

A PEER-REVIEWED NEWSPAPER ABOUT #BWPWAP
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RESEARCHING BWPWAP

HOW NETWORK CULTURE AND DIGITAL MEDIA CONTRIBUTE TO
AND TRANSFORM RESEARCH CULTURE

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, Aarhus University and the reSource transmediale 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; beginning with 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 this 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/transmediale), January 2013.


Longer versions of some of the newspaper articles, as well as links to previous newspapers, can be found at www.aprja.net



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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.

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 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 guerrilla 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 Brigade Rosse, or the RAF, there were also distinctive media strategies, different in each case and it can be argued that every guerrilla 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 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 from 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 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 Emilio 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

new, 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

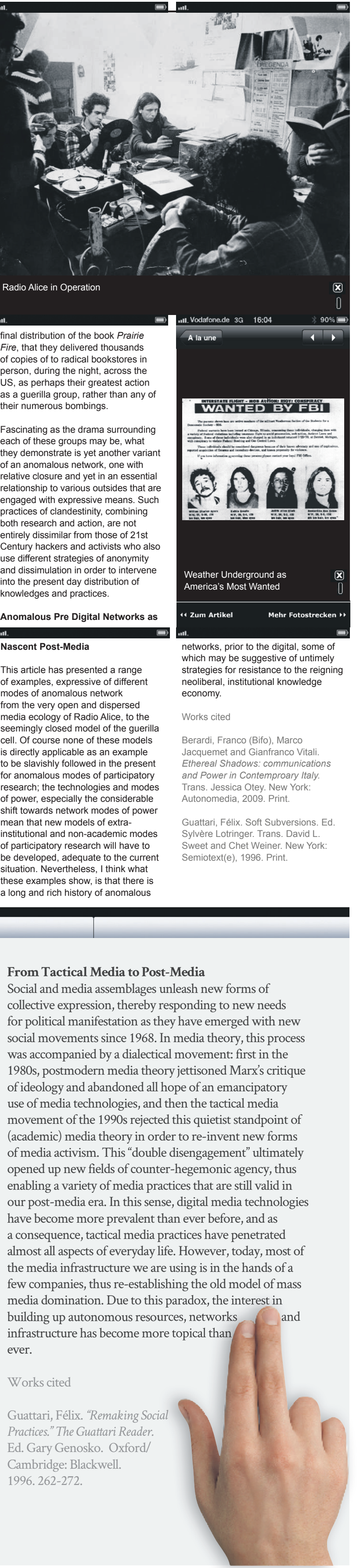
A highly contrasting anomalous network form is that of the guerrilla cell. A first point to be made is that despite the apparent closure of the guerrilla cell it still functions very much as a network with a necessary

final distribution of the book *Frairie 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 guerrilla 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 outsiders 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 guerrilla 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



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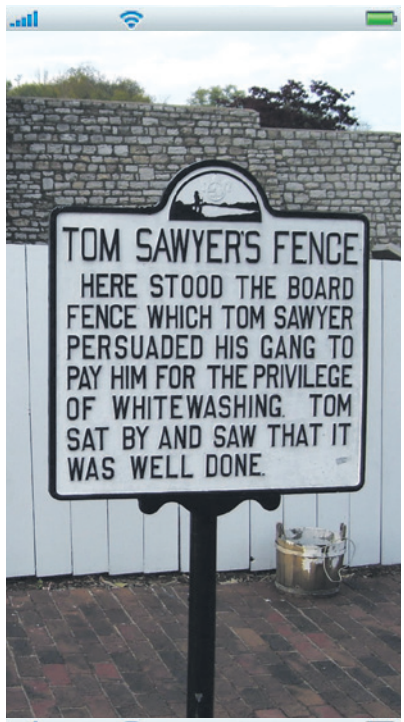
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United Aliens



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 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

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

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 recognition 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.

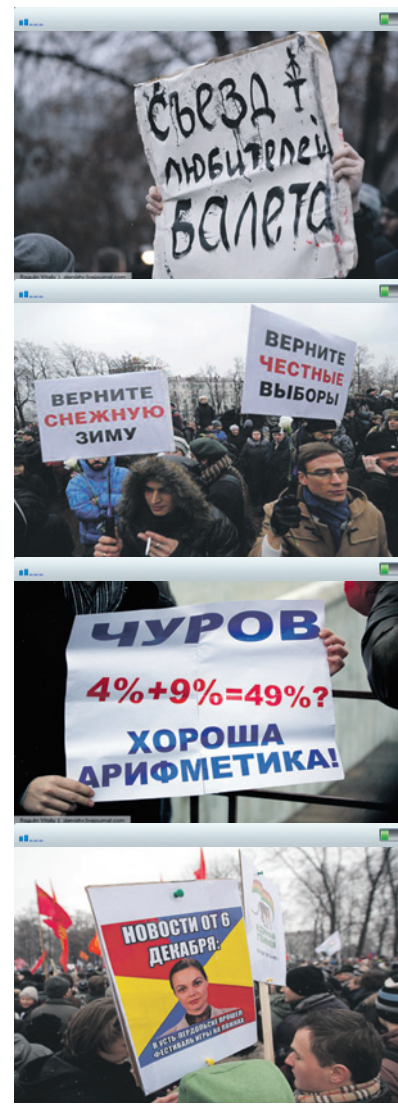
Crisis-ridden Greece occupies a paradoxical position, as the inextricable foundation of the

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.

Grexit is an edited volume published in 50 copies in August 2012 as part of the Vilém Flusser Residency Programme for Artistic Research. An electronic version is available online at transmediale.de



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 named 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 than 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 *designerlassen.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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Guest Editorial

Extract from *Subjectivity 5* (2012).

Stephen 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 historication. 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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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-Witford 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?

LIVING

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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 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.

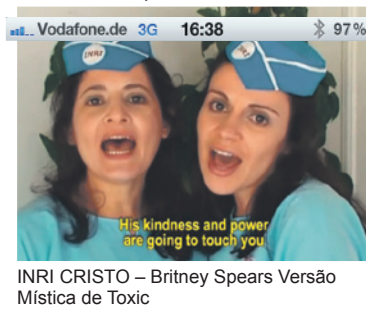


INRI Cristo
 Here comes *INRI Cristo* - a Jesus Christ aspirant who re-elaborates musical video clips. His crew remake Britney Spears, Rihanna, Amy Winehouse - to mention a few. Is he delusional? *Youtube* has been a potent platform for designing glocal identities, yet, how do all these female pop anglophone 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 biopolitical tensions and communication, they reveal new



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)



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 neocapitalism 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



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 (attraverso, Il Male, Trax) and neost Monty Cantins, 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

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,

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 deceptively recognizable, usually as a collective name or a fictional persona; being 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.

