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Fast Capitalism is an academic journal with a political intent. We publish reviewed scholarship and essays about the impact of rapid information and communication technologies on self, society and culture in the 21st century. We do not pretend an absolute objectivity; the work we publish is written from the vantages of viewpoint. Our authors examine how heretofore distinct social institutions, such as work and family, education and entertainment, have blurred to the point of near identity in an accelerated, post-Fordist stage of capitalism. This makes it difficult for people to shield themselves from subordination and surveillance. The working day has expanded; there is little down time anymore. People can 'office' anywhere, using laptops and cells to stay in touch. But these invasive technologies that tether us to capital and control can also help us resist these tendencies. People use the Internet as a public sphere in which they express and enlighten themselves and organize others; women, especially, manage their families and nurture children from the job site and on the road, perhaps even 'familizing' traditionally patriarchal and bureaucratic work relations; information technologies afford connection, mitigate isolation, and even make way for social movements. We are convinced that the best way to study an accelerated media culture and its various political economies and existential meanings is dialectically, with nuance, avoiding sheer condemnation and ebullient celebration. We seek to shape these new technologies and social structures in democratic ways.

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Informatic Spatiality, Electronic Agency, Cybernetic Structure, and the New People Power: Occupy Movements at Play in Network Systems

Timothy W. Luke

Introduction: The Year 2011

It has barely just past, but 2011 already is petrified solidly in print by Time magazine as "The Year of the Protester." In keeping with its active policing of symbolic and social order by "putting a face" on "the force of the year" who typically is a known person, the magazine's cover image of "the Protester" is at the same time ambiguous and distinctive. An androgynous, hooded, veiled, long-necked visage with arched brows and piercing eyes, Time's depiction of "the Protester" recounts how he and/or she roamed from "the Arab Spring to Athens from Occupy Wall Street to Moscow." Resurrecting this street-fighting historical agent of social change from the deep sleep induced by Time's own eager embrace of Fukuyama's "End of History" thesis during the Clinton years, the magazine's editors spin up here their own just-in-time sociology. That is, the years from 1991 to 2011 are now another now closed chapter in time: "credit was easy, complacency and apathy were rife, and street protests looked like emotional sideshows--obsolete, quaint, the equivalent of cavalry to mid-20th-century war . . .. massive and effective street protest; was a global oxymoron until--suddenly, shockingly--starting exactly a year ago, it became the defining trope of our times. And the protester once again became a maker of history" (Time, December 14, 2011).

Most importantly, however, Time asserts the revolutions of 2011 were marked distinctively by "their use of the Internet and social media . . . In the Middle East and North Africa, in Spain and Greece and New York, social media and smart phones did not replace face-to-face bonds and organization but helped to enable and turbocharge them . . . New Media and blogger are now quasi synonyms for protest and protester" (Time, December 14, 2011). In other words, an "occupation" of many cyberspaces out on the Net's systems of digital communication by "the Protester" preceded, and made possible, the protesters' occupations of 2011 – from Tahrir Square to Zuccotti Park.

Such instant sociological analysis, however, with its easy celebration, or lazy dread, of liberatory ebullience in the streets, freedom-seeking through Facebook or crowd-sourced instant reportage of brutal state repression with mobile phone videos, misses the meaning of these movements, even as the mass media struggle to document their size, scope, and significance. From Tahrir Square in Cairo to battles for Benghazi, Libya, from summer riots in London to occupying Wall Street in New York City, from anarchy in Athens to angry voters in Moscow's Red Square, Time's need to find a 1789, an 1848, a 1917, or a 1968 amid 2011, in fact, ends up ultimately trashing the protesters' aspirations for liberation. Due to the protesters' alleged lack of clear demands, decisive agenda or heroic role-models (arguably one could find a plethora of each for every uprising), Time frets when will the protesters effectively focus their energies? The "Year of the Protester" proves to instead be – under Time's benevolent but bored tolerance – simply a journalist's hook for documenting many big protests of the year, which then tries to quilt together innumerable revolutions that do not even have the colors, fabrics or ideologies – touted in many other uprisings since

1989 – as their brands, logos or tags.

While they are in many ways as unplanned and spontaneous, as the capital markets are now overplanned and scheduled, the various Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movements in the U.S.A. do emulate the "horizontal" ties of many-to-many, P2P, or open source network relations against the "vertical" hierarchies of one-to-most, leader-follower or closed source bureaucratic systems. Inspired in part by David Graeber's anarchistic readings (Graeber 2011; 2007; and 2001) of communal order from Betafo in Madagascar and the social construction of monetized debt since the times of Neolithic city-states, OWS networks have been pushing anarchic affinity to demonetize, definancialize and delimit the scope of both paralyzing debt and growing financialization so deeply embedded today in America's social inequalities (Lowenstein 2011: 69-73).

Ironically, however, the cybernetic structures pulled together by the Protester's use of social media, smart phone and street-level blogging as new political tools typify the brittle and mutable bonds of advanced informational society, which online stock exchanges and dark pool capitalists have also adopted as their own. In such environments, as Lyotard notes, no single self amounts to much; but, at the same time,

> no self is an island; each exists in a fabric of relations that is now more complex and mobile than ever before. Young and old, man or woman, rich or poor, a person is always located at "nodal points" of specific communication circuits, however, tiny these may be (Lyotard 1984: 15).

The collaborative/communicative clusters of such mobile cybernetic social formations, then, occupy fluid zones of unstable relationality between fleeting communication and enduring institution at the nodal points of neoliberal individuality.

Despite the digital divide, the density, mobility and rapidity of Internet connectivity in many locales have created the opportunity for free-floating individuals to coalesce into more decisive points of power and critical nodes of knowledge at the interface of virtual and actual spaces (Luke 2000: 3-23). Rather than people flocking to a handful of centralized net portals, more ubiquitous computing, smart devices and embedded intelligence enable persons to become members of amorphous but active collectives. Still, all individuals then can operate as multimodal portraits to networked connectivity through cybernetic platforms hosted by Twitter, CNN, Google, BBC, Yahoo, Al-Jazeera or Facebook. The ramifications of these subtle shifts from "the personal is the political" to "the person can be a portal" to "the portal is the political" flow under the yet to be completely determined horizons of symbolic, social and semiotic consciousness, which Time's figure of "the Protester" struggles to characterize in its depiction and nomination of the members of such militant multitudes as their "Person of the Year."

A quarter century ago, the ambivalent influences of informationalization began a retrofitting of "huge masses of abstract or undifferentiated labor to the ethereal information machines which supplant industrial production" (Guattari & Negri 1985: 34). There are many tendencies unfolding here. Through the revolutionary rhetoric and activity of informational firms in the 1970s and 1980s, the deep architecture and sociotechnical engineering for virtuality has deterritorialized, disintegrated and degraded many practices of most people's once very grounded, localized and enriching labor and leisure all-at-once. Activism beyond borders becomes both possible and more common (Keck and Sikkink 1998). By fusing the workplace and homeplace – telecommuting, 24x7 on-call duties, whole libraries on electronic readers, paid labor as unpaid labor's aftermath – the integration of programmed lifestyle practices into the sociologies of "friendedness" on Facebook or other social media site as ideal social individuality has deterritorialized everyday living in a manner that "signifies work and life are no longer separate; society is collapsed into the logic and processes of capitalist development" (Guattari & Negri 1985: 34). Given these mercantile predispositions, it also is no surprise that contemporary rhetoric labels them as fractions: the 99 percent and the 1 percent.

Usually it is presented as a positive retraining via "life-long learning," or a useful redirecting of work into flex-time hours, but informational society has made more clear how "modern work was creating a global, infernal disciplinary apparatus, in which the constraints were invisible: educational and information constraints which placed the worker at all times under the sway of capital" (Guattari & Negri 1985: 34). The migration of management, logistics and then labor itself into virtual spaces is captured in code: through hypertextual marked up languages in the World Wide Web and other code systems, Wall Street and Main Street as informatics spatial systems began their own occupations of the noninformatic lifeworld. Indeed, "as the production process remade society in its own image, that high degree of abstraction was transferred to social life" (Guattari & Negri 1985: 34).

As the virtualities of My Space, and then Facebook or Google + become a virtual point of personal production

and preproduction, the concrete actualities of "my own space" dissipates. Guattari argues, "there always exists a time in the ordination of social space when the dimension of the face intervenes to delimit what is legitimate from what is not" (2011: 75). This force of "faciality," in turn, often generates/operates/activates a series of apparatuses for steering perception, behavior and cognition via Time-like "facialized consciousness." Everybody then can "become" somebody, and transmit his/her face, voice, text, image worldwide over the networks of YouTube, eBay, Google + or Facebook – all of which simultaneously capacitate, circulate and contour the mutable facialities of agency in cybernetic structures. New freedoms are possible, but they have both a bright and dark side (Morozov 2011) whose fullest potential for cultural, economic or political liberation is still yet to be proven.

II. Informatic Practices and Spatiality

Informatic technologies do not operate autonomously or discretely. They are extremely material, and not ethereally immaterial, in their composition. Hence, the systems of contemporary informatics, as they intermesh with the circuits of commodity production/consumption, should move one to track how fully cyberspaces amalgamate both: "(1) technologies of production, which permit us to produce, transform, or manipulate things," and, "(2) technologies of the self, which permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thought, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality" (Foucault 1988: 18). These conjoined technologies of production and the self fuse in "the new media" sustaining virtual environments. Nonetheless, global service workers in the worldwide banking, finance, insurance and real estate businesses are pushing such human units of production to their failure point in the grids of 24x7 labor. These pressures give the spatiality of global exchange much of its "winner take all" quality in what OWS groups see as today's war of the 99 percent with the 1 percent.

Robust face-to-face interactions between human beings, once more enmeshed in network power, can become more than online events between digital beings (Carter 1998). Hence, physical systems with well-proven redundancies, engineered disconnects, tested safeguards and fixed practices are supplanted by brittle clusters of unstable code in fragile virtual organizations with more total integration; locatable material sites in real space under identifiable, albeit perhaps not effective, governmental control – banks, stock exchanges, libraries, schools, public records, social centers – are displaced by mutable cyberspatial sites to "download content" or receive "user services" under much less or very little governmental oversight (Luke 1996). Today the World Wide Web, and all of the networks of networks of the Internet that operate beside, behind or beneath it in the dark or light domains of the Net, are constituting elaborate e-structures whose e-haviors – particularly those rooted in e-commerce – are acquiring a sui generis metanational quiddity in e-materiality. The e-material world is not immaterial or dematerialized, but its foundations, forms and flows are harder to trace by just anyone (Turkle 2011). Nonetheless, the social individualities of these domains' e-haviors are recontouring behaviors off-line.

When online in networks, one becomes as Lyotard foresaw "a post through which various kinds of messages pass," and, as such, "no one, not even the least privileged among us, is ever entirely powerless over the messages that traverse and position him at the post of sender, addressee, or referent" (Lyotard 1984: 15), as the protester's activities exemplify. Informatic spatiality as a zone of resistance forms with such new language games, and their grammars and narratives increasingly legitimize within the larger acceptance of informationalization as a basis for many social relations from first job interviews to teleconference weddings to webcast funerals. No one forces the willing users of informatic technologies to employ e-readers, wireless mobile devices, cloud computing, online learning, remote desktops, open sources or digital money. The forms of these shared interactions are not the entirety of social relations, but their uses are encouraged, in part, to combat collective entropy, create novel associations, increase overall performativity and exemplify the promise of connectivity as people go mobile and on-line. In turn, despite the robust utility of older technologies and behaviors – from codex books, face-to-face banking, brick-and-mortar stores and in-person services, many of the material things for, and physical sites of, F2F work, are being eclipsed, if not ignored or even junked, by the cybercollective swarming together and apart through the flows of informatic spatiality.

Even though everyone with Internet access or a wireless mobile device currently can be caught up, as bodies and souls, within some sort of either failing or functional face-to-face political system, their civic capabilities for

exercising certain specific practices of governance tied to rule-making, rule-applying or rule-adjudication offline usually do not map over to the subpolitical domains of online technics. Democracy offline can be the inertial historic momentum of older institutions bringing bureaucratic services only to some, the engine of collective inaction mostly for many others or, worse, a designated audience for mainly endless spectacles of quasi-theatrical scandal to all in this or that territorial domain. For a generation, many social theorists have claimed that any new decisive revolutions will be made globally and locally thanks to the machinations of telematic global forces, like Verizon, Microsoft, Apple or IBM, as Beck maintains, "under the cloak of normality" (1992: 186). "In contemporary discussions," as Beck also suggests, "the 'alternative society' is no longer expected to come from parliamentary debates on new laws, but rather from the application of microelectronics, genetic technology, and information media" (1992: 223). Network power and cybernetic structure delimit both the scope such informatic spatiality and the sites of electronic agency (Abbate 1999), but now the alternative society and its members are being cast as "the protesters" of 2011.

In the networks of power shaping the spatialities of work and leisure, flexibilization rules. Thanks to mobile wireless devices – phones, tablets, ultrabooks – and network connectivity, workers and consumers essentially become as modular, fragmented, or cellular quanta of time or activity as their devices allow. At the outer limit of informatic spatiality, workers are paid for temporary, partial, on-demand services at rates below a living wage needed to subsist well in many given place. Similarly, consumers increasing pay for incomplete, fleeting, on-demand goods at prices falling in the foam of continuous competition. Mobile phones match the tasks of modular labor, cellular consumerism and just-in-time markets in mutable zones of service, sites of work or settings of prosumerism (fusing consumption and production in algorithmic practices), destroying the last limits in many lifeworlds against system performativity. Cyberspace and internet time promise near limitless productivity of connected, embedded, and accelerated intelligence as the goods and services of cybernetic structure and electronic agency colonize everyday lifewords. Yet, the quality and quantity of those goods also often rise and fall without rhyme or reason as souped-up market transactions in milliseconds enable speculators to gamble for profits in real-time on-line.

