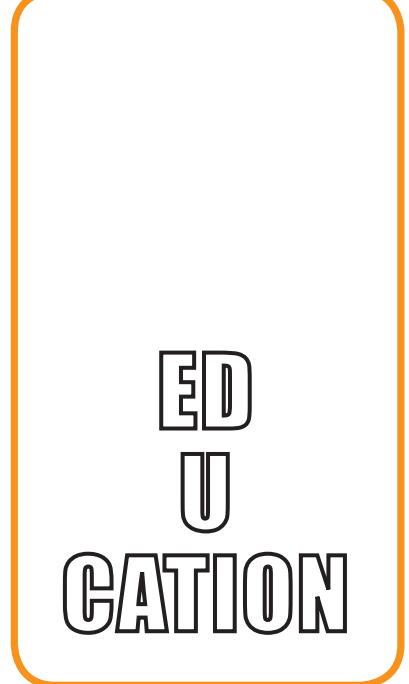

Session 7

Financial crisis and elite attempts to stabilize Neoliberal Informationalism.

Finally we examine the inherently volatile dynamics of the informational economy, culminating in the Asian crisis of 1997-98, the dot-com bust of 2000 and the credit crunch of 2008, followed by the ongoing fiscal crisis of the neoliberal state. Little has been done in the US to control financial capital, but across the Trilateral countries the debt crisis has massively punished the low-income sectors of society and eroded the status of the middle classes, with a major attack on the public university system and a move to cut all remaining welfare-state entitlements. Have we entered a regulation crisis of Neoliberal Informationalism? How have the EU and Japan responded? What paths have been taken by the Gulf states, Russia, Latin America and China? Are new alliances forming among international elites, outside the Trilateral arenas? What could make the grassroots resistance stronger?

Reading
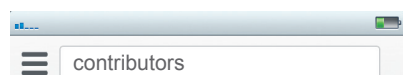William I. Robinson. Global rebellion: The coming chaos? Al Jazeera, Dec 4. 2011. Web. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/11/20111130121556567265.html>

ED
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Session 8

Perspectives for egalitarian and ecological social change in the upcoming decade.

In the absence of reform and redistribution, continued financial turmoil is certain, along with a decline of the Trilateral countries and a reorganization of the monetary-military order. Meanwhile, climate change is already upon us, advancing much faster than anticipated. We face a triple crisis, economic, geopolitical and ecological, with consequences that can't be predicted on the basis of past experience. What are the central contradictions that will mark the upcoming years? Which institutions and social bargains have already come under severe stress? In what ways will the ecological crisis begin to produce political responses? How will class struggles within the US and Europe interact with the crossborder and worldwide struggles heralded by the Arab Spring? Can grassroots movements seize the chances of the crisis? On what basis could new anti-systemic movements be forged?
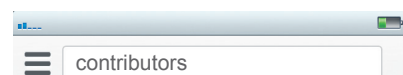
Holmes, Brian. Eventwork. The Fourfold Matrix of Contemporary Social Movements. Continental Drift. Feb 17, 2912. Blogpost. <http://brianholmes.wordpress.com/2012/02/17/eventwork/>

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Christian Ulrik Andersen: Associate Professor in Digital Aesthetics, Aarhus University, Denmark.

Clemens Apprich: PhD researcher, Humboldt University, Berlin, Research Fellow, Moving Image Lab and Post-Media Lab, Leuphana University, Lüneburg, Germany.

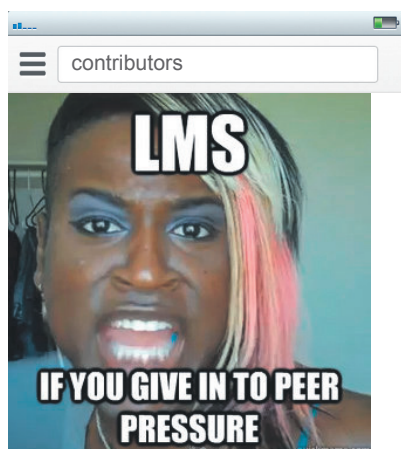**Tatiana Bazzichelli:** Curator of reSource transmedial culture berlin/transmediale, and Postdoc researcher, Centre for Digital Cultures, Leuphana University of Lüneburg, Germany.

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Christophe Bruno: Net artist, Paris, France.

Bani Brusadin: Freelance producer, teacher, PhD researcher at the Arts Dept., the University of Barcelona, Spain.

Geoff Cox: Associate Professor in Digital Aesthetics, Aarhus University, Denmark.

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Matthew Fuller: Reader, Centre for Cultural Studies, Goldsmiths, University of London, United Kingdom.