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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 lose 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 loses 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 connection made by many practitioners but theorised by Garnet Hertz and Jussi Parikka in their *Zombie Media* project at Transmediale 2011.)

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.

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 activist 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

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

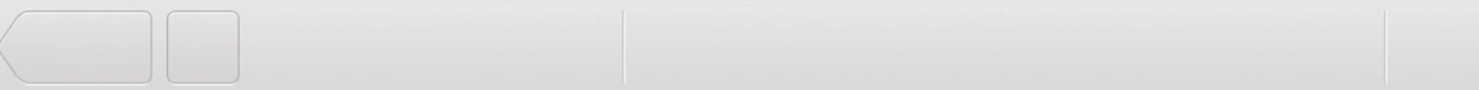
With emerging knowledge systems of contemporary earth observation such as the EVO, what also emerges is the question of how we regard the material practice of computing: the way we labour on, exploit and interact with non-human 'nature'. As Barad would say, what is in question is the nature of 'nature'.

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 plenitude 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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HEXEN 2.0: From MKULTRA via the Counterculture to Technogaianism

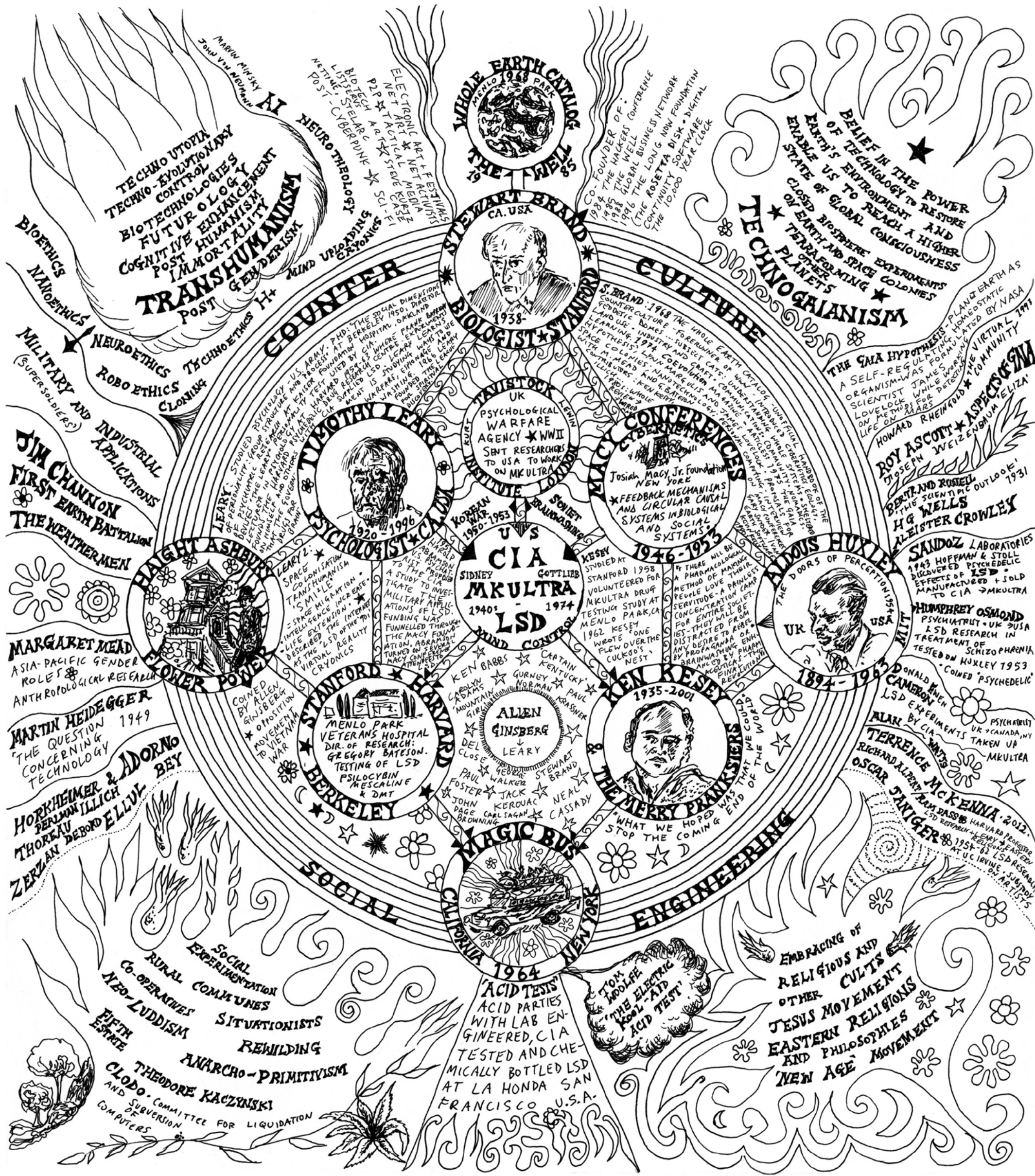


Illustration by Suzanne Treister

HEXEN 2.0: From National Socialism via Cybernetics and the Macy Conferences to Neo-Totalitarianism

