RESEARCH VALUES 2018

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Menu ×

About

Workshop Details

Programme

Practical Details

APRJA

RESEARCH VALUES

Researching values is an encourage-ment to engage with the politics and circulation of values. How can research respond to the current situation – and the politics of taking things at face value? The call for research into value/s in this sense is a challenge to immedi-ate appearances and invisibilities, for speculation on the media ecologies that produce extreme ideological, cultural, societal and political divides, and serves to question cultural and technological shifts against the background of econ-omization and changing value systems. But research values is also a call for action. In times of immediate and reac-tionary responses to complex realities, we urgently need to provide alternatives to this urge towards simplification, and reinvent the notion of research value/s. How can research respond to the cur-rent situation – and the politics of taking things at face value? How can research move out of its own self-reaffirming loop, in which it mostly fulfills an economic function. How does research face its own values and how do the values asso-ciated with research in turn give it value?

The research/PhD workshop RESEARCH VALUES was organized by Aarhus University, ZeM and transmediale and held at the Brandenburg Center for Media Studies (ZeM) in Potsdam in the days running up the transmediale festival (29-31 Jan 2018). More specif-ically it addressed a number of topics (algorithmic values, datafied values, orga-nizational values, face values, block-chain values, material values) that are all enclosed in this publication. Impor-tantly, it also sought to engage in colla-borative processes of knowledge pro-duction that included online as well as offline activities.

The outcomes of the workshop are presented at the festival by Dionysia Mylonaki & Panagiotis Tigas, Pip Thornton, Luke Munn, Francis Hunger, Kim Albrecht, Maria Eriksson, Ashley Lee Wong, Konstanze Scheidt, Nelly Yaa Pinkrah, Emanuele Andreoli, Lea Laura Michelsen, Marc Garrett, César Escudero Andaluz & Martín Nadal, Calum Bowden, Francesco Sebregondi, Joana Moll, Tega Brain, with Christian Ulrik Andersen, Marie-Luise Angerer, Geoff Cox, Jan Distelmeyer, Søren Pold, Winnie Soon and Magda Tyzlik-Carver.

Work in progress can be found at https://researchvalues2018.wordpress.com/ Following the festival, longer papers will be available at www.aprja.net

Likely to be perceived as (0.85) Learn
toxic   more

SEEM WRONG?

Hilary Clinton is toxic

Unlikely to be perceived   (0.39) Learn
as toxic   more

SEEM WRONG?

Abdullah Öcalan is toxic

Who the Regulation Machine Is: Fake News, Toxic Comments and "Illegitimate" Culture
By Dionysia Mylonaki & Panagiotis Tigas

Computational censorship in the form of fake news and toxic comments regulation is a subject that comes up quite often in the public discourse. We show that computational-censorship, or algorithmic regulation is not a solution, it is another layer to the problem.

   1. Social problems are not strictly definable and therefore not solvable by machines and algorithms, a common property of what has been classified as "wicked" problems (Rittel and Webber).

   2. Paradoxically, companies involved in the advertiser/consumer loop (Google/Facebook) are the ones promising to tackle the problem (Stencel); an automated fact checker could harm the user engagement/revenue metrics and therefore would not be appealing to the investors who are the ultimate decision-makers.

   3. Computational censorship is a form of authority and as such, it is exercised by the powerful. In the case of computational censorship, power belongs to the data/algorithms owners. The demographics of data are very explicit, in this case, as they are infused with western rationalism (west-centric and liberalism driven). Therefore, there is no framework that could potentially legitimise computational censorship universally and for all classes.

   But neoliberalism is an algorithm, in the sense that it is a profit maximisation process through natural selection. Therefore, although the above paradoxes question its rationality, in reality, no one can challenge its raison d'être. Demographics of data and capital can

spread the western "civilised values", fake news can be less obviously fake and socially complex problems can be formulated, being reduced to the level of technology without affecting profit-making. The neoliberal algorithm is resilient and patronising, capable of remaining "legitimate" and "democratic".

Rittel, Horst W. J., and Melvin M. Webber. "Dilemmas In A General Theory Of Planning." Policy Sciences, vol 4, no. 2, 1973, pp. 155-169. Springer Nature, doi:10.1007/bf01405730.

Stencel, Mark. "A Big Year For Fact-Checking, But Not For New U.S. Fact-Checkers." Duke Reporters' Lab, 13 December 2017, https://reporterslab.org/big-year-fact-checking-not-new-u-s-fact-checkers/ Accessed 13 December 2017

Subprime Language

by Pip Thornton

SALE

30th Jan 2018   9:36PM
BATCH #: CRC32
AUTH #: 1055963795
AREA #: ALL

1	liquidity	£0.44
1	lost	£0.13
1	resist	£0.70
1	linguistic	£0.39
1	capitalism	£0.20
1	reclaim	£0.26
1	poetry	£0.18
1	for	£1.96
1	art	£0.77