Informatic spatiality transposes behaviors into bits, and bits flowing as behaviors generate informatic spatiality. Subjects acting as bits can reach out, touch someone, write to everyone, video anyone, organize something, and then reconstitute those everyday activities through both embodied human acts and remotely piloted non-human artifacts (Luke 1995: 91-107). These changes make cyberwarfare, digital identity theft, cyberbullying, electronic industrial espionage, cybercrime, digital infrastructure sabotage and cybersurveillance all inevitable. Because of these virtual clusters of operational performativity, one should no longer talk about the Net "and" politics. Instead, the Net is politics (Luke 1996: 109-133). Despite those who defend the often-liberating possibilities of cybernetic structures, their codes are essentially grids for types of guided positive freedoms that become possible only within, and because of, information and communication technologies (ICTs). Not long ago, a rich human life was the one freest from toil and travail for hours, days or weeks. Today, the affluence of the one percent rests upon glorifying work done 24x7x52 in the relentless pursuit of profit perfection.

Informational society's cybernetic structure and electronic agency, as Lefebrve suggests, directs attention to "spatial practice," because such activity materially "secretes that society's space; it propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction" (1991: 38). In today's integrated world capitalist order, the spatial practice of network power "embodies a close association, within perceived space, between daily reality (daily routine) and urban reality (the routes and networks that which link up the spaces set aside for work, 'private' life and leisure" in the mental and material realms of life" (1991: 38). These materialities are simultaneously foundational and superstructural. Since their perceived spatial practices also express "representations of space," which are the dominant order of society and production, one finds "conceptualized space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers. . . all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived" (1991: 38) going live as code. Finally, informatic spatiality delves into "representational spaces," or "space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and users. . .this is the dominated--and hence passively experienced--space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate" (1991: 39). The behaviors of Occupy Wall Street, and other nomadic camps of "the Protester," track the e-havior of the protesters swarming social spatiality on the Net.

With such cyberstructures generating more of the basic registers of everyday spatiality, the protester has leveraged this interplay of practice, thought and activity. While its codes may offer nothing but an ever-changing flux of sign value, they still matter. Such meanings are "complicitous and always opaque," but they also are "the best means for the global social order to extend its immanent and permanent rule to all individuals" (Baudrillard 1996: 196). Growing amidst every city and town is there a new evolving public sphere, or an i-habitat, fabricated from

cybernetic structures and filled with the rushing flow of electronic agents? Virilio asserts there is,

> in fact, there now exists a media nebula whose reality goes well beyond the frontiers of the ghettos, the limits of metropolitan agglomerations. The megalopolis is not Mexico City or Cairo or Calcutta, with their tens of millions of inhabitants, but this sudden temporal convergence that unites actors and televiewers from the remotest regions, the most disparate nations, the moment a significant event occurs here or there (Virilio 2000: 69)

Globalism can appear as a strike from above to serve those way ahead or far outside, but it also is felt as another side of globality as those below, inside and behind converge in the shared i-habitational spaces of networked power.

Despite the Protester's acts of autonomy, the micropolitics of subjectivity creation appear to be driven by "the functions of opening and reclosing signifying assemblages" (Guattari 2011: 79), which now are more frequently now cybernetic structures, electronic agents, network powers. Informatic spatiality simulates systemic stability as operational perfection as a universal resonator to unify the diverse, heterogeneous, localist tendencies of subjects worldwide in some common web of evaluative paradigmatic relations, like the image-driven "friending" work of social media. Giving the Protester "a face," then, is important.

Informatic spatiality, nevertheless, is all about performativity. It tends to install "its systems of neutralization and equivalence of faciality-occurrences against individuals insofar as they prove to have faciality traits comparable with the capitalistic economy of flows. There are certain heads lost that do not pass in the system. It is necessary to hide them, cut them off, make them over, or better yet transform them from the inside" (Guattari 2011: 79). Hence, the networked powers invested in informatic spatialities can deny service, end existing connectivity, issue endless upgrades, or simply recognize as paradigmatic what otherwise would be irrelevant background noise. Headlining the activist antics of "the Protester" in Time, or celebrating the many anonymous Guy Fawkes-masked members of militant multitudes from innumerable OWS-groups, then, pivots upon a moment of seeming mass autonomy. In the global mass media, from the apparent Arab Springs to the allegedly Occupied Wall Streets, pre-programmed modes of electronic agency actually appear to spread faster and the planned cybernetic structures sustaining them definitely dig deeper into everyday lifeworlds to stabilize these evolving new worldwide webs of power.

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Occupy Globalization

Ben Agger, Timothy W. Luke

If Baudrillard is correct and everything is, or soon will become, a "brand," then we need to revisit our ability to "occupy globalization," one of the trendiest brands inside the Beltway, among G7 leaders, and even, of course, in academia, where the faculty experts and administrators of universities also are clamoring to get on board with globality. "Occupy" itself might well soon become a brand, doing our thinking for us, but we are skeptical that it has happened yet. Right now, it seems to operate as a displaced expression of globality's occupation of the thought and lived possibilities for a good conscience of "the one percent," if only because Occupy doesn't theorize itself beyond noticing that capitalist accumulation has left out nearly everyone else constituting those being dispossessed in "the ninety-nine percent."

The "globalization" brand has at least two perniciously intertwined meanings. Since the 1980s and 1990s, there has been a rapid scramble among corporations and governments to reduce, reconfigure or even remove most existing trade barriers. The commodification of national currencies, rationalization of international trade and even weakening of national boundaries all articulate this aspect of globalization. Under the influence of a generation of economists enthralled by Ayn Rand, von Hayek, Milton Friedman, and von Mises, "neo-liberalism" is the strange name given to these efforts to allow the price mechanism in market exchange to marketize every last element of everyday life (or less strange, if one recalls C.B. Macpherson's Political Theory of Possessive Individualism (1970) and his argument that liberalism buttresses capitalism). Marx and Engels fully anticipated this "global turn" as they predicted flights of capitalists battering down such "Chinese walls" as the bourgeoisie sought more sources of cheap labor and more expansive world markets. Thus, their ambivalent insight that globalization "compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image."

The other meaning of globalization recalls the recent 2008 summer Olympics in China, where we see the profitable fruition of three decades of Deng Xiaoping's most crucial policy directive to the toiling masses: "enrich yourselves" by bringing all of the beginnings of American fast-food culture to the swelling middle class in the PRC's big cities and coastal provinces, including key globalizing media such as automobiles, high-rise condos, television and the Internet. China resists some aspects of this globalization when and where the Chinese Communist Party and state authorities still don't permit Facebook, which boasts nearly a billion world 'friends.' The Internet drives both aspects of globalization, connecting producers and consumers of anything, anytime, anywhere, which delivers 24x7 the wares and diversions of what Horkheimer and Adorno first called the culture industry.

And thus the globalization brand has crowded out the older brands of the welfare state, which, for 50 years staved off deep recession and real depression as a mode of collective social economy, removes trade barriers and spreads the wonders of American media culture with its global shopping channels, six-lane expressway automobility and a cuisine known worldwide as McDonald's. Marx called this "capitalism" and Hardt and Negri call it "empire." Now, Marx "got" neoliberalism and perhaps he would have gotten the Internet, Facebook, smart phones and McDonald's. He didn't foresee Keynes, FDR and the welfare state, and thus he thought that a single major depression could, under the right conditions, spell the end of capitalism in a convulsive general crisis. It didn't or, rather, hasn't yet. But, had he foreseen the policy tools employed by New Deal state intervention, which lasted as part of the welfare state brand until Reagan and Thatcher, one wonders if he would have been surprised by the recent marketizing, anti-tariff turn that could be said to be a deboundarying of once strong nation-states in the already modernized regions of the capitalist world-system.

Indeed, Marx anticipated the contours of a postmodern capitalism, as he clearly announces when he and Engels talk in the Manifesto about all solidity melting into air. He foresaw the ethereal images of the computer screen and television replacing (or at least transforming) a harder "reality" over 150 years ago, even if he didn't write extensively about the vapid distractions that follow from tethering the information, communication and entertainment technologies of the contemporary culture industry to the services of global exchange. Marx might have been unsurprised that Facebook would go public, Detroit sells automobiles by bringing Internet connectivity and mega-capacity hard drives into the cars' cockpit consoles, or that the many variants of social media would become an opiate of the masses who are, now as before, alienated in their labor.

The academicization of "globalization" makes the mistake of all positivism: in describing, it endorses. The Frankfurt School identified this conflation as a central feature of an "affirmative culture." Noticing that the Internet erases boundaries quickly becomes a celebration of deboundarying, when, in fact, there are still profound, and most likely intractable, remaining differences in wealth, power and control among classes, nations, regions. To be sure, capitalism/empire/globalization are, as ever, contradictory. The globalizing tentacles of the Internet have been providing a medium, not only for e-commerce and cultural sedation, but also for an Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street. The "global" here definitely is not a solution. It is instead the problem; think of sweatshops, outsourcing, environmental damage, the affirmative culture of CNN, YouTube, pornography, Amazon.

It is tempting to conclude that there is nothing new under the sun; after all, Marx, Lenin and Trotsky all foresaw globalization as an endemic feature of modern economic imperialism. That there is nothing new is true in the sense that we are still struggling to defend social production for private consumption as the order of things, even as the world is driven by collective conflicts that never seem to lessen. Globalization, neoliberalism, marketization affirm a dismantling of welfare state benefits and governmental regulatory intervention at an historical moment when any hopes for the prospects of a socialist utopia have dropped almost entirely out of the public policy discourses for coping with the Great Recession.

And yet France just elected a Socialist president, suggesting that the branding of globalization has not completely succeeded – and never will, given the contradictory qualities of contemporary capitalism. Teleological explanations of the world derive from bourgeois social science's quest for immutable laws of progress that predict and then portray the realization of a harmonious totality as a necessary outcome of history. Bell (1976) announced the coming of a self-realizing future post-industrial age a decade before the Reagan Revolution started dismantling the very state management that kept American capitalism humming by regulating the money supply, creating jobs, investing in a permanent war economy, and redistributing a modicum of wealth so that the poor would continue shopping to prevent their revolt.

Occupy has this exactly correct: Corporate profiteering has rolled back the New Deal and proletarianized the middle class, who live from paycheck to paycheck as they amass more personal debt that forces them to continue living so precariously, including staggering student loans and underwater mortgages. Higher education, which produces Internet-era human capital such as "IT" personnel, has been privatized, changing the larger society's intellectual priorities from the cultivation of civic and cultural values to initiatives that directly benefit capital and the state. Neoliberalism thrives in our most valued example for entrepreneurial culture as organizations of all kinds, even schools and universities, are run on a putative "business model." Meanwhile, the public sphere (Habermas 1989; Calhoun 1993) becomes merely a cybersphere in which people "friend" each other, curate the archives of their electronic personae, and tweet their address book about the latest updates.

Marx understood that the only real business model in capitalism is desperate competition in the marketplace. Writing a hundred years after Adam Smith, Marx predicted that a few corporate giants, eventually replacing the robustness of market competition with oligopoly and monopoly, would squeeze small businesses out. This was unstable to Marx because capitalism cannot find work for the millions laid off by business failures, corporate consolidations and relentless automation. The unemployed cannot consume the products spewed out by giant Fordist industries, especially once the social safety net is ripped away in the name of more robust global competitiveness.

Unfettered markets produce, dialectically, progressive and regressive outcomes: We make food and literacy potentially available for everyone, but the rich get richer as hunger and ignorance become more common. Socialist movements (and here we include the white and black New Lefts of the 1960s) are the dialectical outcomes of this basic irrationality. The culture industry works overtime to flatten the present into utopian sufficiency, and continues the endless electronic warfare of infocommercials, robocalls and pop-ups all aimed at narcotizing people. But as all types of people experience economic crises on the individual level, the narcotic wears off. And, in the aftermath, we get many new social movements such as civil rights, the May Movement, the Prague Spring, the Arab Spring and

now Occupy. These are all moments of a "new" – post-orthodox – Left that is, by now, over 50 years old. Early SDSers, such as Hayden and Flacks, memorialized all this in the timeless Port Huron Statement, which recommended "participatory democracy" as an alternative to the military-industrial complex.

By now, one would broaden the ambit of that oligarchical "complex" into the military-industrial-educational-entertainment complex, which is another way of noticing that base and superstructure, in Marx's terms, are interlocking and nearly nondifferentiable. "Nearly" is a key word, because one should unpack globalization as brand. The commodities being sold under its rubric are made alluring in today's warehouse-scale suburban sales clubs, but their everyday low prices rest upon free trade and sweatshops. Globalization, thus, is best read as world markets plus American mass culture, all made possible by the instantaneity of the Internet. Ironically, this reading of those raw realities can be, and frequently are, affirmed as entirely satisfactory to the corporate-leaning intellectuals in favor of such globalization and its brand.

This returns one to the issue of affirmative intellectual content; concepts that purport merely to describe actually endorse (perhaps by rendering these concepts ontological). That is the storyline of a positivism that pretends not to be narrative at all but to stand outside the world, and thereby reproducing it as our fate. Globalization is portrayed as a fate that we should love (Nietzsche's **amor fati**) because it is too difficult to imagine a "glocal" world (Luke 1994) in which we blend the premodern and postmodern to produce a utopian construct that has been aptly called the **slowmodern** (Agger 2004). Examples of slowmodernity include Petrini's (2003) slow-food movement, redemption of nature, various mind-body healings that Agger outlines in his Body Problems (2010). The slowmodern endorses glocality as a transcendence of a spurious globalization that simply brands subordination to its peculiar New World Order (Luke, 1995) as standing for free trade coffee, Fords with Internet services on-board and Facebook friends.