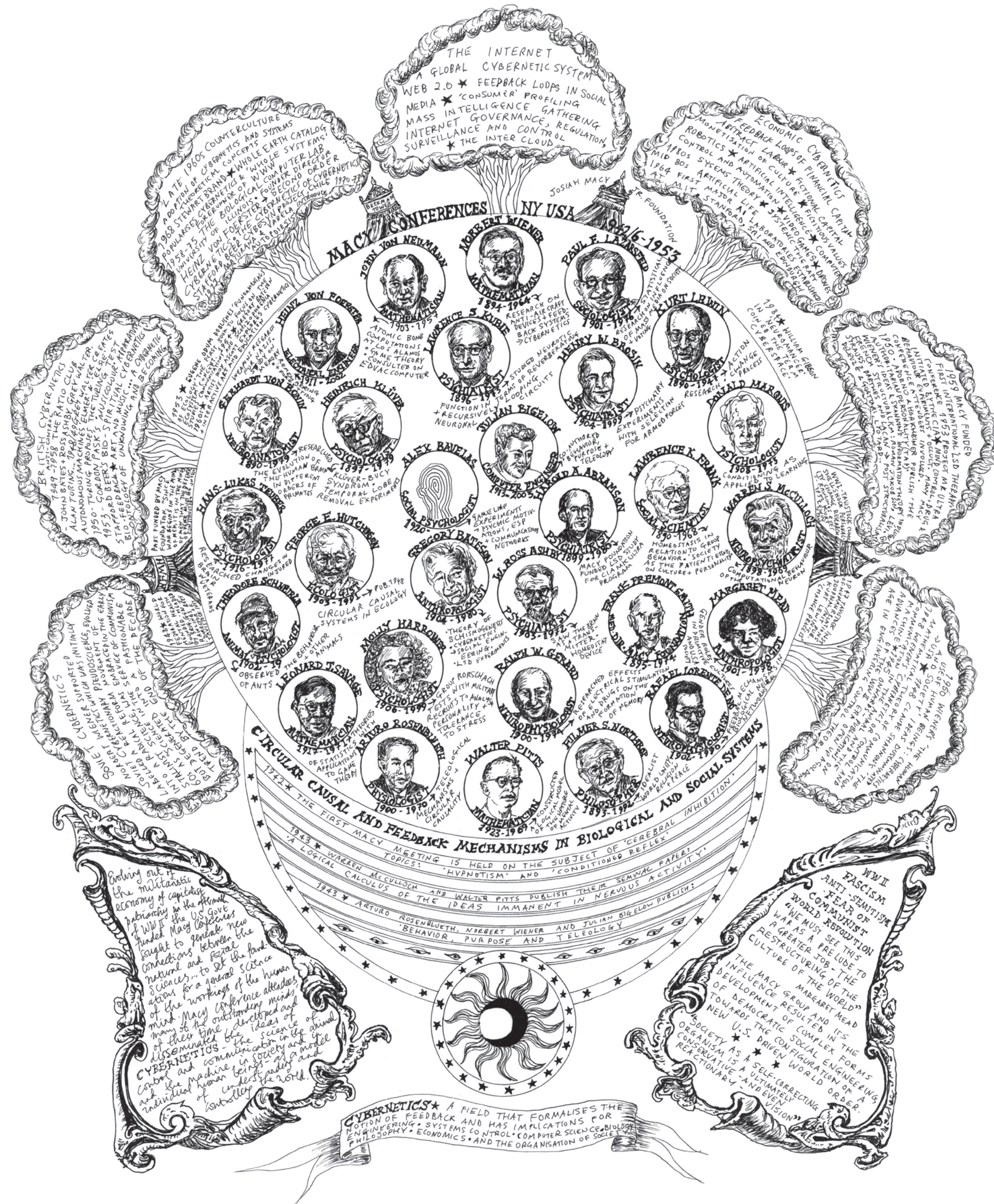


Illustration by Suzanne Treister

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

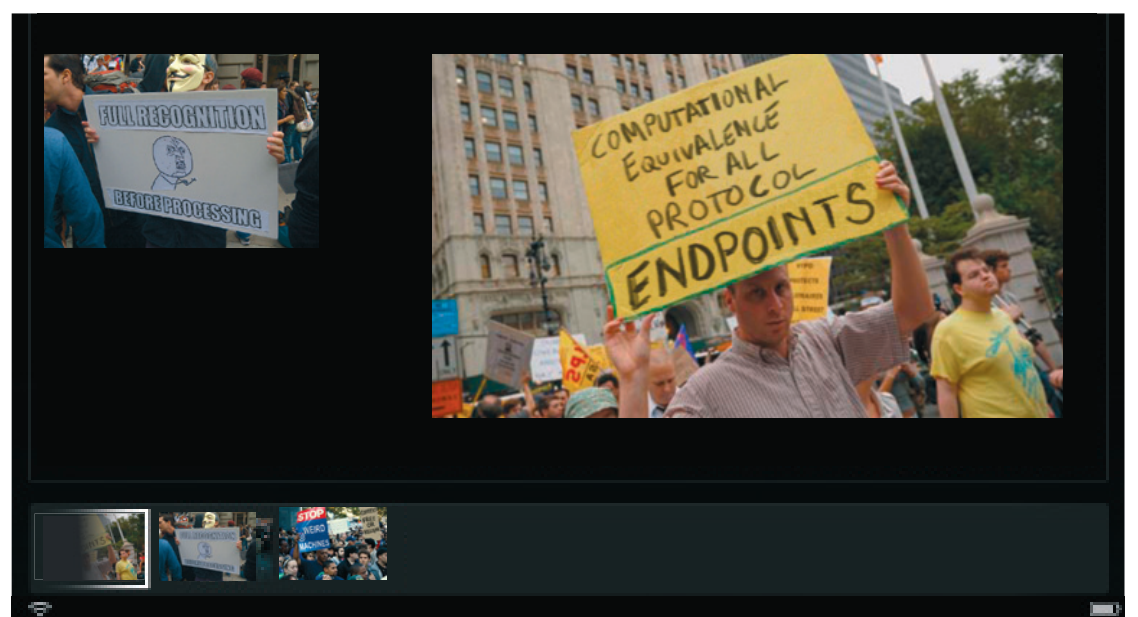
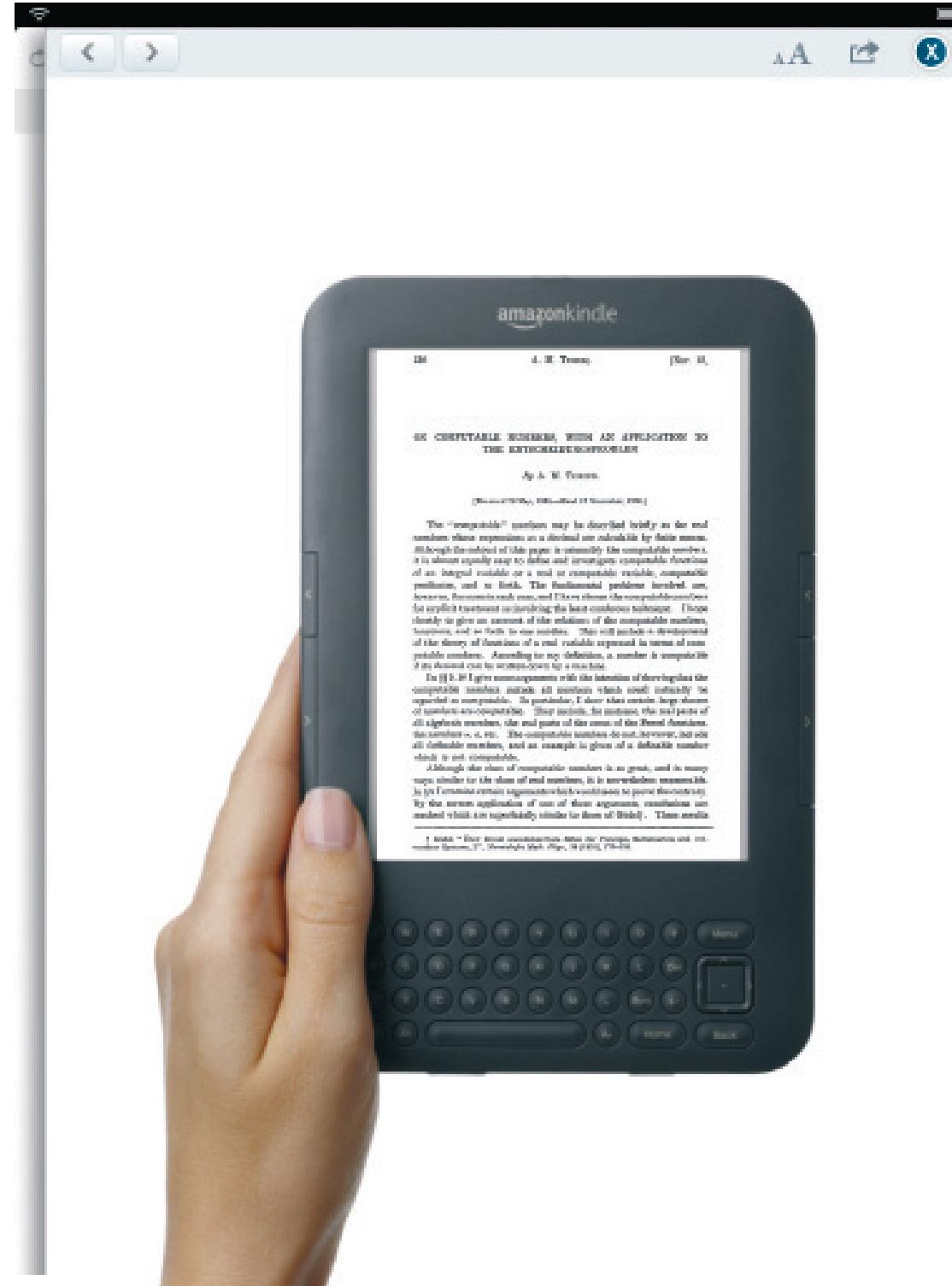
of evil media strategies as there is of coming to a well-regulated distinction between good and evil. Cunning intelligence has, since Ancient Greece, slipped into the interstices of publicly sanctioned knowledge, requiring an equivalently wily intelligence to decipher. For Nietzsche, the breakdown of 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 paradoxical) strategies of the object.