SUBTOTAL	£5.03
TAX:	N/A
TOTAL	£5.03

APPROVED

Thank you for shopping at Google
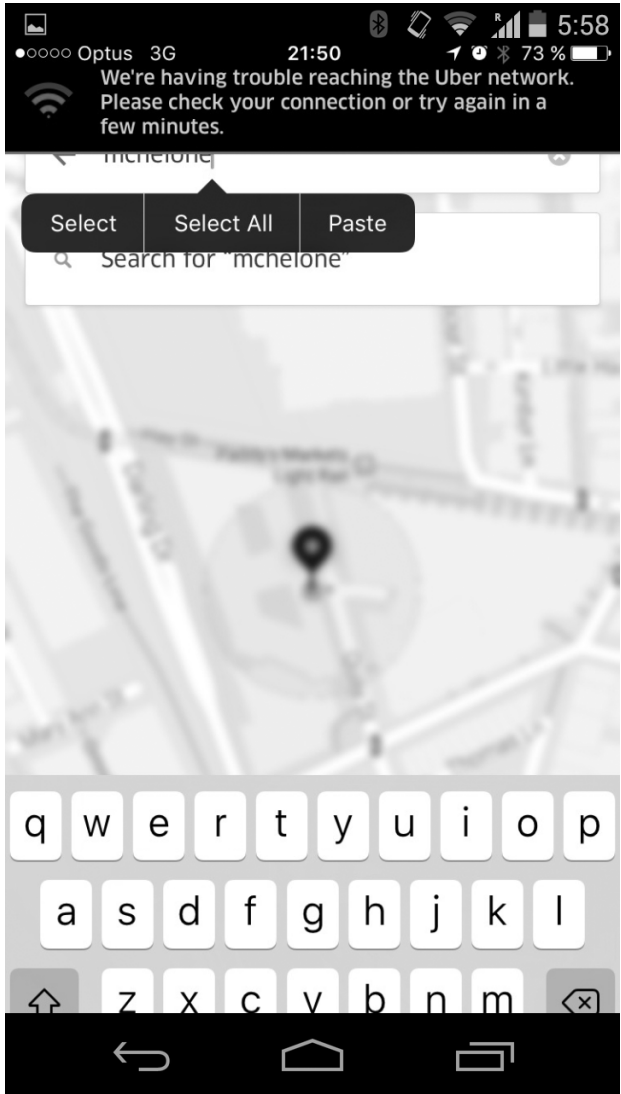
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{poem}.py

Subprime Language:
The Precarious Value of Words in
an Age of Linguistic Capitalism
By Pip Thornton

What is the value of language in a digital age? Should advertising copy be worth more than poetry, for example? Google's commodification of language through AdWords has been called a form of *linguistic capitalism* (Kaplan 2014). But as Google continues to increase its dominance of the informational landscape, this financial metaphor needs pushing further. Today, the words flowing through the portals and platforms of the web have become so infused with the logic of the neoliberal market, they risk becoming *subprime*. In this marketplace, the ongoing effects on and of the language auctioned, sold and exploited in the name of advertising are more and more palpable. In the viral spreading of fake news, political and cultural click-bait and in the daily battles for exposure, it seems that words are being lent against a narrative so tenuous as to make their linguistic function negligible. In this marketplace, words have taken on their own economic value and circulate through digital spaces as commodities, or more accurately as derivatives, giving rise to new levels and types of performative agency. Dangerous narratives and content spread as collateral side effects to the advertising and SEO industry, while at the same time the words that flow through the search bar are stripped of creative potential in favour of exchange value. In this respect, the value of language has shifted from conveyor of meaning to conveyor of capital, with companies like Google taking on the role of language brokers. But as economic capital and linguistic capital circulate through digital spaces at different velocities and at different liquidities, for one to thrive, the other must have a crunch. Always already derivative and liquid in a creative sense, language is now tied to an overriding *economic* derivative value. Words have become 'subprime', 'illiquid' or 'toxic'; indifferent to any version of themselves but the most lucrative to Google. But how long do we have before the linguistic bubble bursts? And how can we resist the destructive power of linguistic capitalism when our very means of communication has been compromised? Perhaps the only way to reclaim language from the algorithmic marketplace is to turn the algorithm back on itself, to take back control, and to return poetry to art.

This piece contains work from '{poem}.py: a critique of linguistic capitalism' (Thornton 2016), as well as some new ideas in development for future work with John Hogan Morris (forthcoming). For more details please see www.linguisticgeographies.com

We're having trouble reaching the Uber network. Please check your connection or try again in a few minutes.

mchelone

| Select | Select All | Paste |

Search for "mchelone"

q w e r t y u i o p

a s d f g h j k l

z x c v b n m

Algorithmic Excess: Uber as Failure
By Luke Munn

app_device_changed

billing_user_country_id
cancels_10mins_prior_to_last_cancel
card_bin_banned_ users
card_type

city_id
client_id
country_ id_changed_at
country_ ids_ with_shared_payment_
count
country_id

deferred_promotion_count

device_fingerprint_banned
device_geohash7
device_model
device_os
device_uid

dynamic_fare
email_domain_banned_trip_ratio
fingerprint
firstname
fraud_risk

google_advertising
gps_points_count
gps_points_max_speed
gps_points_average_speed

greyball_users_with_shared_device_
count
greyball_users_with_shared_pp_count
greyball_whitelist_users_with_shared_
device_count
greyballed_vehicle_view-ids

has_honeypot_whitelist_tag
has_ride_denied_highrisk
has_suspected_fake_account_tag

is_banned_device
last_completed_trip_city_id
last_completed_trip_country_id

mobile
mobile_country_iso2

payment_profile_banned
payment_profile_count
payment_profile_prepaid
payment_profile_uuid
potential_rider_ driver _collusion_tags_
shared_by_device

rating
request_device_rooted
request_device_age
request_loc
request_options

signup_cityid
signup_geohash
signup_lat
signup_lng

total_billing_country_id
trip_distance
trip_duration
trip_status
uber_id
user_agent

vehicle_view_id
vehicle_view_name

[selection of variables associated with
each Uber Rider]

| APRJA 7.1 Research Values	Text No. 03/17
#algorithmicvalues	

Computational Capital
By Francis Hunger

How did electronic databases got situated in the midst of the formation of Computational Capital? They form the infrastructural part of an ongoing media-related and social shift, where subjectivity can no longer be thought as a whole, rather as fragmented, scattered. Partial subjectivities, stored in databases, emerge along fading privacy and the demise of the individual in an indivisible, modernist sense, towards the emergence of the divided, the *dividual*.