Although neologisms cannot do our thinking for us, these new semantic blendings break away from the rhetorical ruts that affirmative culture bless as clear conceptualization and then suggest something about utopian possibility that negates/preserves/transcends the present – a Hegelian **Aufhebung** functioning dialectically, as new terminologies did for Marx. If globality bespeaks something about what early Marx called our species being, then one might get on board. But globality is a new brand of bureaucratized being that involves incredible new forms of hierarchy and inequality, as even the most casual glance at any of the many military and economic battlefields of the moment reveals. Accordingly, we need to occupy 'globalization' as we work to transform it from an affirmative into a critical concept. As it stands, globality is simply another way to talk about – and celebrate – late capitalism, while ignoring its many intrinsic miseries.

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Go Home, Occupy Movement!! (The McFB – Was Ist Das?)

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Ever since, years ago, I coined the expression "McFB way of life" and particularly since my intriguing FB articles (Is there life after Facebook I and II) have been published, I was confronted with numerous requests to clarify the meaning. My usual answer was a contra-question: If humans hardly ever question fetishisation or oppose the (self-) trivialization, why then is the subsequent brutalization a surprise to them?

Not pretending to reveal a coherent theory, the following lines are my instructive findings, most of all on the issue why it is time to go home and search for a silence.

Largely drawing on the works of the grand philosophers of the German Classicism and Dialectic Materialism, it was sociologist Max Weber who was the first – among modern age thinkers – to note that the industrialized world is undergoing a rapid process of rationalization of its state (and other vital societal) institutions. This process – Weber points out – is charac-terized by an increased efficiency, predictability, calculability, and control over any 'threat' of uncertainty. Hereby, the uncertainty should be understood in relation to the historically unstable precognitive and cognitive human, individual and group, dynamics. A disheartened, cold and calculative over-rationalization might lead to obscurity of irrationality, Weber warns. His famous metaphor of the **iron cage** or **irrationality of rationality** refers to his concern that an extremely rationalized (public) institution inevitably alienates itself and turns dehumanized to both those who staff them and those they serve, with a tiny upper caste of controllers steadily losing touch of reality.

Revisiting, rethinking and rejuvenating Weber's theory (but also those of Sartre, Heidegger, Lukács, Lefebvre, Horkheimer, Marcuse and Bloch), it was the US sociologist George Ritzer who postulated that the late 20th century institutions are rationalized to a degree that the entire state becomes 'McDonaldized', since the principles of the fast food industry have gradually pervaded other segments of society and very aspects of life (The McDonaldization of Society, a controversial and highly inspiring book of popular language, written in 1993).

Thus paraphrased, Ritzer states that (i) **McEfficiency** is achieved by the systematic elimination of unnecessary time or effort in pursuing an objective. As the economy has to be just-in-time competitively productive, society has to be efficient as well. Corresponding to this mantra, only a society governed by business models and sociability run on marketing principles is a successfully optimized polity. Premium efficiency in the workplace (and over broader aspects of sociableness) is attainable by introducing F.W. Taylor's and H. Ford's assembly line into human resources and their intellectual activity (sort of intellectual assembly line)[1]. Even the average daily exposure to the so-called news and headlines serves an instructive and directional rather than informational purpose. Hence, McEfficiency solidifies the system, protecting its karma and dharma from any spontaneity, digression, unnecessary questioning and experimenting or surprise.

(ii) **McCalculability** is an attempt to measure quality in terms of quantity, whereby quality becomes secondary, if at all a concern. The IT sector, along with the search engines and cyber -social clubs, has considerably contributed to the growing emphasis on calculability. Not only the fast food chains (1 billion meals, everybody-served-in-a-minute), Google, Facebook, TV Reality Shows, and the like, as well as the universities, hospitals and travel agencies, all operate on a nearly fetishised and worshiped 'most voted', 'frequently visited','most popular', a **big is beautiful,** matrix. It is a calculability which mystically assures us that the **BigMac** is always the best meal – given its quantity;

that the best read is always a bestseller book; and that the best song is a tune with the most clicks on **YouTube**. One of the most wanted air carriers, AirAsia, has a slogan: **Everyone can fly now**[2]. Amount, size, frequency, length and volume is all what matters. Thus, a number, a pure digit becomes the **(Burger)** king. Long **Yahoo**, the king! Many of my students admit to me that Google for them is more than a search engine; that actually **googalization** is a well-established method which considerably and frequently replaces the cognitive selection when preparing their assignments and exams. Ergo, instead of complimenting, this **k(l)icky-Wiki-picky** method increasingly substitutes the process of human reasoning.

(iii) **McPredictability** is the key factor of the rationalized McDonalds process. On the broader scale, a rational (rationally optimized) society is one in which people know well beforehand what (and when) to expect. Hence, fast food is always mediocre – it never tastes very bad or very good. The parameter of McFood is therefore a surprise-less world in which equally both disappointment and delight are considerably absent. McMeals will always blend uniform preparation and contents as well as the standardized serving staff outfit and their customized approach. In the end, it is not about food at all. What makes McDonalds so durably popular is its size, numbers and predictability. (All three are proportionately and causally objectivized and optimized: a meal, who serves it and those served – until the locality and substance of each of the three becomes fluid, obsolete and irrelevant). In such an atmosphere of predictability or better to say predictive seduction and gradual loss of integrity, the culture of tacit obedience (ignorance of self-irrelevance through the corrosive addiction) is to bread, even unspotted. Consequently, more similarities than differences is central to a question of predictability, on both ends: demand (expectation, possibility) and supply (determination, probability).

(iv) **McControl** represents the fourth and final Weberian aspect for Ritzer. Traditionally (ever since the age of cognitivity[3]), humans are the most unpredictable element, a variable for the rationalized, bureaucratic systems, so it is an imperative for the McOrganization to (pacify through) control. Nowadays, technology offers a variety of palliatives and tools for the effective control of both employers (supply, probability) and customers (demand, possibility), as well as to control the controllers. A self-articulation, indigenous opinionation, spontaneous initiative and unconstrained action is rather simulated, yet stimulated very seldom. Only once the wide spectrum of possibilities is quietly narrowed down, a limited field of probabilities will appear so large. To this end, the IT appliances are very convenient (cheap, discreet and invisible, but omnipresent and highly accurate) as they compute, pre-decide, channel and filter moves, as well as they store and analyze behavior patterns with their heartless algorithms. (The ongoing SOPA and PIPA fuss or any other eminent future stringent regulative does not constitute but only confirms and supplements its very nature.)

Aided by the instruments of efficiency, calculability and predictability, the control eliminates (the premium or at least minimizes any serious impact of) authenticity, autonomous thinking and independent judgment. Depth and frequency of critical insights and of unpredictable human actions driven by unexpected conclusions is rationalized to a beforehand calculable, and therefore tolerable few. Hyper-rationalized, frigid-exercised, ultra-efficient, predictable and controlled environment subscribes also a full coherence to the socio-asymmetric and dysfunctional-emphatic atmosphere of disaffected but ultimate obedience ('guided without force', 'prompted without aim', "**poked**, **tweeted** and **fleshmobbed** for 'fun', 'useful idiots', 'fitting the social machine without friction'). Hence, what is needed is not an engagement, but a compliance.

Ergo, the final **McSociety** product is a highly efficient, predictable, computed, standardized, typified, instant, unison, routinized, addictive, imitative and controlled environment which is – paradoxically enough – mystified through the worshiping glorification (of scale). Subjects of such a society are fetishising the system and trivializing their own contents – smooth and nearly unnoticed trade-off. When aided by the IT in a mass, unselectively frequent and severe use within the scenery of huge shopping malls (enveloped by a consumerist fever and mixed with an ever larger cyber-neurosis, disillusional and psychosomatic disorders, and functional illiteracy of misinformed, undereducated, cyber-autistic and egotistic under-aged and hardly-aged individuals – all caused by the constant (in) flow of clusters of addictive alerts on diver-ting banalities), it is an environment which epitomizes what I coined as the **McFB way of life**.

This is a **cyber–iron cage** habitat: a shiny but directional and instrumented, egotistic and autistic, cold and brutal place; incapable of vision, empathy, initiative or action. If and while so, is there any difference between Gulag and **Goo(g)lag** – as both being prisons of free mind? Contrary to the established rhetoric, courage, solidarity, vision and initiative were far more monitored, restricted, stigmatized and prosecuted than enhanced, supported and promoted throughout the human history–as they've been traditionally perceived like a threat to the inaugurated order, a challenge to the functioning status quo, defiant to the dogmatic conscripts of admitted, permissible, advertized,

routinized, recognized and prescribed social conduct[4].

Elaborating on a well-known argument of 'defensive modernization' of Fukuyama, it is to state that throughout the entire human history a technological drive was aimed to satisfy the security (and control) objective; and it was rarely (if at all) driven by a desire to (enlarge the variable and to) ease human existence or to enhance human emancipation and liberation of societies at large. Thus, unless operationalized by the system, both intellectualism (human autonomy, mastery and purpose), and technological breakthroughs were traditionally felt and perceived as a threat.

Consequently, all cyber-social Networks and related search engines are far away from what they are portrayed to be: a decentralized but unified intelligence, attracted by gravity of quality rather than navigated by force of a specific locality. In fact, they primarily serve the predictability, efficiency, calculability and control purpose, and only then they serve everything else – as to be e.g. user-friendly and **en mass** service attractive. To observe the new dynamics of social phenomenology between manipulative fetishisation (probability) and self-trivialization (possibility), the Cyber-social Platforms –these dustbins of human empathy in the muddy suburbs of consciousness– are particularly interesting.

Facebook itself is a perfect example of how to utilize (to simulate, instead of to stimulate and empathically live) human contents. Its toolkit offers efficient, rationalized, predictable, clean, transparent, and most intriguing of all, very user-friendly convenient reduction of all possible relations between two individuals: 'friend', 'no-friend'. It sets a universal language, so standardized and uncomplicated that even any machine can understand it – a binary code: '1' (friend) '0' (no-friend)[5], or eventually '1' (brother/sister), '1/0' (friend), '0' no-friend – just two digits to feed precise algorithmic calculations. Remember, number is the king. **Gott ist tot**, dear Nietzsche – so are men.

Be it occupied or besieged, McDonalds will keep up its menu. Instead, we should finally occupy ourselves (e.g. by reducing enormous **tweet/mob** noise pollution in and all around us)[6].

It is a high time to replace the dis-conceptualflux on streets for a silent reflection at home.

Sorry Garcin, hell is not other people. Hell are we!!

Post Scriptum

> In his emotionally charged speech of December 2011, President Obama openly warned the US citizens: "Inequality distorts our democracy. It gives an outsized voice to the few who can afford high-priced lobbyists (...) the wealthiest Americans are paying the lowest taxes in over half a century (...) Some billionaires have a tax rate as low as 1%. One per cent! (...) The free market has never been a free license to take whatever you want from whoever you can..."
>
> (The Oswatomie High School, Kansas, 06 December 2011, the While House Press Release)

Two months before that speech, the highly respected, politically balanced and bipartisan Budget Office of the US Congress (CBO) released its own study "Trends in the Distribution of Household Income between 1979 and 2007" (October 2011). The CBO finds that, between 1979 and 2007, income grew by: 275% for the top 1% of the US households, 65% increase for the next 19% of households, less than a 40% increase for the following segment of households of the next 60%, and finally only an 18% income increase for the bottom of 20% of the US households. If we consider an inflation for the examined period of nearly 30 years, then the nominal growth would turn to a negative increase in real incomes for almost 80% of the US households; a single digit real income increase for the upper 19% of households; and still a three-digit income growth for the top 1% of population.

According to the available internet search engine counters, this CBO study has been retrieved 74,000 times since posted some 3 months ago. For the sake of comparison, an average clip of great- granddaughter of ultra-rich, billionaire Conrad Hilton is clicked on **YouTube** over 31 million times. Roughly 3 million Americans would represent the top 1% of its population. Who are other 99% – pardon, 28 million individuals – interested in trivial clip/s (with obscure but explicit lines: **They can't do this to me, I'm rich)** of Miss Paris?

Remember what I asked at the beginning of this article: If humans hardly ever question fetishisation or oppose the (self-) trivialization, why then is the subsequent brutalization a surprise to them?

**This is the so-called FB3 article (Is there life after Facebook? III – the Cyber Goo(g)lag Revelations). Its early version was first published by the US Journal of Foreign Relations /12 January 2012/.*

Endnotes

1. University professors have been confronted lately with lengthy and tedious semestral reports in which the central part constitutes the question "teacher input – teacher output"; as if they are not dealing with humans in tertiary education but manufacturing auto spare parts. Following the so-called business models of the corporate world, the latest trend in most of the UN Specialized Agencies is to visibly claim 'staff rotation' (as if it were crop, not people), as well as to note on job applications, nearly a warning; 'we are not a career organization' – as if e.g. the CTBTO, WMO and other IOs are hobby rooms or volunteer fire-brigades, not serious entities dependent on specialists of high professional integrity and profound profile.

2. Everyone can fly now...and enroll at a university. Even Ritzer – almost two decades ago – claimed that we live in an age of mass or McDonaldized higher education, in which many students attend universities by seeing it as a lucrative career opener, not because of a great learning passion. So, it is not an exploration-knowledge quest, but mainly a calculative, narrow-set pragmatism as a driving force behind it. Urged by the labor market needs of McDonaldized society, the students of tertiary education are therefore increasingly getting what they want (as customers), not what they need (as intellectual aspirants).

3. Every system of any living organism on this planet survives by functioning through mechanical solidarity, a non-cognitive group cohesion. Early humanoids were not an exception to this rule. For 1.9 out of 2 million years of our history, the custom of pre-civilizational Homo sapiens (which represents the first societal normative order) was an act of control allied with brutal coercion of a herd/gang onto the diverting, non complying individual – mechanical solidarity aimed at group's security to satisfy the basic need – survival.