Written for *The Spam Book*, Jussi Parkka 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>

TECHNOLOGY



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 "archetypal 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 perversion, 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.



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 Publishers 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*.

Readings 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, Amílcar. *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

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/2011/11/20111130121556567>

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://eicp.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 expansion 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

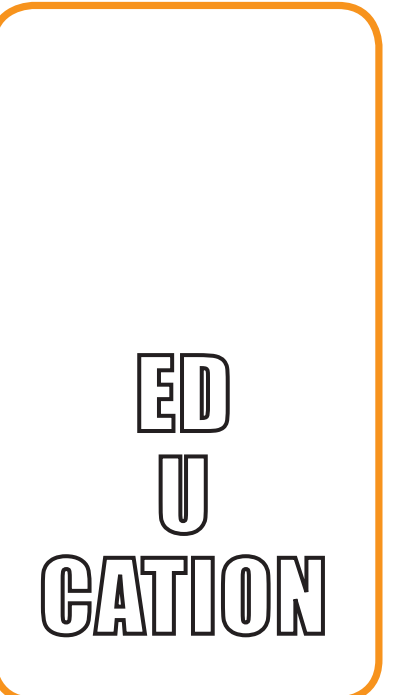
Session 7

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 on-going 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/2011/11/20111130121556567>



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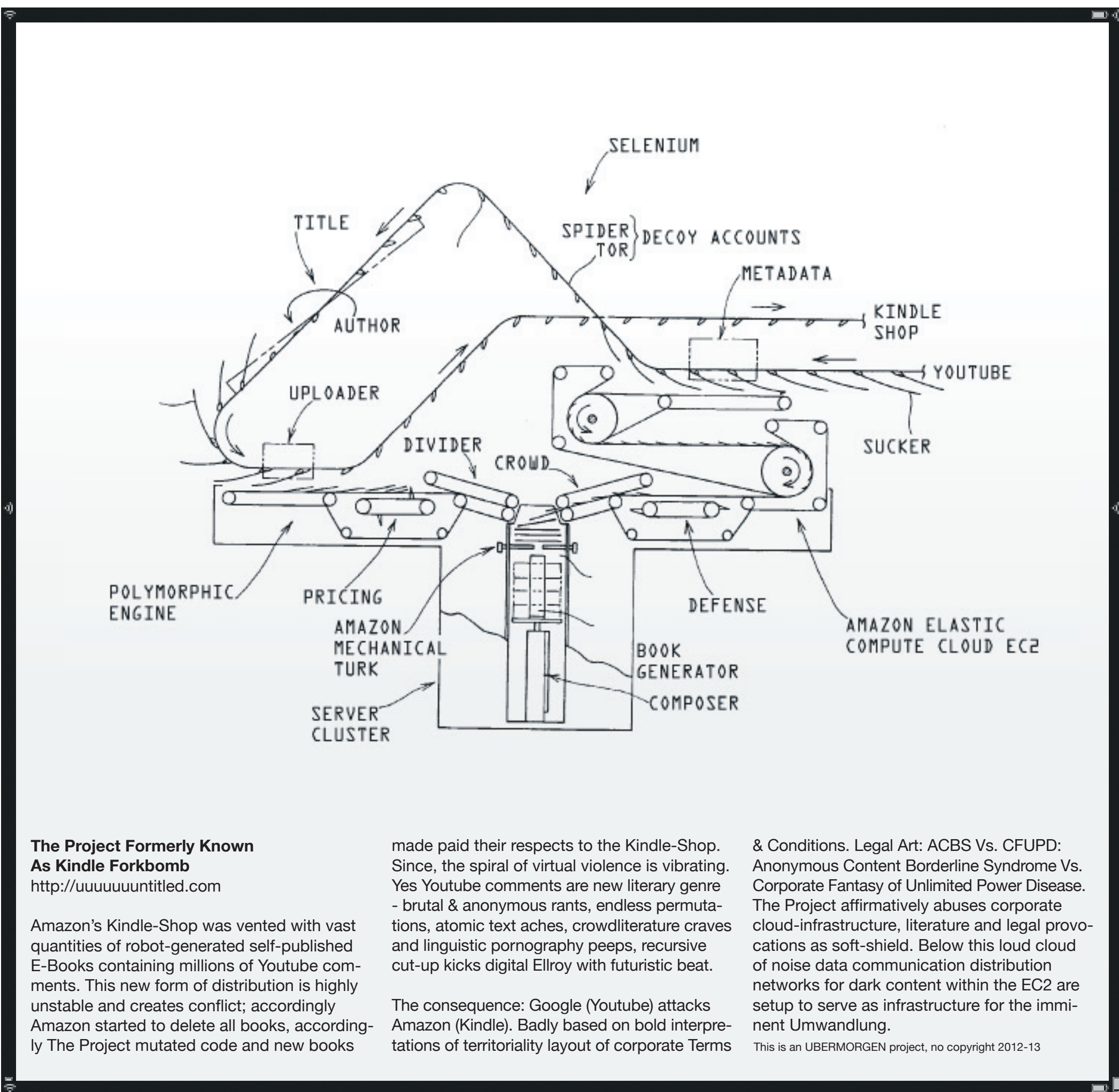
Session 8