Michael Goddard: Lecturer in Media Studies, University of Salford, United Kingdom.

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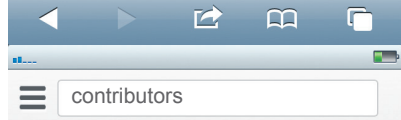
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Yara Guasque: Media artist, Associate Professor of the Post Graduation Program of Visual Arts at the State University of Santa Catarina, Brazil.

Brian Holmes: Autonomous researcher and cultural critic, United States of America.

Robert Jackson: Writer and software developer,

PhD researcher at Lancaster University, United Kingdom.

Marcello Lussana: Musician and thinker born in Italy and living in Berlin.

Andrew Newman: Artist and PhD researcher at the National Institute for Experimental Arts, Sydney, Australia.
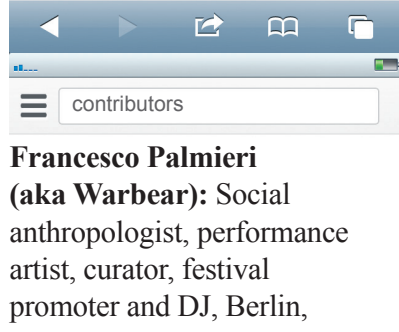
Nora O'Murchu: Research assistant, HEA Futurecomm's project at the University of Limerick, Ireland.

Francesco Palmieri (aka Warbear): Social anthropologist, performance artist, curator, festival promoter and DJ, Berlin, Germany and Rome, Italy.

Georgios Papadopoulos: PhD researcher at the Erasmus University, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

Søren Pold: Associate Professor in Digital Aesthetics, Aarhus University, Denmark.

Helen Pritchard: Artist and PhD researcher, Lancaster

University, United Kingdom.

Andrew Prior: Sound artist, Lecturer in Media Arts, Plymouth University, United Kingdom, PhD researcher, Aarhus University, Denmark.

Sheila Ribeiro: Artist, PhD researcher at PUC, Brazil.

Renée Ridgway: Artist, free-lance curator, writer and educator based in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Florian Schmidt: Freelance Designer, PhD researcher, Royal College of Art, London, United Kingdom.

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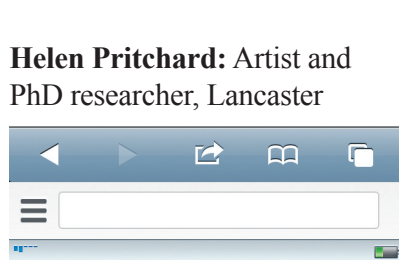
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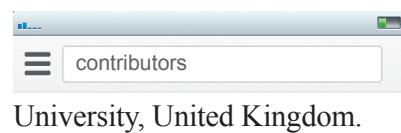
Telekommunisten: Collective investigating the political economy of communications technology. Based in Berlin, Germany.

Suzanne Treister: Artist, living and working in London, United Kingdom.

Magda Tyzlik-Carver: Curator, PhD researcher, Aarhus University, Denmark, Research Assistant in Digital Economy Research Centre, University College Falmouth, United Kingdom.
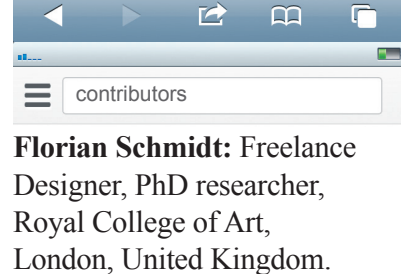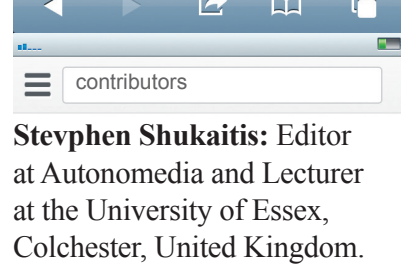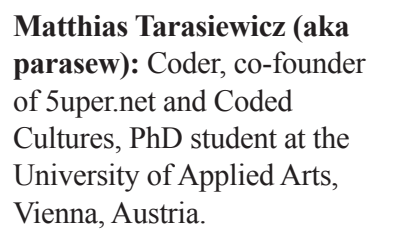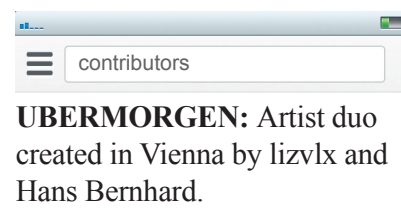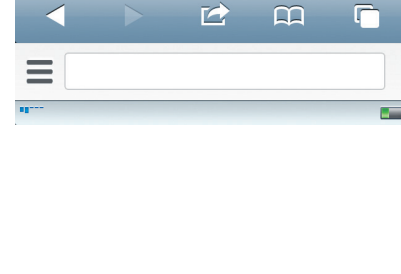
UBERMORGEN: Artist duo created in Vienna by lizvlx and Hans Bernhard.