Today with each query on a search engine, with each spatial movement recorded by smart phones, with each act of consummation, users produce voluntarily and involuntarily data, that is transactional data (other call it metrics). The term »surveillance« is misleading. Where the Liberal consciousness identifies data collection as an act of control directed towards the individual, the argument to be introduced is, that the recording in majority is not about surveillance, but about *the production and extraction of data*. The framing of data recording as surveillance is a strong narrative, fitting well into Libertarian ideology, in theory, in pop culture and in politics. It provides a vulgarized, digestible explanation on an individual, almost narcissist level for the blackboxedness of database systems, or broader spoken, computational infrastructure. Each action, even the seemingly non-productive, for instance the querying of navigation systems, acts of consumption and payment, the usage of infrastructure such as water from a tap, or reading (from an electronic device) has turned into an act of data production. Database systems have emerged as a storage container for data and value, ready to be processed using computing machinery. They are frozen discourse, to be updated with each query. *Computational Capital* means the disposition about data, computing infrastructure and the knowledge how to use it.

Demystifying databases means, to interpreted them as institutional or organizational tools of hailing, addressing, and agency. Databases and algorithms are not first and foremost technology, they rather represent human ideas about (inter)actions. Databases amplify institutional power, since they are able to address the dividual on an individual level, and they do so based on the transactional recordings of former acts of the addressee. A critique of database systems – understood as a set of agency praxes – does not begin with the demand for privacy. It begins with addressing the query and its institutional context.
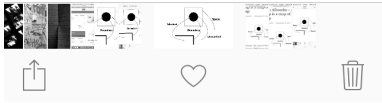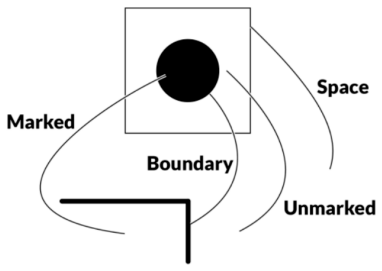
A Map Is a Map of a Map
By Kim Albrecht

'The map is not the territory' writes Alfred Korzybski. But what is the territory? Someone went out and measured by eye or with instruments their surroundings. The retinal representations, the collected information are maps themselves. The question what the territory is only got pushed back.

'This is not a pipe' writes Rene Magritte. But what is a pipe? The pipe can refer to briar, calabash, corncob, chibouk, chillum, hookah, kiseru, midwakh, sebsi…. Pipes are just what we distinguish as a pipe. Is a hookah the territory of Magritte's pipe? There is no direct territory to the image of the pipe Magritte drew; we distinguish what a pipe is.

The coastline paradox states that the longer your measuring device, the shorter the extent of a measured coastline. The fractal structure of something like a coastline has no defined length. The observation determines the map.

In the 1950s the Algoe general store opened at an empty intersection that was marked as the town Algoe in a map. Map designers added the town twenty years earlier to detect plagiarism by their competitors. The map became the territory.

George Spencer Brown articulated the command 'draw a distinction' in his book the 'Laws of Form' (1969). The distinction as the smallest unit of observation and the creation of form. Within the operation of the form, there are only forms. Forms are drawn by the motives and values of the one drawing the distinction. Forms are always maps, and within the logic of the form, there are only maps. Anything we see, measure, collect, archive, store, is obtained by an observer with motives and values that determine how the distinction is drawn. The map-territory relationship suggests an end, some ground truth at some level. The notion of the form always questions the observation and asks for the assumptions made:

What are we observing -> Marked
What are we leaving out of our observation -> Unmarked
Where is the line between the two -> Boundary
What is the medium we are doing this in -> Space

The map is not the territory. There is no territory. There are only maps of maps of maps.

← Battery

75%

About 11 hrs left

Last full charge
4h 25m ago

Screen usage since full charge
1h 33m

Battery saver
Off / Turn on automatically at 15% battery

Battery optimisation

Use since last full charge

YouTube
9%

Spotify
4%

Screen

Eavesdropping on Packets
and Digital Streams
By Maria Eriksson

At face value, streaming services are frequently associated with smoothness and steady supply. Drawing on metaphors of aquatic flows and currents, streaming evokes an imagery of data as a peaceful and precious natural resource. Yet below the seemingly calm interfaces of platforms, complex data arrangements reside – data arrangements that absorb users into capitalist regimes and link together data infrastructures across vast geographic distances.

How can we observe and intervene in such processes of streamed value production, and begin to inspect the politics of the data transmissions that a simple 'click' might trigger? As software systems are increasingly deployed to listen in on digital communications, we need to develop methods to overhear and study *their* actions. We need to make hidden data transmissions speak. Not because this could help us reach an inner essence of truth and transparency with regards to streaming services, but because it could help us establish a starting point for formulating questions and critique.

In order to do this, I believe we need to resist the push to approach network infrastructures at scale and at the heightened speed at which they operate. Instead of amplifying the scope and pace of our observations, we need to find strategies of slowing down and zooming in on data traffic. We need to remember that data infrastructures are not only large but also small. And along this line of thinking, I suggest we focus on the domain of data packets – the smallest units of data into which

online communication is split. What could we learn from observing packet transmissions? How could the unit of the packet serve as an entryway for considering the organization of streamed data infrastructures?