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?

Holmes, Brian. *Eventwork. The Fourfold Matrix of Contemporary Social Movements*. Continental Drift. Feb 17, 2912. Blogpost. <<http://brianholmes.wordpress.com/2012/02/17/eventwork/>>

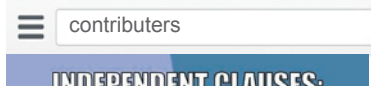
Reading Bryan, Dick and Michael Rafferty. *Capitalism with Derivatives A*



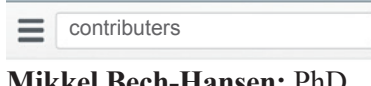
Christian Ulrik Andersen: Associate Professor in Digital Aesthetics, Aarhus University, Denmark.

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

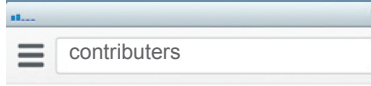
Tatiana Bazzichelli: Curator of reSource transmedial



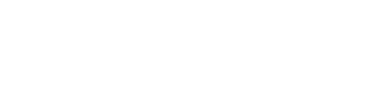
culture, and Postdoc researcher, Centre for Digital Cultures, Leuphana University Lüneburg, Germany.



Mikkel Bech-Hansen: PhD researcher, Aarhus University, Denmark.



Armin Beverungen: Editor of the journal ephemera and Research Fellow, Hybrid Publishing Lab, Centre for Digital Cultures, Leuphana University Lüneburg, Germany.

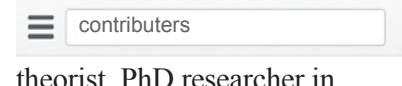


Christophe Bruno: Net artist, Paris, France.

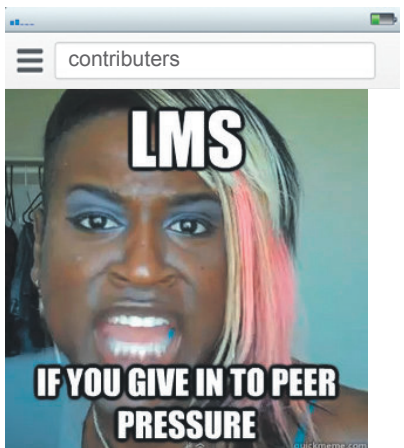
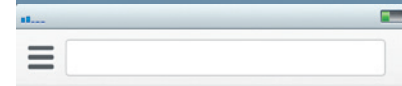
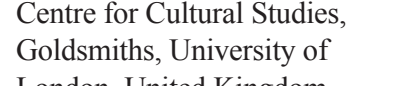
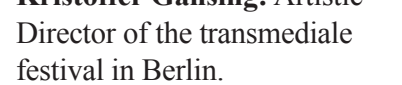
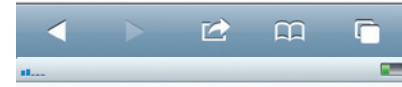
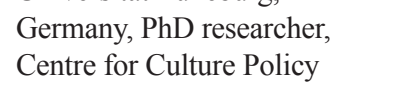
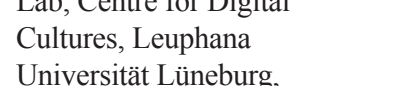
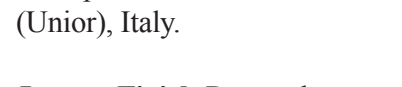
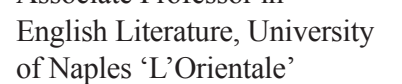
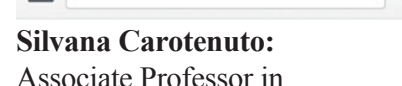
Bani Brusadin: Freelance producer, teacher, PhD researcher at the Arts Dept., the University of Barcelona, Spain.

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

Micha Cárdenas: Artist/

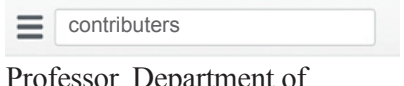


theorist, PhD researcher in Media Arts and Practice (iMAP), University of Southern California, USA.



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

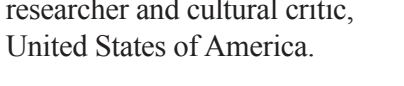
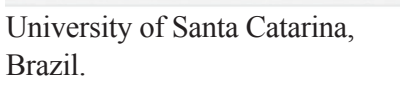
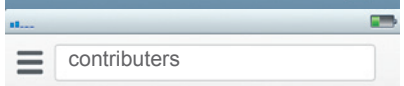
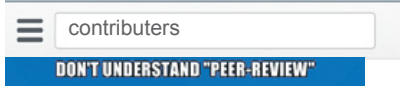
Andrew Goffey: Associate



Professor, Department of Culture, Film and Media, University of Nottingham, United Kingdom.