Cognitariat

In the industrial age, the word 'proletariat' designated the social class of those who held no property apart from the *prole* (the sons) and the strength of their arms. Owning no property, the proletarians were forced to accept a condition of waged labour, that is, a condition of lifetime service and systematic exploitation. In the sphere of semiocapital, the class of producers is composed mostly of people who have no property apart from their own cognitive capacity: nervous energy expressed in form of creativity and language. When the cognitive capacities are set to work, their concrete function and their use value (knowing, expressing and communicating) are submitted to the economic function of increasing capital. Information technologies transform every process into an exchange of signs, and the cognitariat is the one who produces goods through the act of language. This involves the expropriation of what is most intimately human: language. Language is therefore separated from daily life, from corporeality and affectivity, and becomes a captive of capital. Cognitive activity is separated from its social function and its corporality. This separation constitutes the specific form of alienation of cognitive labour. The cognitariat is 'cognitive proletariat': a social class of those who live this separation.

Commons

The idea of the 'commons' is generally taken as an antonym of private property. The enclosure movement, at the end of the 18th century in the UK, demonstrates how common land was fenced off and entitled to private owners. Landowners used the legislative framework at the time to appropriate common land for private profit, and the landless working classes became the labour force of the industrial revolution. In other words, what was inherently held in common (common-wealth) was stolen. As property rights have been extended from land to capital to information, clear parallels exist to how issues of class and property flow from the commodification of information. Nowadays the term is often used in relation to intellectual property, the 'intellectual commons', and its meaning comes close to the public domain. Behind this is the identification of common assets, and the ways these are organised, governed, used in practice, and become part of particular ownership regimes (Copyright or GNU General Public License, for instance). The importance of a discussion of the intellectual commons lies in emphasising that this is not simply a legal issue but one that necessitates political action to protect the commons from privateers. Closely related is the term 'commons-based peer production' as an alternative form of organisation of productive activity. Peer production suggests that the commons is good for innovation outside of the capitalistic relation of property.

Composition and compositionism

How can a group of individuals become a conscious collective subjectivity? Imaginary flows, world expectations, ritual habits and mythologies are diffused as if they were chemical agents in the psycho-sphere, and this diffusion makes possible a transformation of formless aggregates in conscious collectivities that are able to identify themselves more or less temporarily in a common intentionality. This formative process of the collective resembles much more a chemical composition than the mechanical accumulation of organizational forms. It is implicitly a critique of the political subjectivism in the concept of composition (and re-composition) and, at the time same, a critique of empirical sociology. The social process comes to be understood as a heterogeneous *becoming* where technological segments, cultural sedimentations, political intentions, ideological representations, and mechanical and communicating concatenations intervene, and escape the voluntaristic and mechanical reductionism of politics and sociology.

Precarity

The word precarious comes from Latin and means something obtained by prayer, entreaty or a mere favour, something uncertain. Precarity is a state of not being able to know anything about one's own future, being hung by the present. We speak of precarious labour when labour is subordinated to a form of flexible and unregulated exploitation, subjected to daily fluctuations of the labour market and forced to endure the blackmail of a discontinuous salary. The precarious worker is not formally dependent, but his/her existence is not at all free, the waged relationship is discontinuous and occasional, but the dependence is full of anxiety and continuous. In the 1970s and 1980s when the dismantling of the Fordist system and guaranteed wages tied to industrial production began, precarious working conditions appeared as a marginal and temporary phenomenon that concerned above all the young workers that entered into the labour market. At present, it is clear that labour precariousness is no longer a marginal condition, but it is the black heart of the process of global capitalistic production. Precarization is the consequence of the de-territorialization of all the aspects of production. There is no continuity in the work experience: one does not go to the same factory, does not pass along the same paths and does not meet the same people everyday, as in the industrial age. Therefore, it is almost impossible to implement forms of permanent social organization. As labour became precarious thanks to a cellular and reticular transformation, the problem of the autonomous organization of labour must be completely rethought. We still do not know how this organization can be constructed: this is the main political problem of the future.