By eavesdropping on packets and their travels across networks, we may for instance begin to map the actors involved in transforming online behaviors into capital – all the way from backbone providers to ad-tech companies. Embedded into packets are also numerous tiny fragments of codecs, protocols, software solutions, encryption models, and compression strategies on which specific services run. Excavating such information reveals the messiness, dependencies and hybrid natures of online services, as well as the instances of turmoil and failure that frequently mark their complex entanglements.

In contrast to the vast scale of data infrastructures I ask, what would happen if we studied data infrastructures through some of their smallest elements? What if we took the small and humble packet as the starting point for larger infrastructural inquiries?
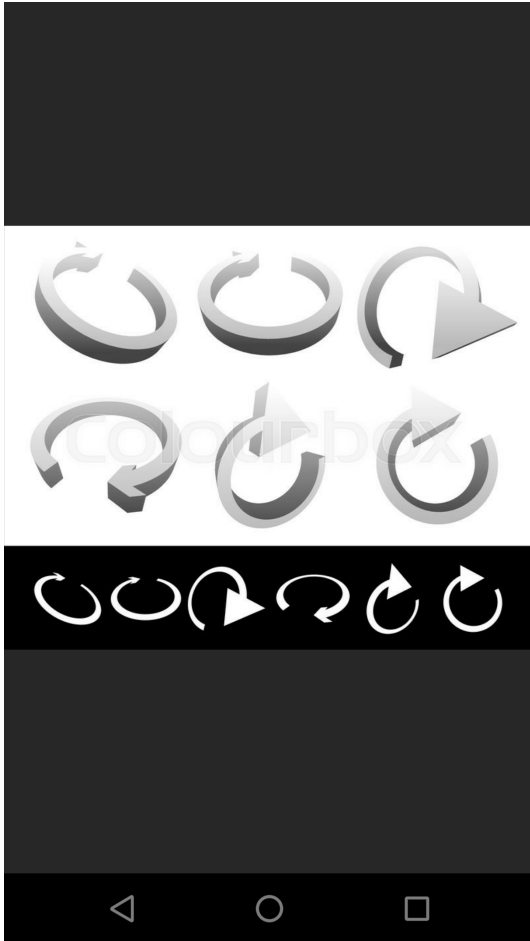
Art in the Creative Economy:
Inoperative Modes of Resistance
By Ashley Lee Wong

In the current creative economy, myths of the autonomy and freedom of artists have become a condition of self-exploitation, self-precarization and self-branding within neoliberal forms of governmentality. As artists became central to the global creative economy, they are left disempowered and precarious at the throes of the market. Cognitive capitalism presents a situation of increased flexibilization of the labour market, while artists are also instrumentalized in processes of gentrification. The ideal notion of artists as a figure of an independent, self-determined individual becomes one that is left to bare the risks in a highly competitive deregulated marketplace.

Simultaneously, the modes of production of artists based on social critique, transgression and radicalism either become coopted by the far-right or subsumed by the market and institutions, rendering them impotent. In the art world, artists seek to challenge and critique the economy yet continually uphold the institutions they may seek to undermine. Here, critique becomes institutionalized in a homoeostatic process that maintains and supports existing systems of power that self-adapts to challenges to it.

Within technology, the Californian Ideology is founded upon radical libertarian counterculture together with neoliberal free market ideals, which has led to Silicon Valley emerging as a dominant economic force. Technological innovation constantly searches to 'disrupt' and revolutionize the industry without ever challenging its underlying logics. We become caught in a situation of 'changeless change' in simulations of progress as technological innovation continues to perpetuate inequalities of wealth and power. Moreover, the tactics of hacktivists can equally be used for racial profiling and online abuse by right wing groups. This shows how these technologies and tactics employed by artists/activists can be used for both social change and destruction. The internet and social media initially celebrated for its civic and revolutionary potential, no longer stand as a tool of liberation. Artists urgently need to find new tactics in today's neoliberal creative economy.

When considering the context of China, it presents an opportunity to rethink notions of resistance and cultural development. China remains largely oblivious to the culture wars in the West as the internet remains tightly controlled by the Communist Party who filters out any dissenting voices. Freedoms of speech are taken for granted in the West. In China, modes of resistance must take another form. As China rapidly develops its creative industries, what new models for culture can we imagine where artists can truly play a crucial role in shaping the future of the world and economy?

Organizational Values
or How to Approach Resistance
By Konstanze Scheidt

We all seem to struggle. Struggle against precarity, struggle against neoliberalism, struggle against gentrification, struggle against a growing right wing populist movement. Perhaps the solution lies in the arts, since it can open up new ways of seeing the world? Or maybe it lies in technologies, since they can give us new opportunities to organize communication and sharing? History gives us some lessons: most critical demands of past countercultural movements are today implemented in the monster we are struggling with. Too often, we become unwantedly complicit with it. So what we are struggling with as well is finding new productive connections for those many struggles, and to find 'new lines of alliances.' In this way, creative approaches to resistance or political art projects aren't just another stabilizing effect for the story of mobilization, flexibility and individualization.

   It is important to get rid of the idea that there is a direct link between representation and mobilization. Just because a critical artwork shows me how bad the world is, I don't start to save it tomorrow, do you? Perhaps we should stop looking for a solution in the arts and start appreciating the daring contradictions that we are confronted with. Then we might start accepting that despite the clear boundaries of our bodies, we are not distinct individuals or autonomous selves that act and resist. On the contrary, we never act alone; the enabling conditions for acting are at the same time acting upon us.