Olga Goriunova: Assistant Professor, Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies, University of Warwick, United Kingdom.

Yara Guasque: Media artist, Associate Professor of the Post Graduation Program of Visual Arts at the State

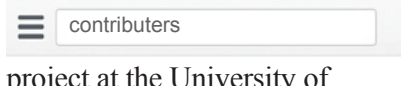
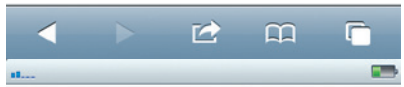


PhD researcher at Lancaster University, United Kingdom.

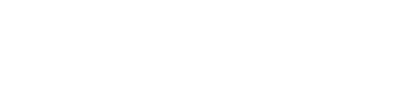
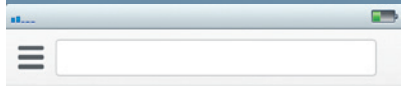
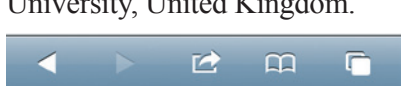
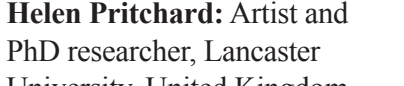
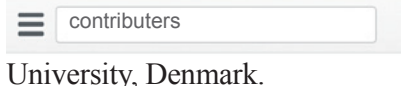
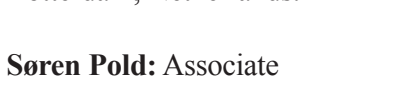
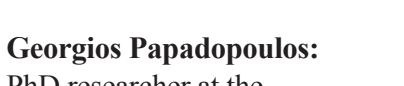
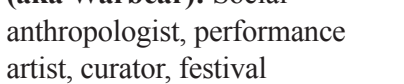
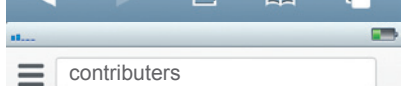
Marcello Lussana: Musician and thinker born in Italy and living in Berlin.

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.

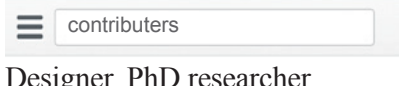


Andrew Prior: Sound artist, Lecturer in Media Arts, Plymouth University, United Kingdom, PhD researcher, Aarhus University, Denmark.