4. Aegean theater of the Antique Greece was the place of astonishing revelations and intellectual excellence – a remarkable density and proximity, not surpassed up to our age. All we know about science, philosophy, sports, arts, culture and entertainment, stars and earth has been postulated, explored and examined then and there. Simply, it was a time and place of triumph of human consciousness, pure reasoning and sparkling thought. However, neither Euclid, Anaximander, Heraclites, Hippocrates (both of Chios, and of Cos), Socrates, Archimedes, Ptolemy, Democritus, Plato, Pythagoras, Diogenes, Aristotle, Empedocles, Conon, Eratosthenes nor any of dozens of other brilliant ancient Greek minds did ever refer by a word, by a single sentence to something which was their everyday life, something they sow literally on every corner along their entire lives. It was an immoral, unjust, notoriously brutal and oppressive slavery system that powered the Antique state. (Slaves have not been even attributed as humans, but rather as the 'phonic tools/tools able to speak'.) This myopia, this absence of critical reference on the obvious and omnipresent is a historic message – highly disturbing, self-telling and quite a warning.

5. One recent foreign policy doctrine was the McFB-ised look-alike: "you are either with us ('1') or against us ('0')".

6. By exporting the revolts all over the place, Al-Qaida treats a state – identical to the early Bolsheviks – as a revolutionary cause, not as a geopolitical, socio-cultural and geo-economic reality. The Al-Qaida is doing it while its leadership and Sturm Falanges are headquartered in the Stone Age–like scenery of Afghan caves, as the early Bolsheviks were doing it from a feudal-frozen country saturated by cataclysmic hungers. Let's hope that OWS will not follow the same 'revolt exporting' logics. The FB's fleshmobs hold an international reach, but the political agendas are always and only national.

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Occupy Wall Street's Battle against American-Style Authoritarianism

Henry A. Giroux

> Only a humanity to whom death has become as indifferent as its members, that has itself died, can inflict it administratively on innumerable people.
>
> — Theodor Adorno

The Occupy Wall Street movement is raising new questions about an emerging form of authoritarianism in the United States, one that threatens the collective survival of vast numbers of people, not through overt physical injury or worse but through an aggressive assault on social provisions that millions of Americans depend on. For those pondering the meaning of the pedagogical and political challenges being addressed by the protesters, it might be wise to revisit a classic essay by Theodor Adorno titled "Education After Auschwitz," in which he tries to grapple with the relationship between education and morality in light of the horrors of perpetrated in the name of authoritarianism and its industrialization of death (Adorno 1998).

Adorno vs. Authoritarianism

Adorno's essay, first published in 1967, asserted that the demands and questions raised by Auschwitz had barely penetrated the consciousness of people's minds such that the conditions that made it possible continued, as he put it, "largely unchanged." Mindful that the societal pressures that produced the Holocaust had far from receded in post-war Germany and that under such circumstances this act of barbarism could easily be repeated in the future, Adorno (1998) argued that "the mechanisms that render people capable of such deeds" must be made visible (p. 192). For Adorno, the need for a general public to come to grips with the challenges arising from the reality of Auschwitz was both a political question and a crucial educational consideration. Realizing that education before and after Auschwitz in Germany was separated by an unbridgeable chasm, Adorno wanted to invoke the promise of education through the moral and political imperative of never allowing the genocide witnessed at Auschwitz to be repeated. For such a goal to become meaningful and realizable, Adorno contended that education had to be addressed as both an emancipatory promise and a democratic project. Adorno urged educators to teach students how to be critical so they could learn to resist those ideologies, needs, social relations, and discourses that lead back to a politics where authority is simply obeyed and the totally administered society reproduces itself through a mixture of state force and orchestrated consensus.

Adorno keenly understood that education is at the center of any viable notion of democratic politics and that such education takes place in a variety of spheres both within and outside of schools. Freedom means being able to think critically and act courageously, even when confronted with the limits of one's knowledge. Without such thinking, critical debate and dialogue degenerates into slogans, while politics, disassociated from the search for justice, becomes a power grab or simply hackneyed. What is partly evident in the Occupy Wall Street movement is not just a cry of collective indignation over economic and social injustice that pose threats to human kind, but a

critical expression of how young people and others can use new technologies, social formations and forms of civil disobedience to reactivate both the collective imagination and develop a new language for addressing the interrelated modes of domination that have been poisoning democratic politics since the 1970s. At the same time, the movement is using the dominant media to focus on injustices through a theoretical and political lens that counters the legitimation of casino capitalism in the major cultural apparatuses. The rationality, values and power relations that inform hyper-capitalism are now recognized as a new and dangerous mode of authoritarianism.

I am certainly not equating the genocidal acts that took place in Nazi Germany with the increasingly anti-democratic tendencies evident in U.S. foreign and domestic policies; but I do believe that Adorno's essay offers some important theoretical insights about how to imagine a broader understanding of politics as a form of public pedagogy. Its acute analysis of authoritarianism no doubt continues to resonate today, especially in light of the emergence of anti-democratic forces in American society that propagate massive human suffering, a disproportionate distribution of wealth and income, individual and collective despair, a sense of powerlessness and hopelessness, and multiple forms of economic, political, and racial exclusion. Adorno's essay raises fundamental questions about how acts of inhumanity are inextricably connected to the pedagogical practices that produce formative cultures that legitimate a culture of cruelty, a punishing state, the militarization of everyday life and an assault on the welfare state, while transforming government into an adjunct of corporate power.

Adorno insisted that crimes against humanity by authoritarian regimes should not be reduced to the behavior of a few individuals, but instead be understood as speaking in profound ways to the role of the state in propagating such abuses and the mechanisms employed in the realm of culture that attempt to silence the public in the face of horrible acts. Adorno pointed to the dire need to issue a public challenge that would name such acts as moral crimes against humankind and translate that moral indignation into effective pedagogical and political practices throughout society so that such events would never happen again. Adorno's plea for education as a moral and political force is just as relevant today, given the authoritarian practices used by the Bush and Obama administrations in conjunction with powerful corporations and financial institutions. The political and economic forces fueling such anti-democratic practices – whether they are unlawful wars, systemic torture, practiced indifference to chronic poverty, persistent racism, a war on youth and immigrants, massive economic inequality or the killing of innocent civilians by drone attacks – are always mediated by widespread educational forces and a host of anti-public intellectuals, institutions, and cultural minions. Just as Adorno asserted following the revelations about Auschwitz after World War II, effective resistance to such authoritarian acts cannot take place without a degree of knowledge and self-reflection about how to name these acts and their accomplices and transform moral outrage into concrete attempts to prevent such human violations from unfolding in the first place.

Anti-Authoritarianism in #OccupyWallStreet

Critics of authoritarianism like Adorno in many ways offer insight into the concerns and collective opposition being raised by young people and others through the Occupy Wall Street protests taking place all over the United States and in many other parts of the globe. What we see happening in this surge of collective resistance is an attempt to make visible the ideologies, values, social relations and relations of power that fuel a toxic form of casino capitalism, one that assumes it owes no accountability to the American public and legitimates itself through an appeal to the self-evident and the discourse of common sense. Injustices of various stripes are much more powerful when they are normalized or hide behind the shadow of official power. The collective uproar we see among young people and others is in part an attempt to make dominant power visible and accountable, while doing so through new forms of solidarity that have been often marginalized, fractured, pathologized or punished. In fact, within a very short time, the Occupy Wall Street protesters have changed the national conversation from the Republican right-wing discourse about deficit reduction and taxing the poor to important issues that range from poverty and joblessness to corporate corruption. They have all but usurped dominant media and cultural apparatuses that have been enormously successful in normalizing the ideology, values, and social practices of market fundamentalism for a number of decades. But most importantly, as Jonathan Schell (2011) has argued, they have unleashed "a new spirit of action," an expression of outrage fueled less by policy demands than by a cry of collective moral and political indignation whose message is "'Enough!' to a corrupt political, economic and media establishment that is hijacking the world's wealth for itself, immiserating ordinary people, sabotaging the rule of law, waging interminable savage

and futile wars, plundering the world's finite resources, lying about all this to the public and threatening Earth's life forms into the bargain."

The spirit of action that informs the current protest movement is not about providing recipes or tossing around facile slogans – it is about using new pedagogical tools, practices and social relations to educate the rest of the American public about the dangers of casino capitalism as a new form of authoritarianism. The Occupy Wall Street protests offer a new language of critique and hope, while inventing a mode of politics in which the claims to justice, morality and social responsibility prevail. In this first and important stage of the movement, young people and others are making visible how organized violence works through a criminal culture and set of dominating power relations; they are expressing a sense of not just individual but collective outrage that is as moral as it is concretely utopian. "Imagine the unimaginable" is more than an empty slogan; it is a call for reactivating the potential of a radical imagination, one that rejects the tawdry dream worlds of a privatized, deregulated and commodified society. The protesters are making a claim for a sense of collective agency in which their voices must be heard as part of a concerted effort to shape the future that they will inherit. This effort is part of what the philosopher Bernard E. Harcourt (2011) has called a social movement in search of a new form of politics, one that not only rejects the inadequacy of existing laws and institutions but also offers resistance "to the very way in which we are governed: it resists the structure of partisan politics, the demand for policy reforms, the call for party identification, and the very ideologies that dominated the post-war period." What young people and other protesters are making visible is that the frontal assault being waged by casino capitalism against social protections, economic justice, immigrants, unions, worker rights, public servants, democratic public spheres, the notion of the common good and human dignity itself represents not only an attack on existing and future generations of young people but also an alarming act of barbarism and attack on democratic modes of governance and sovereignty.

Democracy is always an unfinished project. Yet, in its current state in America, it appears to be in terminal decay. If a democratic struggle is to be successfully mobilized against the bankers, hedge fund managers, religious extremists and other members of the ruling and corporate elite, then a critical and democratic formative culture must be given life through the production of new ways of thinking and speaking, new social organizations and a new set of institutions that collectively stake a claim to democracy, if not hope itself. What is promising about the Occupy Wall Street protests is that young people and older Americans are delineating the contours, values, sensibilities and hidden politics of the mode of authoritarianism that now shapes the commanding institutions of power and everyday relations of the 99 percent, who are increasingly viewed as excess, disposable and unworthy of living a life of dignity, shared responsibility and hope. This task of delineation is not easy: the conditions of domination are layered, complex and deeply flexible. Yet while the forms of oppression are diverse, there is a promising tendency within the Occupy Wall Street movement to refocus these diverse struggles as part of a larger movement for social transformation. And there is more. Such protests also embody the desire for new forms of collective struggle and modes of solidarity built around social and shared, rather than individualized and competitive, values.

History is not without ample examples of how new modes of resistance can develop, ranging from traditional acts of civil disobedience such as sit-down strikes and teach-in campaigns to voter registration drives and the development of alternative modes of communication. But the Occupy Wall Street protesters, while capable of using traditional and historically informed acts of resistance, are in large part rejecting old ideological and political models. They are not calling for reform but for a massive rethinking and restructuring of the very meaning of politics – one that will be not only against a casino capitalism, which through the chimera of free markets rewards the financial and political elites at great social and environmental costs but also for a restructuring of the notion of governance, rule of law, power relations and the meaning of democratic participation. The current protests make clear that this is not – indeed, cannot be – only a short-term project for reform, but a political and moral movement that needs to intensify, accompanied by the reclaiming of public spaces, the use of digital technologies, the development of public spheres, new modes of education and the safeguarding of places where democratic expression, new identities and collective hope can be nurtured and mobilized. At the same time, there are some crucial short-term demands that are worth pursuing, such as ending student debt, funding programs to eradicate the scourge of 22 percent of American children who live in poverty, developing much needed infrastructure, offering mortgage relief for the 50 million living with the "nightmare of foreclosures," increasing taxes on the wealthy and corporations, and putting into place a public works program for the 25 million unable to find jobs (Scheer 2011). These calls for change represent only a handful of the policy reforms that will surely continue to be articulated as part of a larger strategy of long-term structural change and political transformation.

Defending the Public Good

It is important to recognize that what young people and many others are now doing is making a claim for a democratically informed politics that embraces the public good, economic justice and social responsibility. Central to this struggle is the need to affirm the social in governing, while defining freedom not simply through the pursuit of individual needs and the affirmation of self-interests but also as part of a social contract that couples individual and political rights with social rights. Political and individual freedoms are meaningless unless people are free from hunger, poverty, needless suffering and other material deprivations that undercut any viable possibility of dignity, agency and justice. The capacity for individual and political freedom has to take a detour through the social, which provides the economic foundation, public infrastructures and social supports for making private joys possible and individual dreams realizable. The public good is the basis for any real understanding of freedom, at least one that believes in shared responsibilities, liberty, equality and justice. As Zygmunt Bauman (2011) points out, political rights lose their viability without social rights. He writes:

> Little or no prospect of rescue from individual indolence or impotence can be expected to arrive from a political state that is not, and refuses to be, a social state. Without social rights for all, a large and in all probability growing number of people will find their political rights of little use and unworthy of their attention. If political rights are necessary to set social rights in place, social rights are indispensable to make political rights 'real' and keep them in operation. The two rights need each other for their survival; that survival can only be their joint achievement. (p. 14)

The Occupy Wall Street protests are rejecting a notion of society that embraces a definition of agency in which people are viewed only as commodities, bound together in a Darwinian nightmare by the logic of greed, unchecked individualism and a disdain for democratic values (Lakoff 2011). The old idea of democracy in which the few govern the many through the power of capital and ritualized elections is being replaced with a new understanding of democracy and politics in which power and resources are shared and economic justice and democratic values work in the interest of the common well-being and social responsibility.

The Occupy Wall Street protesters reject the propaganda they have been relentlessly fed by a market-driven culture: the notion that markets should take priority over governments, that market values are the best means for ordering society and satisfying human needs, that material interests are more important than social needs, and that self-interest is the driving force of freedom and the organizing principle of society. Professor Fred Jameson once said, and I am paraphrasing here, that it is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism. That no longer seems true. The cracks in the capitalist edifice of greed and unchecked power have finally split open, and while there is no guarantee that new modes of social transformation will take place, there is a vibrant collective energy on the horizon that at least makes such a possibility imaginable once again.