   We are embedded in digital infrastructures and some claim therefore hacking, whistleblowing, reverse engineering or open software are the appropriate instruments for resistance in the present time. They are all important, but in the end it is still about collective practices when it comes to imagining a different world. To assemble in the streets, on squares, in town halls is already a political claim, before any stated claim. It is not only that we are dependent on the material environment or the environmental technology, but also on other acting bodies which we are related to. There is no monster hidden under the bed we have to drag into the light. The monster is here, it is between us, around us, it is us, and at the same time it is more than us, else than us. We produce it and we are produced by it.

   But what do we do now? When the self is always an unfinished process and therefore our knowledge is always partial, it not only opens up the possibility but the necessity to join the other who is always more than human. When we couple the divergent struggles, when we acknowledge the paradoxes and contradictions, we might make them start moving by playing with them, by making art out of them and then transform them to new questions and then start all over again.

Nelly Yaa Pinkrah
today at 18:08

Looking for Opacity
By Nelly Yaa Pinkrah

Did you grasp the title of the acclaimed TV-show *Black Mirror*? Or should I ask what is staring back at you every day: the mirroring screen or yourself? When media perform they become invisible. Their hiding, becoming opaque, will guarantee their untainted performance and we know this has been the case since we have a concept of what media actually is. Paradoxically, the regime of transparency and the »enlightenment-episteme«, the violence and control of the gaze, the making, forcing and leaving all things visible, are as pressing as ever. And they are enforced by these same covert media and technologies in dimensions that capture language, identities, bodies and geographies. Transparency, its epistemological implications for how to best understand subject and object, how to perceive, constitute and create them in the first place, has a multilayered semantic structure which reveals how metaphorical levels and relations of visibility and invisibility, light and shadow overlap in ideas, knowledge production, and the construction of the world.

While we associate opacity with media (and) technology, only recently have we began to harness its potentialities in order to imagine and act upon different epistemologies, histories, relations and practices – perhaps even all of these together. The poet and cultural critique Édouard Glissant did just that. In his oeuvre, a thinking about opacity started with thinking about language, which as we now is a medial form. Opacity transforms not only theoretically and poetically as a concept, but also as a method in his own practice. It is posed against exactly a Western transparency while in his poetics imagining a complementary version of it. A militancy, that shows in the demand first formulated in 1969 to a »right to opacity«, lies in the refusal to understand something in order to handle or interact with it. The case for acknowledging a necessary impenetrability then urges us to think of alternative ways of individual and collective, of the subject and to be subject, to relate, to solidarize, to resist, to narrate, and to write.

Let us follow Glissant's poetics and poetic knowledge, his understanding of and play with language, and his revolutionary concepts such as creolization and opacity. Let us explore the linkages to a cybernetic epistemology – in which the black mirror becomes the black box – to computational knowledge and realities, and to contemporary politics that suggest we have to thoroughly consider the interplay of transparency and opacity. We have to think of concepts of opacity under contemporary conditions, and most importantly, we have to look at practices that deliberately produce it, as well as those everyday acts and practices that did so all along. But where to find them?
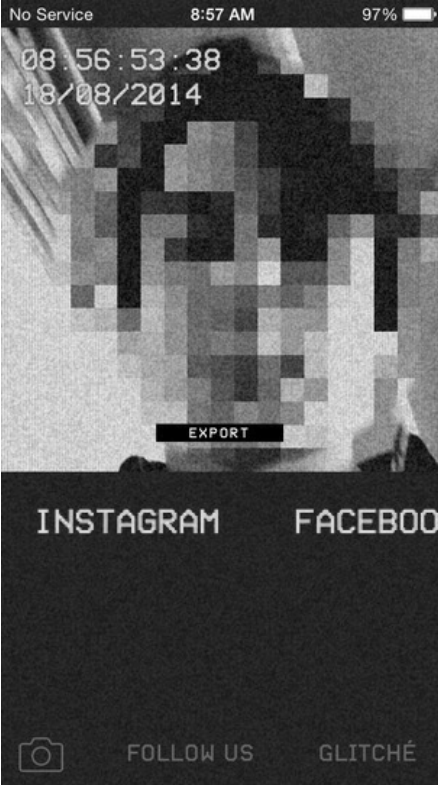
The Algorithmic Facial Image
and the Relation Between Truth Value
and Money Value
By Emanuele Andreoli

"There is the first very uprightness of the face, its upright exposure, without defense. The skin of the face is that which stays most naked, most destitute. […] There is an essential poverty in the face, the proof of this is that one tries to mask this poverty by putting on poses, by taking on a countenance. The face is exposed, menaced, as if inviting us to an act of violence" – Emmanuel Levinas, Ethics and Infinity.

Nowadays, the face appears as one of the most relevant and controversial bio-techno-political battlefield. Especially in the frame of the current evolving processes of 'machinization' of the face, connected to the development of a number of tracking technologies which are nowadays reaching the mainstream public – from iPhone X unlocking by recognizing the face of its owner, to a new Mastercard technology allowing payment by tracking users' faces, to apps such as MSQRD and Face Stealer which allow users to modify their facial traits by assuming the ones of somebody else. The 'Algorithmic Facial Image' is the type of image generated by the aggression of this type of technologies over the face. The Algorithmic Facial Image is a form of 'Machinic Selfie' characterized by a new genre of algorithmically constructed liveness and nonhuman agency.