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

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

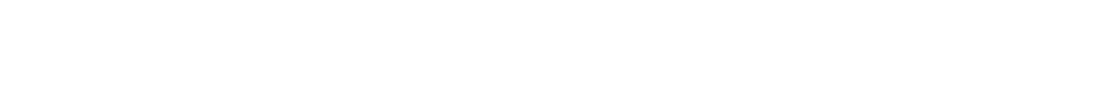
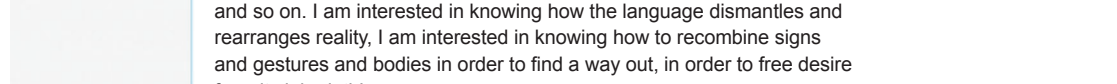
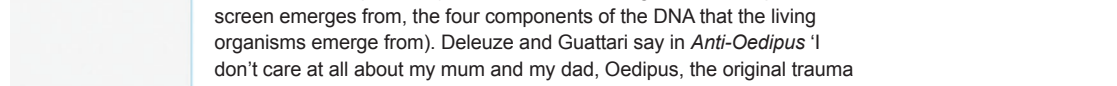
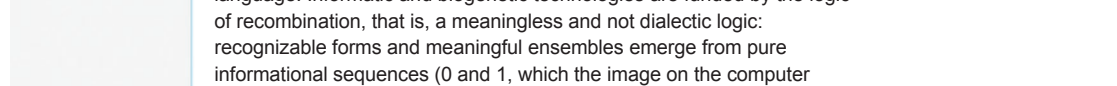
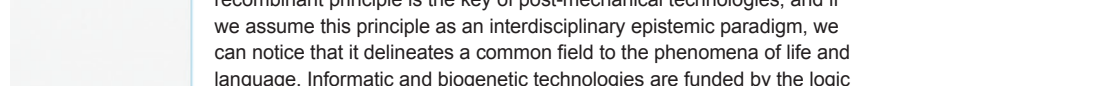
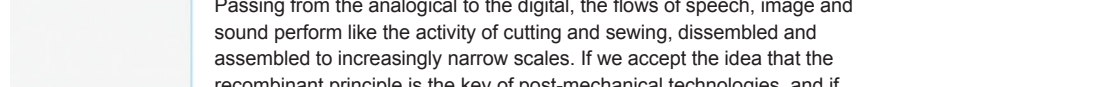
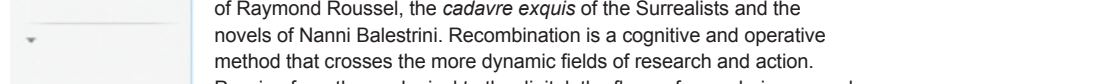
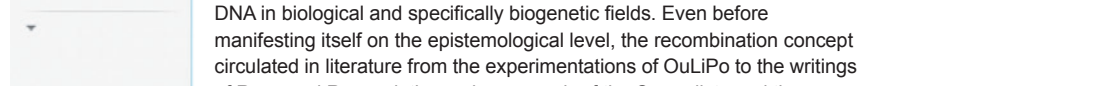
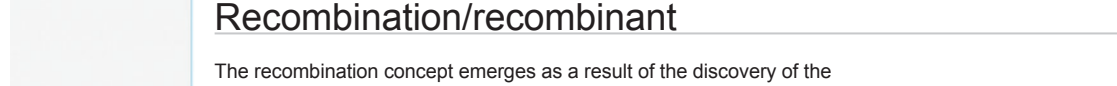
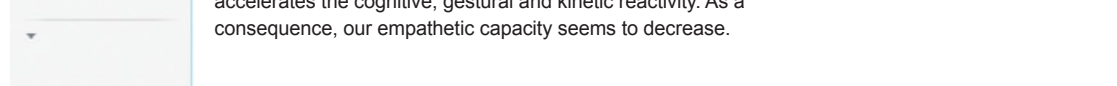
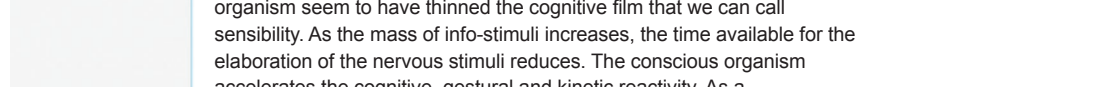
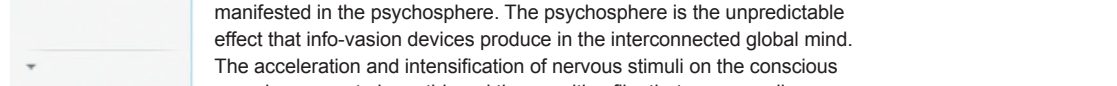
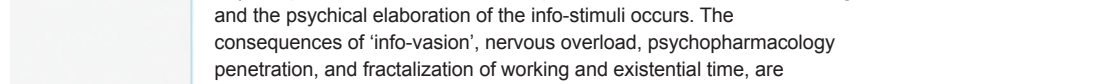
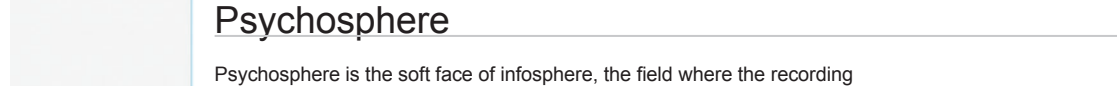
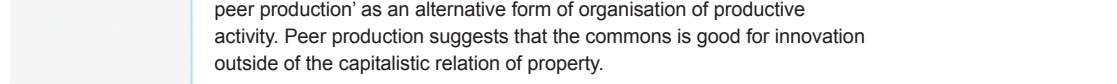
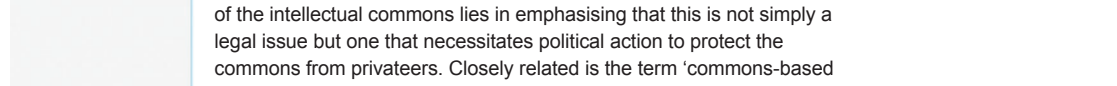
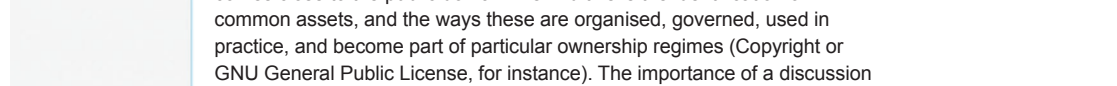
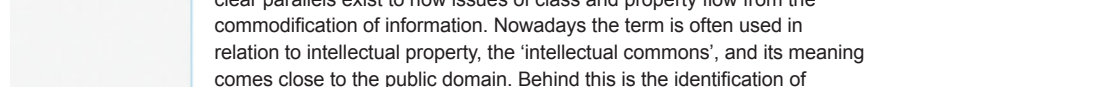
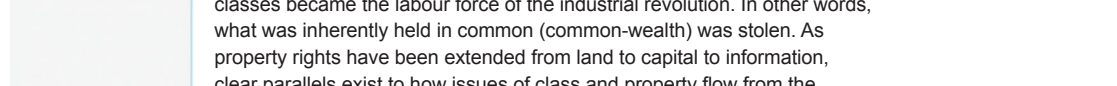
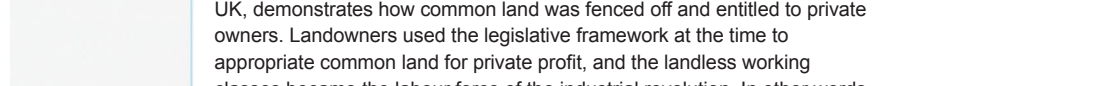
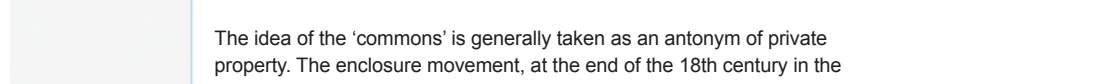
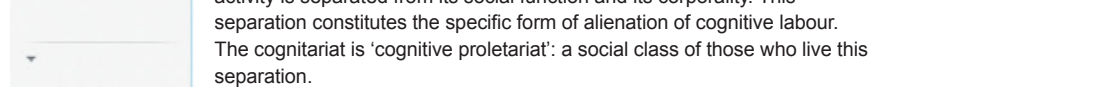
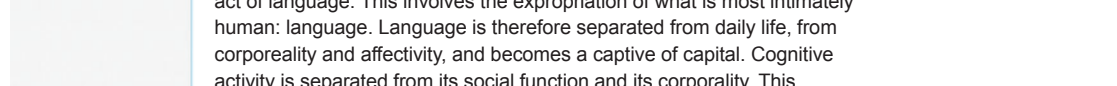
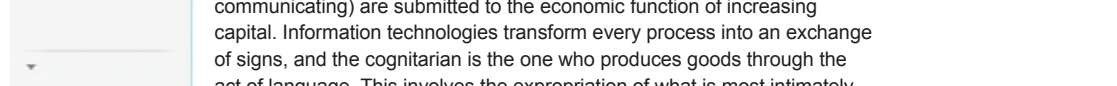
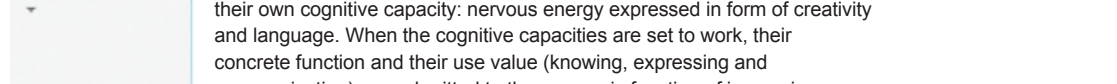
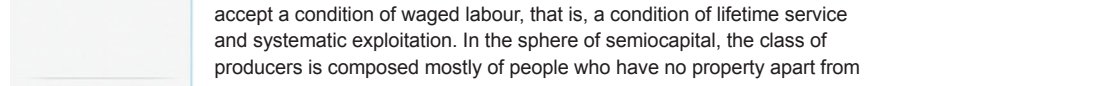
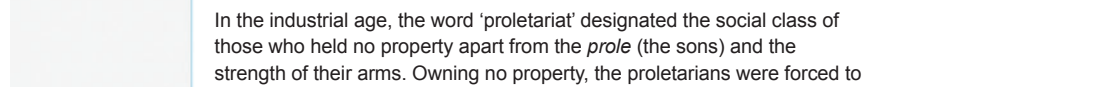
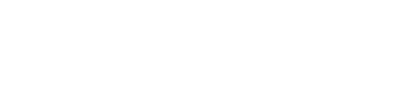
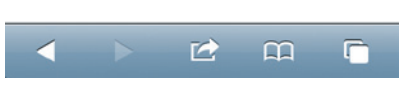
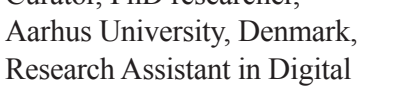
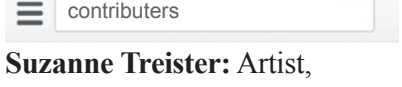
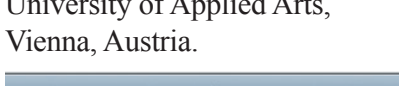
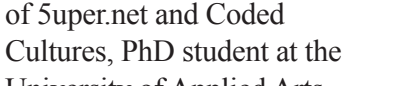
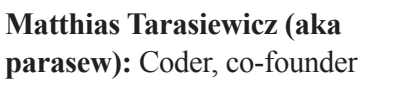
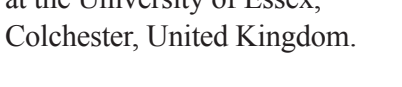
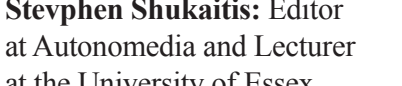
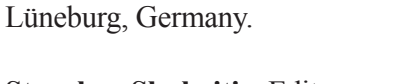
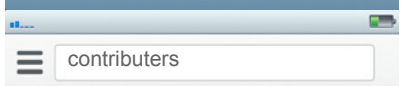
Florian Schmidt: Freelance