In the spirit of Adorno's call after Auschwitz for a politics that embraces education as both an emancipatory promise and a democratic project, the Occupy Wall Street protesters are making clear that the values and practices of disposability and social death promoted by casino capitalism have replaced important elements of a democratic polity with a culture of violence in which democracy has become a pathology and informed appeals to morality and justice a cruel joke. They are arguing forcefully and rightly with their bodies and through the new social media that neoliberal economics and its cruel forms of politics and public pedagogy, amply circulated in various platforms of the dominant media and in higher education, have become a register of how difficult it is for American society to make any claim on the promise of a democracy to come. As the realm of democratic politics shrinks and is turned over to market forces, social bonds crumble and any representation of communal cohesion is treated with disdain. As the realm of the social disappears, public values and any consideration of the common good are erased from politics, while the social state and responsible modes of governing are replaced by a corporate-controlled punishing state and a winner-take-all notion of social relations. Within this form of casino capitalism, social problems are placed entirely on the shoulders of individuals just as the forces of privatization, deregulation, and commodification weaken public institutions and undermine the web of human bonds and modes of solidarity that provide the foundations for a democratic politics and a political and economic democracy. Younger and older Americans are now saying "we have had enough," and their spirit of resistance is as educational as it is political.

At this same moment, young people all over the world are developing a new language of ethics, community and democracy in order to imagine a type of society and global world other than the one that is currently on display. It is imperative for intellectuals, educators, social workers, organized laborers, artists and other cultural workers to

join with them in order to put the question of radical democracy, solidarity and economic and racial justice on the political agenda. This suggests we need to forego the fractured single-issue politics of the past by refusing to argue for isolated agendas. It suggests developing a social movement that rejects small enclaves in favor of a broader social movement that can address how the current configuration of neoliberal capitalism and other anti-democratic modes of authoritarianism work as part of a larger totality. Such a globalized movement must offer to all people the tools of a politics that embraces both a radical imagination and a radical democracy. This means making evident not only how casino capitalism intensifies the pathologies of racism, student debt, war, inequality, sexism, xenophobia, poverty, unemployment and violence, but also how we might take up the challenge of developing a politics and pedagogy that can serve and actualize a democratic notion of the social – that is, how we might understand and collectively organize for a politics whose hope lies with defending the shared values, spaces and public spheres that enable an emergent radical democracy.

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Guy Debord and the Integrated Spectacle

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The emergence of the so-called 'anti-globalization' movement saw a renewed interest, amongst some associated with this movement, in the thought of the Situationists. In the 1960s Guy Debord[1] argued that modern capitalism had become a society of the spectacle. Debord divided the spectacle into two forms, the diffuse and the concentrated. In the 1980s Debord put forward the idea that modern capitalist society had now become an 'integrated spectacle'. This notion of an integrated spectacle, developed in Debord's later oeuvre, has often received less attention than the concept of spectacle outlined in his earlier writings. In this article, therefore, I make the integrated spectacle my central focus of attention.

In his book *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle* Debord suggests that:

> These *Comments* are sure to be welcomed by fifty or sixty people... It must also be borne in mind that a good half of this interested elite will consist of people who devote themselves to maintaining the spectacular system of domination, and the other half of people who persist in doing quite the opposite. Having, then, to take account of readers who are both attentive and diversely influential, I obviously cannot speak with complete freedom... Some elements will be intentionally omitted; and the plan will have to remain rather unclear. Readers will encounter certain decoys, like the very hallmark of the era ([1988] 1990: 1-2).

In the article I examine the concept of the integrated spectacle -as best I can, bearing in mind Debord's remarks cited above- by undertaking an 'immanent critique'. The article is divided into three sections. In the first section, I make an assessment of the integrated spectacle as a global concept. In the second section, I examine how the integrated spectacular society functions. In the third section, I discuss the issue of resistance to the integrated spectacle.

The Integrated Form of Spectacle

Towards the end of the 1980s – in a context in which the 'cold war' had entered its final phase – Debord argued that the two forms of spectacle he had previously formulated, the diffuse and the concentrated,[2] had combined into an 'integrated spectacle'.[3] This 'rational combination' took place 'on the basis of a general victory of the… diffuse [spectacle]' (Debord 1990: 8). The concentrated spectacle, Debord claims, preferred 'the ideology condensed around a dictatorial personality', whilst the diffuse spectacle, which 'represented the Americanisation of the world', required 'wage-earners to apply their freedom of choice to the vast range of new commodities now on offer' (1990: 8). Debord suggests that since '[t]he disturbances of 1968', which failed to overturn modern capitalist society, 'the spectacle has thus continued to gather strength' (1990: 2-3). He also remarks that 'the spectacle today is certainly more powerful than it was before' (1990: 4). Further, he writes 'that the spectacle's domination has succeeded in raising a whole generation moulded to its laws' (1990: 7). 'The commodity', he maintains, 'is beyond criticism' (1990: 21).

For Debord, 'the integrated spectacle is characterised by the combined effect of five principal features: incessant technological renewal; integration of state and economy; generalised secrecy;[4] unanswerable lies; an eternal present' (1990: 11-12). Furthermore, Debord claims that 'the integrated spectacle has been pioneered by France and Italy'

(1990: 8), and that '[t]he emergence of this new form [of spectacle] is attributable to a number of shared historical features' (1990: 8-9). These include, 'the important role of the Stalinist party and unions in political and intellectual life, a weak democratic tradition, the long monopoly of power enjoyed by a single party of government, and the need to eliminate an unexpected upsurge in revolutionary activity' (1990: 9).[5]

What, then, are we to make of Debord's claim that 'the integrated spectacle has been pioneered by France and Italy'? And how does this relate to Debord's claim that following the 'general victory' of the diffuse over the concentrated spectacle, an integrated spectacle 'has since tended to impose itself globally'? (1990: 8)

To explore this further, let us consider how the five principal features of the integrated spectacle relate to the previous two forms of spectacle. It can be argued, I think, that four of the five principal features are common to both diffuse and concentrated spectacular societies; namely, integration of state and economy, generalized secrecy, unanswerable lies, an eternal present.[6] **Incessant** technological renewal is, however, something which Debord implies was a feature of spectacular society in its diffuse rather than concentrated form.[7]

Debord, I think, is arguing that although diffuse and concentrated spectacular societies had differences between them, indeed differences sufficient to categorize particular societies into either form of spectacle, these two forms of spectacle are nevertheless not fundamentally opposed to one another. What Debord seems to suggest, then, in his later oeuvre,[8] is the following: that some of those features common to both forms of spectacle became modified following the 'general victory' of the diffuse over the concentrated spectacle. For example, Debord claims that in relation to 'unanswerable lies',[9] the 'concept of **disinformation** was recently imported from Russia' (1990: 44) (prior to the collapse of the USSR). Thus, a concept or practice that arose and developed in a concentrated spectacular society, once applied in societies that had been categorized as diffuse, modifies the feature 'unanswerable lies' (see Debord 1990: 44-9).

So, although Debord sees the integrated spectacle as a form of spectacle that 'has been established…on the basis of a general victory of the form which had shown itself stronger: the diffuse' (1990: 8), it is not a case of the diffuse form spreading unaltered to those societies that were part of the concentrated spectacle. Rather, the 'rational combination' of the two forms has led to the emergence of societies around the world that are a **hybridization** of diffuse and concentrated forms. Indeed, if we consider – as I argued above – that four of the five principal features of the integrated spectacle were common to both diffuse and concentrated societies, it follows that there were elements of the concentrated spectacle already present within the diffuse spectacle and vice versa.

If we are, then, to make any sense of Debord's integrated spectacle, it could be argued that whilst the historical features shared by France and Italy are not necessary for the development of the integrated spectacle within most (or even all) societies around the world, **what is necessary is the existence of an Americanized system of mass production and consumption.** For Debord, I think, it is this that makes possible the incessant technological renewal of modern capitalist society. Furthermore, the reason for Debord's identification of France and Italy as pioneers of the integrated spectacle arguably comes down to the following: that the 'principal features' he identifies, in the particular historical context of these two societies, had altered, post 1968, to such an extent that a new form of spectacle could be distinguished. And that context was one which had the following features: a highly developed (Americanized) system of commodity production and consumption, a strong 'Stalinist party and unions…, a weak democratic tradition, the long monopoly of power enjoyed by a single party of government, and the need to eliminate an unexpected upsurge in revolutionary activity' (1990: 9) – namely the events of 1968. To take one of the principal features, 'an eternal present', a technique associated with this, which was prominently utilized and developed in (concentrated) Stalinist societies, was, according to Debord, the '[use of] police methods to transform **perception**' ([1967]1995: para 105). Yet this technique, which was developed within France and Italy after 1968, has been modified such that '[t]he police in question…are of a **completely new variety** [emphasis added]' (1995: 8).[10]

If we hold, then, to the argument outlined above, I think it is possible to view the integrated spectacle as a global concept. That said, the following question now arises: how does the (global) integrated spectacle reproduce itself? It is to this issue that I shall now turn.

Pleasure, Unpleasure and the Integrated Spectacle

The Situationists – in their heyday – considered that the spectacle is able to perpetuate itself, in part, through manipulating the individual's desire to experience pleasure (see Debord 1995: paras 59, 66 & Vaneigem [1967]1994:

138). In this regard the following could be argued: given that the Situationists believe that the individual can attain self-realization through the pleasurable passions to be creative, to play and to love (see Vaneigem 1994: ch 23), and that '[p]leasure is the principle of unification' (1994: 253),[11] the spectacle is able to reproduce itself by harnessing the pleasurable passions or real erotic desires of the individual (see below).[12] Spectacular society, then, through manipulating the individual's desire to experience pleasure, achieves an illusory unity.

Now, I think the way in which the Situationists imagine that the spectacle reproduces itself, remains, on a general level, the same throughout their oeuvre -early or late.[13] That said, the particular manner in which the spectacle modifies the individual's passions is portrayed, in Debord's later oeuvre, as a more intensive process of repression than the Situationists previously imagined. Arguably, this stronger repression refers to the following (although I must stress that this is not made explicit in Debord's later writings): that as the capitalist system, by the 1980s, produced a greater range of commodified goods and reified roles for people to consume, there emerged, for the mass of the population, niche markets for commodities.

Spectacular society, through offering a huge range of 'image-objects'[14] (alienated goods and roles) for consumption,[15] manipulates the individual's sexual instinct. It stimulates – via images – the individual's real desires, but only permits 'pseudo-gratification'.[16] The individual, whose passions are subjected to a type of repression as they are 'rechannelled…in roles' (Vaneigem 1994: 133) or through the consumption of goods, experiences **controlled** pleasure; the spectacle, therefore, frustrates the realization of the individual's real desires.[17] Post 1968, modern capitalism, due to changes in mass production techniques, offers a greater variety of image-objects from which to choose than hitherto. And it is through the niche marketing of commodities, it seems, that the spectacle has become more sophisticated in its manipulation of the individual's real desires. Yet this requires – although this is potentially problematic for the spectacle – that the individual becomes more aware of the specificity of his or her desires (see section III). That said, the spectacle continues, nevertheless, to thwart genuine self-realization, as it re-routes the individual's authentic desires towards **commodified** forms of leisure or play.[18]

In addition to modern capitalism's manipulation of the individual's sexual instinct, I think it can also be argued that the integrated spectacle manipulates, as did the spectacle (in a minor way) in its diffuse form and (to a greater extent) in its concentrated version, the instinct of self-preservation to help perpetuate itself (see below).[19] With this in mind, let us explore in greater detail how the spectacle in its integrated form functions.

In his Comments on the Society of the Spectacle, Debord brings the notion of fear more to the fore.[20] He claims that:

> Going from success to success, until 1968 modern society was convinced it was loved. It has since had to abandon these dreams; it prefers to be feared (Debord 1990: 82).

What Debord implies here, I think, is that the 1968 rebellion in France revealed –particularly to the ruling class – that the majority of the population was not deeply integrated into spectacular society. In addition to this, Debord suggests that the spectacle 'has at least sufficient lucidity to expect that its free and unhindered reign will very shortly lead to a significant number of major catastrophes' (1990: 62). He points to an ecological catastrophe, citing the dangers associated with nuclear power plants and the destruction of the earth's ozone layer by CFC gases (1990: 34-8, 62). He also mentions an economic catastrophe, 'in banking, for example' (1990: 62). For Debord, then, the circumstances of the post 1968 era have been conducive for fear to become a major factor in relation to the reproduction of spectacular society.[21]

Surveillance organizations, which lurk in the background ready to strike at organized opposition, make people fear the consequences of dissent. They ensure that proletarian[22] opposition to spectacular society is 'eliminated' (Debord 1990: 80) or 'dispersed' (1990: 84). Debord maintains that:

> Under spectacular domination people conspire to maintain it, and to guarantee what it alone would call its well-being. This conspiracy is a part of its very functioning (1990: 74).

So there is, in part, a conspiratorial element to the functioning of the integrated spectacle.[23] As Debord writes:

> [Specialists in surveillance] can now employ traditional methods for operations in clandestine milieux: provocation, infiltration, and various forms of elimination of authentic critique in favour of a false one which will have been created for this purpose (1990: 53-4).

Indeed, in its quest to crush dissent 'the highest ambition of the integrated spectacle is still to turn secret agents

into revolutionaries, and revolutionaries into secret agents' (Debord 1990: 11). Take the case of the undercover policeman Mark Kennedy. From 2003 to 2010, Kennedy, a British policeman under the alias Mark Stone, infiltrated various anti-capitalist groups across Europe associated with the 'anti-globalization' movement. He was unmasked as a police agent just before a trial was due to begin in which the state sought to prosecute a group of protestors with whom Kennedy was associated; they were accused of planning an occupation of Ratcliffe power station in the UK.[24] The conspiratorial side to the spectacle (of which Debord speaks), should not, however, be seen as something unified and omnipotent. Rather, 'thousands of plots in favour of the established order tangle and clash almost everywhere' (1990: 82). 'Surveillance', Debord suggests, 'spies on itself, and plots against itself' (1990: 84).