   If the security face-tracking technologies named above are based on the idea that one's face is unique and not replicable, the amount of entertaining face-tweaking apps available on the market seems to suggest exactly the opposite – the face is trackable, its features tweakable, and its uniqueness hackable. In this sense, the supposed transparency of the face seems to coalesce with the opaqueness of the algorithmic processes happening behind it. Thus, the face turns into the site where contradictory regimes of truth coexist and feed each other in a form which keeps an appearance of immediacy while hiding layers of algorithmic complexity. How does this new regime of truth relate to processes of 'datafication' and value extraction? It seems that from a hermeneutic perspective the art of circulationism and data extraction lies on this ambivalence: the more immediate and transparent an image looks the more its networking value grows, the more a number of opaque extractive practices are implemented behind its surface. In this sense, the Algorithmic Facial Image becomes one of the most valuable data objects circulating online, and works as a portal for aggressive practices of data capture - as the construction of 'Data Selfies' from the data aggregated by face-driven mobile apps clearly demonstrates. Are you really sure your face is yours?

Disappearing in an Age of
Digital Biometrics
By Lea Laura Michelsen

We are at war! Maybe you didn't notice? Maybe you were too busy turning into a kitten, altering your face with the newest biometric technology build into Instagram? Or maybe you already joined the invisible army, ghost, spreading across the globe?

Today we see an emerging wave of artists practising the art of masking and camouflaging. What are they hiding from? What are these practices – the shiny pink-bubbly plastic masks, face dazzle, silver-plated anti-drone coats and "fake face" – generating technologies – articulating? And why are they emerging in this particular historical moment?

I would say: they emerge as a response to a renaissance of physiognomy. Of taking the face at face value. A particular coming together of biometric technologies aimed at making the subject transparent. Forcing the subject to give up its identity and most intimate thoughts and intentions. Digital biometrics are taking biopolitics to a new, accelerated level of networked control. With physiognomy, phrenology and anthropometry in the 18th and 19th centuries humanity already experienced analogue versions of biometrics, exerting control through readings of biological traits; facial features and expressions, skulls… With digital biometrics, able to read brainwaves, heart rhythms, gait, vein patterns and DNA, this control is pushed even further. It becomes hyper-control.

Artists like Zach Blas, Adam Harvey, Heather Dewey-Hagborg, Leo Selvaggio and Sterling Crispin are cultivating different strategies for shielding the subject from and rebelling against the biometric regime. At face value, most of these maskings seem like inadequate and impractical tools for hiding or bringing about a revolt. Some of them even draw attention to and highlight their subjects. But this might be just the thing – maybe the clumsiness and practical uselessness actually reveal the usefulness of these maskings? What if their making a big deal out of the impossibility of disappearing, while still stubbornly insisting on it, is exactly what is needed to end up somewhere else, somewhere new?

These maskings are articulating an activist resistance to the ideology of transparency that are deeply codified into the veins of contemporary biometrics. And so, I think, they are beginning to activate a very relevant and valuable counter-aesthetics. Maybe the only thing to do in an age of digital biometrics is to resist the return of old physiognomic logics with new imageries that cultivate different logics and ways of relating than through faces and surfaces.

Unlocking Proprietorial Systems
By Marc Garrett

The blockchain is 10 years old and is surrounded with a hype hardly seen since the arrival of the WWW. In 2015 the Ethereum blockchain launched with a new layer that could run "smart contracts", pieces of code which act as autonomous agents, performing the function of a legal agreement without the interference of a corruptible or what is deemed as a fallible human. These can be combined to perform as blockchain-based companies called Distributed Autonomous Organizations (DAOs) and there are a plethora of blockchain implementations and political agendas now developing. How these unfurl will affect our ability to relate to each other, to deliberate, decide and cooperate with each other as individuals, organisations and societies.

When considering what we know now regarding Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google etc, and how they have impoverished autonomous relations to such a degree that it is now rare to experience an exchange or online activity, outside corporate-controlled "social" zones. Are we content with libertarian belief systems proposing decentralization, in their terms. Would this be a workable and socially conscious decentralization, and is bypassing centralized banks enough, or merely a ploy for yet another group of elites to dominate our technologically, related futures?

As a way round this I propose initiating the conditions for a Post-Tactical Media, where new critically informed sustainable, collective and ecological ventures are encouraged. Thus, rather than having everything given to us by over lords, who manage our interactions we build our own platforms, networks and infrastructures, on our terms. Thus, update our visions, tools, and emancipatory levers to reflect contemporary social contexts that assume all as equal agents, and as part of a larger, global, intersectional community. To unpack these questions we revisit early resisters of domination around land ownership and enclosures, such as the Diggers and The New Levellers. We also examine different types of proprietorial systems and how they are gender specific and what these represent.

Catlow, Ruth and Garrett, Marc. (Jan 22, 2018) Furtherfield. Spring Editorial 2018 Blockchain Imaginaries. https://www.furtherfield.org/blockchain-imaginaries/#easy-footnote-bottom-5

The Research in the Age of the Cryptocene: War, Economy, Knowledge, Rights.

"Classical ciphers" are the ones that can be solved with pen and paper, this fact changed
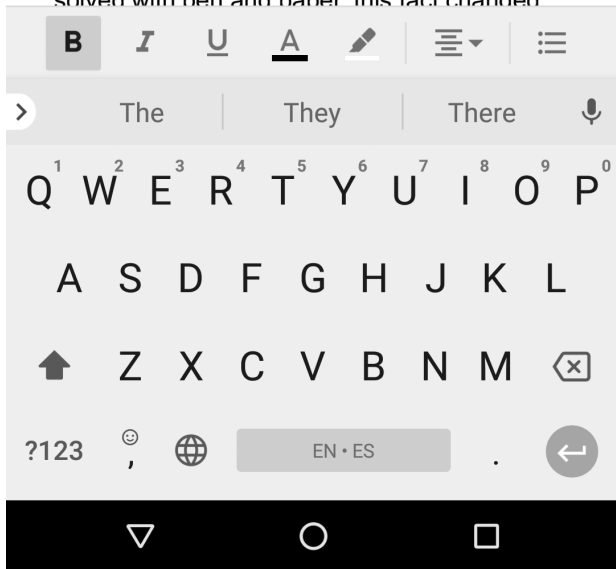
The Research in the Age of
the Cryptocene: War, Economy,
Knowledge, Rights.
By César Escudero Andaluz &
Martín Nadal

Does it make sense to generate a distributed research model outside the institution based on blockchain?