Designer, PhD researcher, Royal College of Art, London, United Kingdom.

Oliver Lerone Schultz: Researcher at the Moving Image Lab and Post Media Lab, Leuphana University, Lüneburg, Germany.

Nishant Shah: Director-Research at The Centre for Internet & Society, Bangalore, India and an International Tandem Partner

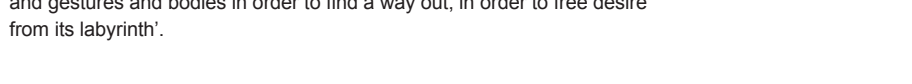
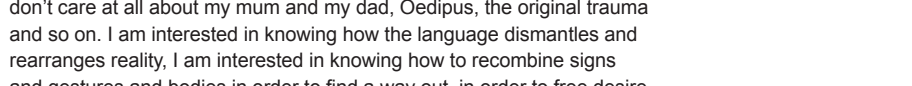
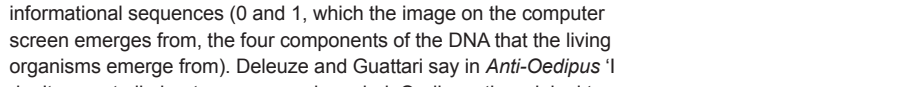
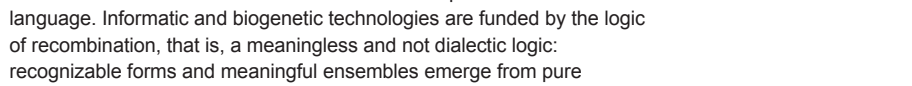
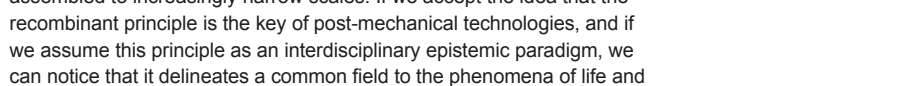
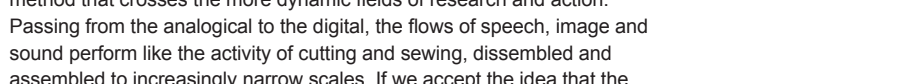
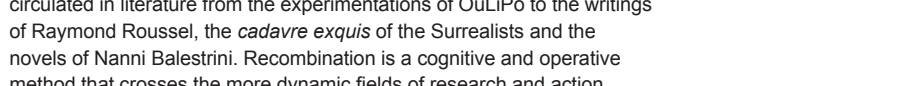
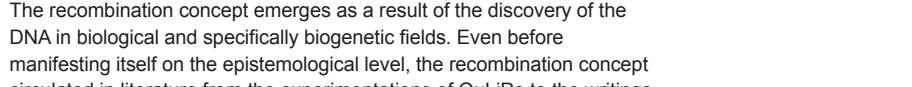
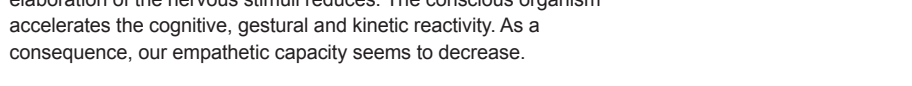
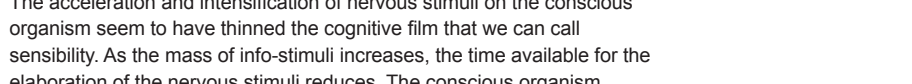
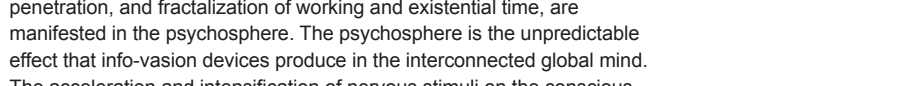
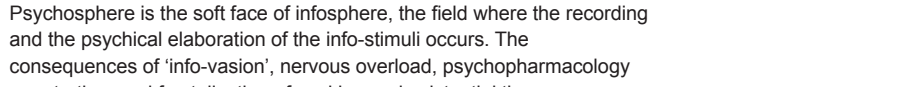
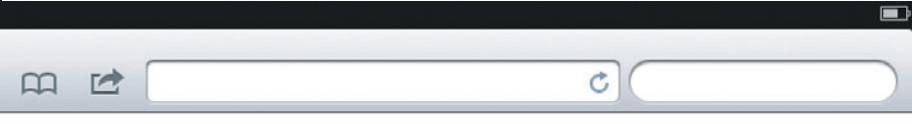


Cognitariat

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. Owing 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 semi-capital, 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 cognitarian 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 privatisation. 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.



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