Debord also alludes, arguably, to the idea that frightening or alarming images, circulated by the mass media, manipulate the individual's instinct of self-preservation and make him or her experience fear. As he writes:

> The spectacle makes no secret of the fact that certain dangers surround the wonderful order it has established. Ocean pollution and the destruction of equatorial forests threaten oxygen renewal; the earth's ozone layer is menaced by industrial growth; nuclear radiation accumulates irreversibly. It merely concludes that none of these things matter (Debord 1990: 34). [25]

It would appear, then, that the mass media – and I think Debord's use of the term 'spectacle' here does denote the mass media – on the one hand generate fear by highlighting specific dangers that pose a threat to the individual's very existence; and yet on the other hand soothe these fears by suggesting the insignificance of such 'dangers'.[26] On my reading, it is through the media raising the issue of catastrophic dangers to humankind, that the individual's instinctual impulse of self-preservation is stimulated such that he or she experiences a feeling of extreme fear. In turn, as the spectacle portrays these dangers or risks as unimportant, the individual is relieved of the pain or unpleasure generated by a rise in instinctual tension.

This argument could, I think, be applied to the US government's 'war on terror'; a 'war' launched following the September 11, 2001 attacks in the USA. Periodically, the media raise the issue of new terror plots; this makes the individual feel extremely anxious that his or her existence is threatened by upcoming acts of terror. As the terror attacks fail to materialize, the media subsequently suggesting the insignificance of this particular threat or danger, the individual experiences a feeling of relief. For example, in July 2002 a warning by the state authorities that the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco was a possible target of a terrorist plot (although no such attack subsequently took place), gained widespread media coverage.[27] Further, it could be argued that when, occasionally, terror attacks do actually take place, the individual's feelings of extreme anxiety are soothed as the media report that the state authorities are hunting those responsible for such attacks. For instance, the much publicized US drone aircraft missile attacks which assassinate 'suspected militants',[28] or the use of special forces to assassinate Islamist militants, such as Osama Bin Laden, who, on 2 May 2011, was killed by a US Naval Seals unit in Abbottabad, Pakistan.[29]

At this point it is pertinent to note that Debord points to the 'dissolution of logic' in spectacular society (1990: 27); or put another way, to the rise within the conditions of modern capitalist society, of a technological rationality which appears as reason itself.[30] In this connection, the Situationists referred to the spectacle's power of recuperation; that is to say, modern capitalism's ability to absorb – via the process of commodification – that which emerges outside of its domain. As Debord writes, '[spectacular discourse] isolates all it shows from its context, its past, its intentions and its consequences' (1990: 28). In other words, anything that becomes subject to the rule of the commodity-form becomes equivalent and its importance or otherwise is veiled.[31] It is the logic of the commodity form, then, and not some conspiracy or dictatorship, which has facilitated the emergence of the media's illogical language. As the commodity form has impacted itself upon images and information, these things have become increasingly fragmented; indeed, separated from their context, past and so on, to such a degree that most people are unable to make any real sense of them. Therefore, in a society in which the commodity-form rules over lived experience, most people lack 'the ability immediately to perceive what is significant and what is insignificant or irrelevant' (1990: 30).[32]

Debord claims that 'the dissolution of logic has been pursued by…means…linked to the mass psychology of submission' (1990: 27). Here, Debord alludes to the notion that the spectacle manipulates the individual's instinctual drives to aid the smooth functioning of modern capitalism. To unpack this a bit further, I shall now make a few comments about Wilhelm Reich's The Mass Psychology of Fascism (1933), in which he dealt with the issue of society's manipulation of the instincts, as this should help to clarify Debord's thought.[33]

Writing in the 1930s, Reich saw the family as the main social institution that socialized the individual. Reich argued that '[the authoritarian family] becomes the factory in which the state's structure and ideology are molded'

([1933] 1991: 30). He suggests that the family's '[moral inhibition of the child's natural sexuality] has a crippling effect on man's rebellious forces because every vital life-impulse is now burdened with severe fear' (1991: 30). For Debord, however, it is agencies external to the family that are now the central socializing forces –especially the mass media (see Debord [1978] 2003: 136-37). With this difference in mind, let us now see how Reich's ideas about fear and the instincts compare with those of Debord.

In contrast to Reich's claim that '[m]an's authoritarian structure…is basically produced by the embedding of sexual inhibitions and fear in the living substance of sexual impulses' (1991: 30), Debord and the Situationists do not, I think, imagine that spectacular society turns people into conformist worker-consumers through encumbering the sexual instinct with severe fear. Rather, they imply that this instinctual drive is manipulated in such a way that the real desires which derive from this drive are re-routed towards the spectacle's image-objects. For the Situationists, then, spectacular society, by harnessing – via images – the individual's sexual instinct to reproduce itself, is left in a precarious position: it might be subverted by proletarians if they come to realize their real erotic desires.[34] Indeed, this is what the Situationists claim had taken place in France during 1968. According to Debord, it was the events of 1968 that led spectacular society, which 'until 1968…was convinced it was loved', '[to prefer] to be feared' (1990: 82).

For the Situationists, the spectacle is able to perpetuate itself through manipulating the individual's desire to experience pleasure. Yet, if we consider that when the spectacle manipulates the sexual instinct the individual's (real) desires are not burdened with severe fear, but rather redirected towards 'pleasurable' spectacular roles and consumer goods, then I think that this may, in part, account for the Situationists' tremendous optimism concerning the prospects for proletarian revolution throughout their earlier thought. Such optimism, however, disappears in Debord's later oeuvre.

To explore this further, let me briefly make a few comments about Freud's theory of the instincts and his model of the psyche. Freud referred to the self-preservation instinct in relation to the ego and the sexual instinct in relation to id. The ego is that part of the individual's psyche that observes the reality-principle; the id, the pleasure-principle. [35] Freud suggests, in this regard, that the ego operates according to the reality principle – seeking instinctual gratification by adjusting to the facts of the external world – in order to ensure the maximization of pleasure; or, put another way, to ensure that the individual overcomes a state of unpleasure.

With this in mind, it could be argued that fear plays the following role in the functioning of the integrated spectacle. Given that Debord and the Situationists assume that the spectacle's system of mass consumption functions through harnessing the individual's pleasurable desires which stem from the sexual instinctual drive: and that this system of consumption could no longer function if this vital drive became burdened with severe fear. Moreover, given that Debord claims that the events of 1968 revealed how vulnerable the spectacle was to proletarian subversion, the spectacular system has, it seems, managed to remain in existence by generating fear through manipulating the individual's instinct of self-preservation to a greater extent than prior to the rebellion of 1968.[36] By developing in this way, the system has become able to counteract more effectively the potentially subversive erotic desires of (proletarian) individuals.

For Debord, I think, the system of mass consumption, prior to the events of 1968, functioned as follows: it tapped the (real) erotic desires of the individual, and then repressed these desires as they were rechanneled through the consumption of spectacular goods and roles. The system was, nevertheless, extremely vulnerable to 'proletarian revolution'.[37] What the uprising of 1968 in France showed, for the Situationists, was that modern capitalist society had been temporarily subverted by the 'new proletariat'.[38] Such subversion took place as proletarians sought an authentic realization of their erotic desires which had been awakened but were not then successfully repressed, by the spectacle. After 1968, as I argued above, the spectacle, due to alterations in mass production techniques, refined the way in which its system of mass consumption manipulated individuals' passions. Through developing, for the mass of the population, niche markets for commodities, modern capitalism has, in a sense, become more responsive to the diversity of human desires. Yet according to the terms of Situationist theory the spectacle still blocks genuine self-realization as it re-routes the individual's authentic desires towards commodified goods and roles. The integrated spectacle, then, although more sophisticated in its harnessing of human erotic desire, nevertheless, remains vulnerable to proletarian rebellion (see section III).

Now, if we consider that both those parts of the individual's psyche Freud termed the id and the ego seek to overcome a state of instinctual tension – that is strive to maximize pleasure or overcome a state of unpleasure – then it appears that, within the terms of Debord's theory, it is through harnessing the individual's sexual instinctual drive as well as self-preservation drive that the integrated spectacle is able to function successfully. Without drawing strength from the individual's instinctual impulse of self-preservation, to counter the (real) erotic desires that the spectacle

taps to re-route towards its image-objects, spectacular society would remain extremely vulnerable to 'proletarian revolution'. Therefore, arguably, as the media publicize catastrophic dangers which threaten humankind and in turn stimulate the self-preservation instinct such that the individual experiences a feeling of extreme fear, the spectacle is able, so to speak, to pitch the ego against the id. This is, I think, what Debord may be alluding to when he claims that

> until 1968 modern society was convinced it was loved. It has since had to abandon these dreams; it prefers to be feared. It knows full well that 'its innocent air has gone forever' (1990: 82).

The Integrated Spectacle and Resistance

Debord's view of the spectacle, outlined in his later oeuvre from the 1980s, is more bleak and pessimistic than the earlier Situationist vision. By the 1980s, the process of deindustrialization, which had begun in the early 1970s in the industrially advanced world, had led to a decline in large-scale workers' struggles in the sphere of production. Furthermore, with improvements in transport, communications and the introduction of computers into the production process, companies were able 'to vary output at short notice to meet changing demands' (Hobsbawm 1994: 404). In such circumstances, the development of niche markets, for the mass of the population, subjected people to an intensified mystification. Yet, although Debord claims that modern capitalist society's powers of mystification have gained in strength since 1968,[39] I do not think that he believes that people have become perfectly reified. Put another way, he considers, I think, that there are limits as to the extent to which the spectacle can control the passions of individuals.[40] Indeed, I think he continues to imagine that proletarian revolution[41] against the spectacle is a possibility; a remote possibility, but a possibility nonetheless.[42] Towards the end of Comments on the Society of the Spectacle, Debord makes the following remark:

> We must conclude that a changeover is imminent and ineluctable in the coopted cast who serve the interests of domination, and above all manage the protection of that domination. In such an affair, innovation will surely not be displayed on the spectacle's stage. It appears instead like lightning, which we know only when it strikes (1990: 88).

Just prior to the section I have quoted, Debord suggests that the consolidation of spectacular domination is analogous to the 'great changes in the art of war' which came about following the French Revolution (1990: 85-7). He cites the change from soldiers being '[kept in] ranks and firing on command', to soldiers being 'deployed in extended order, firing at will as they advanced on the enemy' (1990: 86-7). Now, if we assume that the 'coopted cast' that Debord refers to in the quotation is an allusion to worker-consumers, and that these worker-consumers – like the soldiers – are no longer so highly regimented but rather consumers who are encouraged to be more aware of their individuality, of their desires, then I think it is possible to read the cited passage as follows.

Spectacular society, to reproduce itself, has become more sophisticated in harnessing the individual's real desires. Whereas previously a more limited selection of commodities was available for consumption, with the development of niche markets for commodities this requires, in a sense, that each consumer be encouraged to develop a greater awareness of his or her individuality. In other words, for the spectacle to tap the individual's passions and re-route them towards the more diverse range of alienated goods and roles now offered, it needs to make each individual become more aware, than hitherto, of the specificity of his or her desires. The spectacle, then, is compelled to move away from conditioning individuals to develop rather similar desires for commodities. This means that the spectacle encounters the following problem: as proletarians are encouraged to express more readily their individuality, albeit through commodified forms of leisure or play, potentially, at least, they will not be quite as conformist as they were when there was a more narrow selection of spectacular commodities available.[43] So, in this sense, 'the coopted cast' of worker-consumers have the potential to create the 'innovation' (or revolutionary transformation) which Debord suggests, 'will…not be displayed on the spectacle's stage' (1990: 88). [44]

Furthermore, as the Situationists' conception of the proletariat includes not only worker-consumers but also socially marginalized groups, let us consider the following: given that an uprising by marginalized youths, for the Situationists, constitutes an instance of a proletarian rebellion, then arguably, this might open up a further possibility for Debord's later theory to account for revolutionary change. Such youths could be seen as a 'catalyst' for a more widespread rebellion involving worker-consumers (see Debord 1995: para 115 & Vaneigem 1994: 242).[45] Indeed, towards the end of 2005 there was an uprising by youths from the banlieue which shook France. In addition, in

England, during August 2011, disaffected youths rioted in various cities, looting shops and destroying property. Like the rioters of Watts in Los Angeles during 1965, who Debord believed had '[taken] modern capitalist propaganda, its publicity of abundance, literally' (Knabb ed. 2006: 197), these youths, through the act of looting, achieved 'the most direct realization of the distorted principle, "To each according to his false needs"' (Knabb ed. 1989: 155). To quote Debord:

> They want to possess now all the objects shown and abstractly accessible, because they want to use them. In this way they are challenging their exchange-value... Through theft and gift they rediscover a use that immediately refutes the oppressive rationality of the commodity... (Knabb ed. 2006: 197)

That said, I think Debord believes that proletarian revolution against the integrated spectacle – involving marginalized groups and worker-consumers – is merely a slim possibility. For Debord, the spectacle's powers of mystification post 1968 have strengthened. Nevertheless he imagines, it seems, that there remains a chance – albeit remote – that a majority of proletarians may someday spontaneously rebel against reification and overthrow spectacular society. Furthermore, this emphasis on spontaneity gives rise to a marked tension in Debord's later thought between the following two central claims (a tension that was lessened to some extent in the Situationists' earlier oeuvre through the intervention of a non-spectacular revolutionary avant-garde). That is to say, (1) the claim that modern capitalist society has strong powers of domination and mystification – powers that have gained in strength since 1968; and (2) the claim that proletarian revolution against the spectacle is a possibility.