To answer this question we propose a research model in which the blockchain replaces the institutions in their role of archiving, recognising and funding the knowledge generated by researchers.

The objective is to explore its repercussions, rethinking established links, reconfiguring the ownership models, and defining concepts such as originality, authenticity and ownership; values related to the creation of information and knowledge. Where the role of publishers, institutions and reviewers are rewarded with tokens generated in the same system.

Archiving free access knowledge: Storing articles in the blockchain could be a sustainable solution allowing researchers the access to papers without restrictions from institutions or governments. Generating a distributed database, open and accessible to everyone.

Recognising free access knowledge: Finding a way to evaluate prestige and originality is needed. We imagine an archive where papers are connected to other papers by its citations creating a network of recognition. Similar to Google's page-rank the more times a paper is cited more relevant and greater recognition is considered to have.

Funding free access knowledge: This artistic project establishes a relationship between funding and recognition in the research community where the researchers are remunerated based in their achievements. Other use of the "network of recognition" would be to define how resources are distributed. In this funding structure people will have the possibility to promote the research field they prefer by rewarding it.

In conclusion, blockchain makes everything more extreme as happened in economy with cryptocurrencies. Hence, we can suspect that the outcome of this "research system" proposed is going to be a "hyper-capitalist" way of researching. This research acts as a trigger for thinking how the lack of jurisprudence works in research environment, analyzing the consequences in advance. However, we cannot control what is going to happen: Once a computer program is launched, human action disregards.

#blockchainvalues
#speculativethinking
#blockchain=hypercapitalist
#freeaccessknowledge

5004912	2 mins ago	238	2	f2pool_
5004911	3 mins ago	184	0	f2pool_
5004910	3 mins ago	84	0	bitclubp
5004909	3 mins ago	236	0	Ethermi
5004908	4 mins ago	377	0	ethfans.
5004907	4 mins ago	112	0	miningp
5004906	4 mins ago	146	0	Ethermi
5004905	4 mins ago	78	0	miningp
5004904	5 mins ago	140	0	Ethermi
5004903	5 mins ago	250	0	f2pool_
5004902	5 mins ago	281	0	Ethermi
5004901	5 mins ago	379	0	ethfans.
5004900	6 mins ago	122	0	Ethermi
5004899	6 mins ago	201	0	f2pool_
5004898	6 mins ago	380	0	et

Forking in Time
By Calum Bowden

5004899
Time is political. Cutting across physics, engineering, philosophy, colonialism, and logistics, the coordination of time was at the base of modern knowledge and power. Clocks, train schedules, and factory timetables were used to force people to submit to extractive global flows of resources and capital. Met with hostility by people around the world, Greenwich Mean Time became something that could be enacted only when needed. There is no universalism, only universalisation.

5004900
A blockchain is a distributed database made secure by requiring all participants to store a copy of a time-stamped record of data across a peer-to-peer network. They enforce absolute succession through consensus, and for this reason, Nick Land argues The Blockchain solves the problem of spacetime. Bitcoin, the first blockchain, is seen as a liberation technology by some anarcho-capitalists for its ability to distribute power away from financial and democratic institutions to depoliticise capital flows. Each bitcoin is backed by a chain of digital signatures, carrying its transaction history with it. Time, the arithmetic succession of blocks, becomes money itself. In the universe of the singular Blockchain, there is one true version of history. The past is immutable and the context in which the data is registered superfluous. Succession defends a particular brand of human biological and social exceptionalism that should be unthinkable.

5004901
Synchronisation, sharing fundamentals, coevalness, the syncing of a given social context, of shared technologies and infospheres, mobile devices overflowing with social media. Paul Virilio argues the current regime is comprised of the synchronisation of emotions enabled by real-time media. This leads to reactionary political responses and an emphasis on the short-term and immediate. A symptom of emotional democracy is FOMO – Fear Of Missing Out – which helps to explain the rise of a financial bubble around blockchain-based cryptocurrencies. Sharing the roller coaster of cryptocurrency prices pulls more people into the time as money machines for fear of missing the next great rally and chance to get rich quick.

5004902
How can we break the hegemony of the next totalising platform? Blockchains exert power through synchronisation, transforming absolute succession into a depoliticised currency. Forking, alternative governance models, and scalable heterogeneous chains might be used to destabilise the concentrations of power currently forming around singular blockchain networks and their absolute times. If we are to distribute power along shared peer to peer lines then it is going to have to be headless. Maybe what we need is something like an organisational guillotine, a post-capitalist Hydra, or a Chuthulu chain.

APRJA 7.1	Text No.
Research Values	14 / 17
#blockchainvalues #absolutetime #cryptopolitics #Cthulhuchain	

Deep Carbon
By Joana Moll

Our so-called networked society has failed so far to transpose the logic of interconnectedness into our lives. Citizens are becoming increasingly machine-like and dependent on data, threatening the connection between humans and their natural habitats. Although most of our daily transactions are carried out through electronic devices, we know very little of the apparatus that facilitates such interactions, or in other words, about the factory that lies beyond the interface. The Internet is the biggest "thing" that humanity has ever built. Its massive infrastructure is composed of billions of computers and thousands of kilometers of submarine and inland cables. This immense infrastructure rests on the shoulders of invaluable supporting technologies, largely unnoticed by its audiences; namely human labour, intangible legions of algorithms, and a vast consumption of natural resources. In 2008, the Internet was already responsible for the 2% of CO_2 global emissions, exceeding those of the entire aviation Industry. The amount of users and network connections has increased at a whooping pace ever since. Yet despite the growing number of Internet users and information flows, the material representation of the Internet remains blurred in the social imagination.