Psychosphere

Psychosphere is the soft face of infosphere, the field where the recording and the psychical elaboration of the info-stimuli occurs. The consequences of 'info-vasion', nervous overload, psychopharmacology penetration, and fractalization of working and existential time, are manifested in the psychosphere. The psychosphere is the unpredictable effect that info-vasion devices produce in the interconnected global mind. The acceleration and intensification of nervous stimuli on the conscious organism seem to have thinned the cognitive film that we can call sensibility. As the mass of info-stimuli increases, the time available for the elaboration of the nervous stimuli reduces. The conscious organism accelerates the cognitive, gestural and kinetic reactivity. As a consequence, our empathetic capacity seems to decrease.

Recombination/recombinant

The recombination concept emerges as a result of the discovery of the DNA in biological and specifically biogenetic fields. Even before manifesting itself on the epistemological level, the recombination concept circulated in literature from the experimentations of OuLiPo to the writings of Raymond Roussel, the *cadavre exquis* of the Surrealists and the novels of Nanni Balestrini. Recombination is a cognitive and operative method that crosses the more dynamic fields of research and action. Passing from the analogical to the digital, the flows of speech, image and sound perform like the activity of cutting and sewing, dissembled and assembled to increasingly narrow scales. If we accept the idea that the recombinant principle is the key of post-mechanical technologies, and if we assume this principle as an interdisciplinary epistemic paradigm, we can notice that it delineates a common field to the phenomena of life and language. Informatic and biogenetic technologies are funded by the logic of recombination, that is, a meaningless and not dialectic logic: recognizable forms and meaningful ensembles emerge from pure informational sequences (0 and 1, which the image on the computer screen emerges from, the four components of the DNA that the living organisms emerge from). Deleuze and Guattari say in *Anti-Oedipus* 'I don't care at all about my mum and my dad, Oedipus, the original trauma and so on. I am interested in knowing how the language dismantles and rearranges reality, I am interested in knowing how to recombine signs and gestures and bodies in order to find a way out, in order to free desire from its labyrinth'.

Refusal

Refusing to work follows the logic that capitalism is an irrational system that cannot be replaced by anything through better planning or anything that employs its logic. It derives from Mario Tronti's essay 'The Strategy of Refusal' of 1965, pointing out that capital uses workers' antagonistic opposition for its own development. The mistake in Classical Marxism had been to simply see the working class as the antagonistic subject of capitalism, and therefore the advocated alternative to break free of exploitative conditions is for work itself to be transformed through self-determination and made more autonomous (sometimes referred to as 'self-valorisation'). Creative labour can re-appropriate the instruments that are part of its very domination in the 'cycle of struggle' between labour and Capital. This sense of refusal is paralleled by the 'artstrike' calling on cultural workers to stop making or discussing their work from 1990 to 1993 – proclaimed under the aegis of 'Neoism' – plagiarising Gustav Metzger's 1974 proposal for an Art Strike, according to Stewart Home (in 'Assessing the Artstrike 1990-1993'. Yet the artstrike appears a rather tame nihilistic gesture set against the more militant refusal to work associated with Autonomia. To the autonomists, the refusal of work is a strategy toward immanent communism.

Recuperation

Recuperation, is a term, first proposed by Guy Debord of the Situationist movement. It is the process by which "radical" or oppositional ideas and actions become commodified or absorbed into mainstream society and culture. The term is used within 'autonomist Marxism' – the tradition of Marxism which places the self-activity of the working class at its core – which arose during the 1960s and 70s in the work of such intellectuals as Raniero Panzieri, Mario Tronti, Sergio Bologna, Mariorosa Dalla Costa, Francois Beradi, and Antonio Negri. Their thesis suggests Capital has insinuated itself everywhere, and everywhere attempts to acquire the power to coordinate, commandeer and recuperate value.

Semiocapitalism

Semiotics is the science that studies signs. We call capitalism a social system founded on the exploitation of labour and finalized to the accumulation of capital. We can talk of semiocapitalism when informational technologies make possible a full integration of linguistic labour with capital valorization. The integration of language in the valorization process involves obviously important consequences in both the economic field and in the linguistic sphere. It is possible to calculate the working time that is necessary to carry out a mechanical operation, but it is not possible to calculate the time of average labour socially necessary to elaborate signs and to create new forms in a precise way. Therefore, linguistic labour is hardly reducible to the Marxian law of value, and consequently the economy imports new factors of instability and indefiniteness within itself as the valorization becomes dependent on language. Besides this, language imports economic rules of competition, shortage and overproduction within itself. That is how an excess of signs (supply) is generated that cannot be consumed and elaborated in the time of social attention (demand). The consequences of semiotic overproduction are not only economic, but also psychical, as language acts directly on the psychosphere.

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Concept Store #3: Art, Activism and Recuperation. Eds. Geoff Cox, Nav Haq and Tom Trevor. Bristol: Arnolfini, 2010.

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