Debord claims that the integrated spectacle's powers of domination have increased to the point whereby spectacular society 'has eliminated every organised revolutionary tendency' (1990: 80). Further, he claims that authentic dissent[46] against the spectacle (whether that of dissenters with a highly developed revolutionary consciousness or otherwise) has been 'dispersed' (1990: 84). By making such claims Debord is, I think, pushed towards a more 'spontaneous' conception of proletarian revolution. That is to say, Debord becomes increasingly reliant on the spontaneous component of the Situationists' vision of revolution.[47] Yet adhering to such a conception brings with it the risk that Debord's theory will pull itself apart, given that he supposes that those who practise détournement[48] (diversion/subversion) may or may not have a revolutionary consciousness.[49] And for the majority to attain such a consciousness, to combat the recuperative power of the spectacle, the assistance of a revolutionary avant-garde group would be required.[50]

That said, it could be argued that the scattering or atomization of authentic dissent might now be counteracted by the use of 'new' technologies, such as the internet and mobile phones, which Debord, who died in 1994, does not mention. Given that these 'new' technologies appear, at present, to be difficult to police, it might be suggested that such technologies can now assist the linkage of those in opposition to capitalist society. Indeed, the use of the internet to help mobilize anti-capitalists – whether active nihilists, those with a proto-revolutionary consciousness or those with an advanced revolutionary (Situationist) consciousness[51] - has been seen with the 'anti-globalization' movement: this brought together dissenters against a variety of international summits of world leaders (such as World Bank, IMF, G8 meetings and so on). Also, the internet has been used to mobilize the 'occupy wall street' movement, which began as an occupation of Zuccotti Park in New York City's Wall Street financial district on 17 September 2011 and then spread to many other cities in the US and around the world.[52] Of course, provided these movements are anti-hierarchically organized, engage in subversive play, do not put forward proposals for the reform of the capitalist system and so on, they can, according to Debord's theory, be viewed as expressions of authentic dissent; that is to say, they stand in opposition to the spectacle and its recuperators (whether reformist politicians, business, hierarchical 'revolutionary' parties and so on).

Furthermore, marginalized youths in London and various other cities in England made use of social networking sites via various 'new' technologies during the August 2011 riots. Some of those involved in the events used an encrypted communication system on BlackBerry mobile phones. Whilst originally developed primarily to provide a secure method of communication for 'business users',[53] some of the rioters used BlackBerry Messenger to communicate with each other and attain some degree of organization during the rebellion. Put another way, they subjected a 'new' technology, developed for capitalist business people, to what Debord termed détournement. Once again, provided these rebellious youths organize themselves, during such events, anti-hierarchically and play subversively (through, for instance, looting[54] - 'which instantly destroys the commodity as such') (Knabb ed. 1989: 155), their rebellion can be considered to be in opposition to the spectacle. However, should they turn to a creed such as nationalism (of one kind or another) or become seduced by hierarchical 'revolutionary' parties and so on,

this would strengthen the spectacle again.

Therefore, if we assume that some 'new' technologies, when subjected to détournement, can help those opposed to the integrated spectacle to overcome their dispersal or atomization, then the introduction of this new element into the theory could lessen the tension between Debord's two central claims (outlined above): and, enhance it, to some extent, as a theory of social change. Yet, should the 'new' technologies used by genuine dissenters become more susceptible to police surveillance and control, the tension in Debord's theory would remain marked.

Endnotes

1. Guy Debord was a member of the Situationist International (SI) which existed from 1957 to 1972. The SI was formed by 'artists' associated with various European artistic avant–garde organizations. Up until the early 1960s the SI concerned itself with culturally subversive activities; following this the group developed a more 'political' strategy to realize the unification of art and life. The group published twelve issues of the magazine Internationale situationniste. The group's two major theorists were Guy Debord and Raoul Vaneigem. Debord's The Society of the Spectacle and Vaneigem's The Revolution of Everyday Life were published just prior to the May 1968 uprising in France.

2. In The Society of the Spectacle Debord claims that '[t]he diffuse...spectacle is associated with the abundance of commodities, with the undisturbed development of modern capitalism' ([1967] 1995: para 65). The societies that Debord has in mind here are the industrially advanced capitalist societies of the West. 'The concentrated...spectacle', Debord claims, 'normally characterizes bureaucratic capitalism, though it may on occasion be borrowed as a technique for buttressing state power over more backward mixed economies, and even the most advanced capitalism may call on it in moments of crisis' (1995: para 64). The societies that Debord has in mind here are those of the 'communist' bloc (in the USSR, Eastern Europe, China etc), Fascist regimes in industrially advanced societies –in times of crisis- and an assortment of societies in the less industrially developed world.

3. Debord claims in Comments on the Society of the Spectacle that: 'When the spectacle was concentrated, the greater part of surrounding society escaped it; when diffuse, a small part; today, no part' ([1988] 1990: 9). Also see note 31 about spectacular images.

4. Debord maintains, in this regard, that as illegality in integrated spectacular society has increasingly encroached upon the 'legal state', the Mafia, with its secretive form of organization and ruthless methods (e.g., assassination), thrives. And it prospers in various guises, including the Mafia of the media, politicians, bankers, etc (1990: 63-71). 'The Mafia', Debord remarks, 'is not an outsider in this world...it stands as the model of all advanced commercial enterprises' (1990: 67).

5. Note, here, that these shared historical features of France and Italy that Debord mentions could, arguably, be considered common to the societies of the Eastern bloc. Nevertheless, Debord does not claim that the integrated spectacle was pioneered by Eastern bloc societies.

6. (i) An eternal present: in his early oeuvre (see note 8) Debord suggests that '[t]otalitarian bureaucratic society lives in a perpetual present in which everything that has happened earlier exists for it solely as a space accessible to its police' (1995: para 108). Here, the idea is that history, within the Stalinist regimes of the concentrated spectacle, was continually rewritten and memories controlled –'using police methods to transform perception' (1995: para 105). What emerged, then, was a seemingly eternal present watched over by the constantly vigilant forces of 'the police'. The feature 'an eternal present' is also implicit in Debord's discussion of 'consumable pseudo-cyclical time' (1995: para 153); a form of time found in both diffuse and concentrated societies. He suggests that time in the realm of consumption draws upon the cyclical time of static pre-industrial societies; in such societies time was dominated by the changing of the seasons and was experienced as something that returned to the mass of the population. Yet, it is a false form of cyclical time: with the rise of capitalism the attempt to present time as something that returns to people is at odds with the real historical time that capitalism has brought into existence for all individuals in society.

(ii) Generalized secrecy: I think that this feature is implicit in the Situationists' early oeuvre. For instance, just as Debord, in his later oeuvre, talks of 'the often frightening secrets of shoddy production hidden by advertising' (1990: 52), so the Situationists, in their earlier oeuvre, also make reference to how advertising acts to conceal, from consumers, the reality of the goods that are sold to them and the process of their production –whether in the diffuse or concentrated forms of spectacle (see, for instance, Debord's The Society of the Spectacle (1995: para 69) & 'The Situationist Frontier', Internationale situationniste # 5 trans. Paul Hammond, December 1960, http://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/frontier.html Retrieved 24 May 2012). Likewise, just as Debord, in the 1980s, wrote that '[e]veryone accepts that there are inevitably little areas of secrecy reserved for specialists' (1990:

60-1), so the Situationists, in the 1960s, allude to secrecy when discussing the 'specialized thought of the spectacular system' (Debord 1995: para 196).

(iii) Integration of state and economy: Debord, in a rather sweeping comment that could apply to both diffuse and concentrated societies, asserts 'that continual tinkering by the State has succeeded in compensating for the tendency for [economic] crises to occur' (1995: para 82). Concerning the Stalinist societies of the concentrated spectacle, Debord claims that the form of capitalism in existence was a bureaucratic or state capitalism (1995: para 104). Debord also claims that a characteristic of fascist societies, which he groups within the concentrated spectacle, was 'massive State intervention' in the capitalist economy (1995: para 109). Furthermore, in what I think is an allusion to some 'third world' societies, Debord claims that '[t]he concentrated form of the spectacle...may on occasion be borrowed as a technique for buttressing state power over more backward mixed economies' (1995: para 64).

(iv) Unanswerable lies: See note 9 for details.

7. For references to the inferior economic development of concentrated spectacular societies, compared with that of diffuse spectacular societies, see, for instance, Debord, The Society of the Spectacle (1995: paras 58, 104, 108).

8. By the early and later oeuvre of Debord and the Situationists, I mean the following. The early oeuvre refers to the writings of Debord and the Situationists up until the dissolution of the SI in 1972. The late oeuvre refers to Debord's writings in the post-SI period.

9. In his later oeuvre Debord claims that: 'Unanswerable lies have succeeded in eliminating public opinion, which first lost the ability to make itself heard and then very quickly dissolved altogether' (1990: 13). In his earlier book, The Society of the Spectacle, the feature 'unanswerable lies' is, I think, implicit in his claim that with the rise of spectacular society 'all community and critical awareness have ceased to be' (1995: para 25). Taking into account this claim – as well as others – within Debord's early oeuvre, I think that 'unanswerable lies' can be considered a feature of the spectacle in its diffuse and concentrated forms.

10. Debord makes this remark in the 'Preface to the Third French Edition' of The Society of the Spectacle.

11. For references to Freud's pleasure-principle in the Situationists' oeuvre, see Raoul Vaneigem The Revolution of Everyday Life ([1967] 1994: ch 23).

12. I think that when the Situationists refer to the spectacle harnessing the passions of creativity, play and love, they allude to the notion that it manipulates the sexual instinctual drive.

13. I have discussed the Situationists' concept of 'spectacle' developed in their early oeuvre elsewhere. See, Julian Eagles, 'The Spectacle and Détournement: The Situationists' Critique of Modern Capitalist Society', Critique: Journal of Socialist Theory,40:2 (May 2012), 179-198.

14. Debord uses the term 'image-objects' in The Society of the Spectacle (1995: para 15).

15. In The Society of the Spectacle Debord argues that for capital accumulation to continue in a society saturated with commodities, 'alienated consumption is added to alienated production as an inescapable duty of the masses' (1995: para 42).

16. Debord uses the term 'pseudo-gratification' in The Society of the Spectacle (1995: para 59). I should also add that Debord does not believe that all images are false. As he writes, in Panegyric Volume 2: 'The reigning deceptions of the time are on the point of making us forget that the truth may also be found in images. An image that has not been deliberately separated from its meaning adds great precision and certainty to knowledge' ([1997] 2004: 73).

17. The Situationists argue that there is one role that goes beyond fragmented roles -the role of the consumption celebrity. The consumption celebrity has access to the whole realm of consumption and appears to be an individual who is totally fulfilled. People find celebrities to identify with and live vicariously through such 'stars of consumption' (Debord 1995: paras 60-1).

18. Debord believes, I think, that for each individual to achieve complete self-realization humankind must make full use of the technology and productive powers that it has as its disposal. See, Ken Knabb ed., Situationist International Anthology ([1981] 2006: 135, 179-80).

19. In this article I assume that the Situationists accept Freud's earlier dualistic model of the instincts; that is to say, a sexual instinct and a self-preservation instinct. Vaneigem, I should point out, suggests that Freud made a 'mistake' with his later formulation of a death instinct (1994: 162).

20. In his earlier book The Society of the Spectacle, Debord claims that in the concentrated spectacle '[the bureaucratic economy] must... be attended by permanent violence' (1995: para 64). The implication, here, is that fear assists with the functioning of the concentrated spectacle. Concerning the diffuse spectacle and fear, see note 21.

21. In their earlier oeuvre, the Situationists allude to the idea that fear plays a minor role in the functioning of diffuse spectacular societies. For instance, Vaneigem, in The Revolution of Everyday Life, writes 'that a whole spectacle is organised around particular sufferings. A sort of nationalised philanthropy impels each person to find consolation for his own infirmities in the spectacle of other people's. Consider disaster photographs, stories of cuckolded singers, or the grotesque dramas of the gutter press. And, at the other end of the scale, the hospitals, asylums and prisons –real museums of

suffering for the use of those whose fear of going in there makes them rejoice to be on the outside' (1994: 47).

22. The Situationists claim that the 'new proletariat' includes workers (in blue and white collar employment) as well as groups on the margins of capitalist society – for instance, youth, students and the lumpenproletariat. Also see note 38.

23. Debord also suggests, in the script for his film 'Refutation of All the Judgements, Pro or Con, Thus Far Rendered on the Film The Society of the Spectacle' (1975), that '[t]he spectacle is an infirmity more than a conspiracy' ([1978] 2003: 112). What Debord implies here, I think, is that for modern capitalist society to function successfully, what is most significant is that individuals, themselves, are attracted to, or tempted by, the (controlled) pleasures of the spectacle –its roles, lifestyles and consumer goods.

24. See the Guardian newspaper articles on this issue www.guardian.co.uk/environment/mark-kennedy Retrieved, 24 May 2012.

25. Another danger or risk that could be added here is that of AIDS. In this connection, I should point out that Debord expressed his admiration for Michel Bounan's book Le Temps du SIDA (1990) – a book that deals with the AIDS crisis. The book has not to date been translated into English. For further details, see Andrew Hussey The Game of War: the Life and Death of Guy Debord (2001: 363). For Debord's letters sent to Bounan see Notbored http://www.notbored.org/debord.html Retrieved, 24 May 2012.

26. I do not think that Debord believes that the mass media constitute some form of dictatorship or conspiracy. For instance, when commenting on the media's presentation of events, in Comments on the Society of the Spectacle, Debord claims: '...we know, for example, that a political assassination can be presented in another light, can in a sense be screened... And it is not some kind of reign of terror which forces such explanations on the media' (1990: 67). The implication here, I think, is that the mass media have simply highlighted various dangers to humankind, post 1968, because such images are the sort of thing that help to stabilize modern capitalist society.

27. See, for example, the BBC News report http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/2133626.stm Retrieved, 24 May 2012.

28. See, for example, the Sky News report http://news.sky.com/home/world-news/article/16165408 and the BBC News report http://bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-17312913 Retrieved, 25 May 2012.

29. See, for example, the ABC News report http://abcnews.go.com/wnt/video/osama-bin-laden-death-obama-calls-it-a-good-day-13510230. Retrieved, 25 May 2012.