Our techno-ecological habitat is expansive, yet is only accessible through interfaces. The numerous domestic interfaces that we use in our everyday life play an essential role in diluting the many tangible realities of our networked society. This is particularly true when it comes to the several tangible and intangible infrastructures that construct the Internet, supported by their underlying material impacts. Interfaces tendency to blur the materiality constructing their own operations directly dilutes the user control they aim to empower. The result generates a sense of comfortable limbo where the user can interact "free" of guilt, thought and reflection. In that respect, we can argue that the Interface may unfold a critical agent in the generation of a culture of irresponsibility. I firmly believe that interfaces can play a key role in raising broad public awareness surrounding the relationships between our actions and their material impact on the physical world. By designing mechanisms capable of triggering thoughts and actions, interfaces can empower, stimulation and re-appropriate subjectivity. I believe that interfaces hold not only the power, but the responsibility to generate critical thought about the true nature of technology, and the imagining of alternative techno-paradigms which offer greater responsibility towards our environmental and human conditions. How could we explore and create awareness of the hidden materiality of networks and clouds through interfaces?

The Environment Is Not a System
By Tega Brain

How does computation shape ecological thought? Technologies profoundly structure our understanding of complex systems, they give us analogies and metaphors, and shape assumptions of how we think the world works. It's common to say we depend on food *chains* and *compute* situations. The word *eco-system* itself reminds us that the history of ecology is enmeshed with system theory. Just as Earth's environments have been materially refigured by infrastructures, our languages and epistemologies are also shaped by them. Armed with a computer, the world appears as data.

At a time characterized by both human disturbance and a surplus of computation, it is tempting (and lucrative) to claim computational fixes for thorny existential problems. We see this in the smart city, and more dramatically in geoengineering proposals that threaten to commodify a stable Earth system. Framed as solutions, these overlook social and economic factors and – perhaps more profoundly – present the world as a system to be optimized. But the environment and its ecologies are not systems. Despite our computational rapture, viewing them as such leaves much of the world out.

As artificial intelligence is applied in environmental science, it is apt to attend to the epistemological assumptions embedded in these statistical approaches, assumptions like past data indicates the future, and more data equals more reality. The story of British geophysicist Joe Farman's discovery of the ozone hole shows the dangers of the latter. Farman maintained a single ground based ozone sensor in the Antarctic in spite of the launch of NASA atmospheric monitoring satellites that collected orders of magnitude more data. When Farman's data showed a 40% drop in ozone levels, he initially thought it was a mistake but eventually published this as the first observation of the destruction of the ozone layer. How had NASA's satellites missed this? NASA's data processing software was programmed to discard readings that appeared to be outliers. In this case, reality itself was assumed to be an outlier and disregarded as error.

If the environment is not a system, then what is it? Anna Tsing offers the term *assemblage.* Assemblage helps get around connotations of boundedness, knowability and chains of cause and effect implied by system. Assemblage acknowledges encounters as indeterminate and outside of totalizing human description.

Technologies reveal some aspects of the world and obscure others. Data driven modeling is only one method for understanding environments, yet a systems view makes it is easy to forget that there is always more going on. How can we add to these perspectives of environmental assemblages that can behave like systems, but are not systems themselves?

Strangling Interfaces
By Francesco Sebregondi

Logistics has moved from a support role in the deployment of the war machine to a mode of power in its own right. It is perhaps in Gaza – under blockade since 2007 – that this shift can be grasped to its fullest extent. As the material conditions of life inside the Palestinian enclave worsen at an alarming pace, Gaza is often approached as a site of exceptional backwardness. Yet, rather than a political atavism, the Gaza Strip constitutes a frontier where the defining technology of power of our globalised present is both stress-tested and calibrated.

To argue this claim, I proceed with a critical examination of the architecture of the Gaza blockade. The tracing of its contours and operational logics reveals a figure which I propose as a diagram of *logistical* power: a form of power that is primarily exerted through the channelling, regulation, and modulation of all forms of circulations across the social field. As a violently contested territory, Gaza sheds new light on the thorough entanglement of the military and civilian characters of contemporary logistics. Moreover, by grounding the argument in Gaza – a site rightly associated with a process of fixation – I aim to emphasise that is critical to an understanding of the political dimension of contemporary logistics: namely that logistics operates as much through the acceleration of certain flows as on the hindering of others. In fact, the spatial and political technology used to obstruct circulations in and out of Gaza shares much with the one tasked with lubricating the flow of goods, capital, and labour around the globe. In this perspective, the blockaded Gaza Strip appears as an inverted image of the logistical *zone*. Building upon an emerging body of research on the relation between contemporary urbanism and logistics, I turn to Gaza to investigate a darker image of the *smart* future anticipated by the rise of logistical power.

A key feature of logistics is to displace the effective locus of power from the centre of the territory to the border – understood as a filtering device, as the interface that enables the particular kind of *differential* circulation that characterises our globalised condition. This shift calls for a number of realignments within political theory. The logic of gathering, where politics are articulated through the confrontation of primarily discursive practices, is increasingly exhausted. Can we deploy a politics capable of acting within and through dispersal, of affecting our proliferating border conditions, of confronting logistical power through the (re-)design of its strategic circuits?