30. The Situationists, in their early oeuvre, claim that the Marxian 'schema of the contradiction between productive forces and production relations should obviously no longer be understood as a short-term death warrant for the capitalist production system', and that '[t]his contradiction should be seen rather as a judgement...against the miserable development generated by this self-regulating production...in view of the fantastic potential development that could be based on the present economic infrastructure' (Knabb ed. 2006: 135). What I think the Situationists imply, here, is that in a context in which economic productivity has increased in advanced capitalist society, technological rationality cannot provide the basis for a critique of capitalist society -as was the case for Marx. In other words, it is not now the case that capitalism is unable to utilize successfully the technologies it has developed. Rather, the contradiction is the calamitous impact upon human society of the successful use of such technologies. For a discussion of how, for Marx, technological rationality could provide the basis for a critique of capitalist society, given the level of development of capitalism in the nineteenth century, see Andrew Feenberg 'The Bias of Technology' in Robert Pippin et al. Marcuse: Critical theory and the Promise of Utopia (1988).

31. Spectacular images, for Debord, are an 'abstract representation' of the entirety of the commodities of modern capitalist society. In such a society, exchange value has increasingly come to control and manipulate use value – see The Society of the Spectacle (1995: paras 46-9) & Knabb ed. (2006: 136).

32. In Comments on the Society of the Spectacle, Debord notes that the spectacle's control of historical memory mystifies rulers as well as the ruled. As he writes: '...once the running of a state involves a permanent and massive shortage of historical knowledge, that state can no longer be led strategically' (1990: 20).

33. The Situationists were aware of Wilhelm Reich's ideas and references to Reich and his ideas can be found in various Situationist texts. As Reich's The Mass Psychology of Fascism was first published in the French language by Payot in 1972, it seems unlikely that this book, at least until 1972, would have been available to the Situationists.

34. For a more detailed discussion of this argument see Eagles, 'The Spectacle and Détournement', op.cit.

35. See Sigmund Freud 'Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning' (1911) in On Metapsychology: The Theory of Psychoanalysis (1991: 35-44).

36. I think that the manipulation of the self-preservation instinct can be read into the Situationists earlier thought. It is, nevertheless, a factor that is more peripheral to the functioning of the spectacle in the Situationists' earlier oeuvre.

37. In their early oeuvre, the Situationists claim that proletarian revolution is highly likely to take place against spectacular society. That said, they also claim that in France during 1968 '[a] lasting revolutionary victory was...only a very slim possibility' (Knabb ed. 2006: 317). For further details, see Eagles, 'The Spectacle and Détournement', op.cit.

38. For references to the term 'new proletariat' in the Situationists' oeuvre, see, for instance, Knabb ed. (2006: 111, 122). For further details about the 'new proletariat', see Debord (1995: paras 114-15).

39. For a discussion of commodity fetishism, see Norman Geras, 'Essence and Appearance: Aspects of Fetishism in Marx's Capital', New Left Review 65 (1971) 69-85. For Geras, 'the phenomenon of fetishism imposes itself on men (a) as mystification and (b) as domination'; '...the two aspects', he suggests, 'are intimately related'.

40. The Situationists, in their earlier oeuvre, claim that: 'The internal defect of the [spectacular] system is that it cannot totally reify people; it also needs to make them act and participate, without which the production and consumption of reification would come to a stop' (Knabb ed. 2006: 106). What underlies this claim, I think, is a conception of human nature that draws upon that advanced by Karl Marx. The Situationists – and this is implied in Debord's later oeuvre – outline, following Marx, an 'essentialist' element to the nature of human beings; that is to say, the needs for nourishment and shelter and the capacities for love and creativity. Going beyond Marx, however, the Situationists add the capacity to play as an 'essential' aspect of human nature.

41. The Situationists' conception of proletarian revolution is more wide-ranging than that put forward by classical Marxists. They hold to the classical Marxist notion of the proletariat's seizure of control of the means of production. Yet, they also think that other forms of power, which classical Marxists believe are more marginal, such as alienated leisure, the urban planning system, the educational system and so on, need to be subverted to ensure that a proletarian revolution is authentic.

42. To quote Debord from Comments on the Society of the Spectacle: 'If history should return to us after this eclipse, something which depends on factors still in play and thus on an outcome which no one can definitely exclude, these Comments may one day serve in the writing of a history of the spectacle' (1990: 73).

43. Lest there be any confusion here, I should point out the following: although it might be thought that integrated spectacular society's encouragement of proletarians to become more aware of the specificity of their desires will increase the likelihood of proletarian rebellion, I do not think this is what Debord implies. Rather, the implication is that the spectacle has become more sophisticated in the way in which it harnesses the passions or real desires of individuals, given that it can now offer to consumers a greater range of commodities: proletarians, therefore, are subjected to a more intensified mystification. Furthermore, should large-scale proletarian rebellion actually take place against the integrated spectacle, I think that Debord still confronts the same problem found in his earlier thought; that is to say, that the majority of those in rebellion remain vulnerable to the recuperative powers of the spectacle.

44. In various passages within his oeuvre, Debord refers to the term 'innovation' vis-à-vis the revolutionary transformation of society. See Debord Complete Cinematic Works: Scripts, Stills, Documents ([1978] 2003: 147-48) & Knabb ed. (2006: 176).

45. To quote Vaneigem from The Revolution of Everyday Life: '...within the [teenage] gang, playing remains of such great importance that a real revolutionary consciousness is always a possible outcome...Should delinquents arrive at a revolutionary consciousness simply through understanding what they already are, and by wanting to be more, they could quite conceivably become the catalyst of a widescale reversal of perspective' (1994: 242).

46. In The Society of the Spectacle Debord refers to spectacular rebellion or dissent, as opposed to genuine dissent, as follows: 'A smug acceptance of what exists is likewise quite compatible with a purely spectacular rebelliousness, for the simple reason that dissatisfaction itself becomes a commodity as soon as the economics of affluence finds a way of applying its production methods to this particular raw material' (1995: para 59). And again: 'By eagerly embracing the machinations of reformism or making common cause with pseudo-revolutionary dregs, those driven by the abstract wish for immediate efficacity obey only the laws of the dominant forms of thought, and adopt the exclusive viewpoint of actuality' (1995: para 220).

47. In their early oeuvre, the main thrust of the Situationists' thought suggests that proletarian revolutions are created by the spontaneous action of proletarians along with the (somewhat minimal) assistance or intervention of a revolutionary avant-garde.

48. For the Situationists, détournement is 'the reuse of preexisting artistic elements in a new ensemble' (Knabb ed. 2006: 67). They claim, in their early oeuvre, that if a majority of proletarians practise the technique of détournement, by constructing situations, modern capitalist society may be completely overturned. As regards the construction of situations, they write: 'The situation is...designed to be lived by its constructors. The role played by a passive or merely bit-part playing "public" must constantly diminish, while that played by those who cannot be called actors, but rather, in a new sense of the term, "livers," must steadily increase... Our situations will be ephemeral, without a future. Passageways. Our only concern is real life; we care nothing about the permanence of art or of anything else' (2006: 41)

49. See the Situationists' assessment of the uprising of May 1968 in France and that of the Watts riots in Los Angeles during 1965, in Knabb ed. (2006: 194-203, 288-325) & René Viénet Enragés and Situationists in the Occupation Movement, France, May '68 ([1968] 1992).

50. See Debord (1995: paras 119, 120, 121); Vaneigem (1994: 199, 273); Knabb ed. (2006:.112-13, 285-86, 380-82). Also see, Eagles, 'The Spectacle and Détournement', op.cit.

51. For a discussion of the Situationists' views about proletarian rebellion and consciousness put forward in their early oeuvre, see Eagles, 'The Spectacle and Détournement', op.cit.

52. The use of the internet's social networking sites – such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube – to mobilize people has also been seen in the uprisings of the 'Arab Spring'. I should add here that Debord does not comment on the rise, in spectacular society, of religious fundamentalism. Debord and the Situationists did not imagine that religion would re-emerge, in a modern capitalist context, as a major force in political and social life. For a discussion of this issue, in relation to the September 11, 2001 attacks in the US, see Eagles, 'The Spectacle and Détournement', op.cit.

53. See the Guardian newspaper article 'Why BlackBerry Messenger was rioters' communication method of choice' http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/dec/07/bbm-rioters-communication-method-choice. Retrieved, 24 May 2012.

54. Concerning the destruction of property and looting that took place during the Watts riots of 1965, Debord remarks that: 'People who destroy commodities show their human superiority over commodities. They stop submitting to the arbitrary forms that distortedly reflect their real needs... Once it is no longer bought, the commodity lies open to criticism and alteration, whatever particular form it may take... Looting is a natural response to the unnatural and inhuman society of commodity abundance' (Knabb ed. 2006: 197) And concerning the theft of goods 'from a distribution factory (i.e. supermarket, large store, discount warehouse)' (Vaneigem [1974] 1990: 14), Vaneigem remarks that: 'What is required if an object is to be removed from the commodity process and kept from returning to that process, is obviously that it should not be re-sold, nor appropriated for individual use, nor exchanged for a mess of money or power, (stealing so as to play the underworld big-shot and thus to have a role is merely to reproduce the spectacle-commodity process, with or without the permission of the State)' (Vaneigem 1990: 13).

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The "Big Government" Mythology

Carl Boggs

One of the enduring myths of American politics is that business and government share a natural enmity – a fiction entertained on both the right and left, but held with special ideological fervor by the current breed of Republicans. According to Grover Norquist, the Tea Party and every Republican presidential candidate government is innately evil, tyrannical and corrupt, the implacable enemy of personal freedom. In their frenetic "starve-the-beast" crusade, the anti-government warriors are seemingly intent on shrinking the public sector until it bleeds to death, thus enabling American citizens, in Norquist's words, to finally "get the government off our money, off our guns, off our lives."

Norquist, founder of Americans for Tax Reform, says he wants to cut government in half within the next decade – then proceed to cut it in half again, then yet again. Like the Tea Party he did so much to inspire, Norquist and his followers apparently yearn for a world in which state power becomes more or less invisible. Or so he claims. Every Republican aspirant for the White House presents an obligatory image of anti-government "outsider" far removed from the diabolical ways of the Beltway, even as all have spent considerable part of their lives in and around establishment politics, deeply embedded in the norms and practices they so routinely denounce.

.In their familiar slash-and-burn rhetoric, the new Republicans seem oblivious to the longstanding and tightening partnership between corporations and government, "private" and "public" interests that has come to define the structure of power in American society. Libertarian posturing on the campaign trail and populist masquerading on talk radio has provided rather deceptive clues to Republican behavior in office, which consistently means **increased** federal spending, bigger public deficits, and indeed Bigger Government. Even if all the threatened assaults on the state fortress were to be victorious, the outcome would be nothing less than suicidal to the very interests expected to benefit, because the Tea Party fiction of an eviscerated government – or return to a nineteenth-century "night-watchman state" – is basically a formula for political chaos and economic collapse.

The oft-heard refrain in conservative political discourse that "free markets" are the natural expression of human existence while the state is intrinsically coercive and parasitical – echoes of Ayn Rand and her emboldened circle of apostles – resonates with a tradition steeped in the frontier ethos of self-made individualism in a world dominated by the harsh struggle for survival. As the basis of policy for any modern industrial order, however, it is thoroughly unworkable – disconnected from what has become an institutionalized state capitalism. Superficial calls for small government, free markets and deregulated economy carry a seductive, if superficial, attraction – one reason for their ideological primacy in the campaigns of Rick Santorum, Ron Paul, Newt Gingrich and even the supposedly "moderate" Mitt Romney.

Romney is running as quintessential "anti-politician", as the simple businessman who entered politics with great ambivalence and has long detested everything about it. The Beltway is totally alien to him. Recipient of generous corporate and super-PAC money, Romney embellishes the persona of outsider. In fact Romney was socialized into establishment politics from childhood, his father having served three terms as governor of Michigan – and of course he later served as governor of Massachusetts and campaigned vigorously three times for national office. The great anti-establishment crusader Gingrich – and former House speaker – in fact relies just as fully as anyone on super-PAC contributions. A dedicated partisan of small government, Gingrich intoned: "If you believe the world is a dangerous place and America should be strong, then Newt Gingrich is your candidate." Gingrich's idea of a globally "strong America," of course, is unthinkable without heightened Pentagon expenditures, more resources for

worldwide U.S. deployments and massive budgets for war preparations not to mention expanded intelligence and surveillance capabilities. How precisely such ambitious militarism is supposed to contribute to "small government" neither Gingrich nor any of the Republican hawks has ever explained.

Leaving aside the question of Gingrich's warmongering, a further problem with the Republican small-government mantra is that large-scale state power has for many decades performed functions without which American society would face unavoidable descent into chaos – functions in fact indispensable to corporate interests: foreign and military engagement, trade policy, fiscal stabilization, subsidies, law enforcement, bailouts, R&D and crucial infrastructural demands. Even the wildest Tea Party ideologues have been known to defend and often times celebrate these expensive governmental activities, their famous "wrecking" agenda usually going no further than selected social programs and public regulations. What most troubles the free-market charlatans are government measures designed to limit freewheeling corporate power. It follows that Big Government is no enemy of "freedom" when it comes to budget-draining resources for the war economy, security state and global military operations.

The growing concentration (and merger) of corporate, government and military power has come to pervade every corner of the American landscape. Unprecedented big-business lobby power in Washington D.C. – and indeed every state capitol – has blurred the officially divined separation between corporate interests and political power beyond recognition. From several hundred lobbies in the late 1970s, the number of well-funded interest groups had by 2011 risen to more than 12,000, with banking, pharmaceutical, agribusiness, insurance, military and energy conglomerates exerting new leverage over elections, Congressional legislation and such bodies as the Food and Drug Administration, Environmental Protection Agency and Federal Communications Commission.

With U.S. military spending (counting Veterans' benefits) now approaching one trillion dollars yearly, the budget slashers voice few misgivings about this (scarcely- debated) burden on the public treasury. As the Pentagon adds relentlessly to the fiscal deficit – and with Homeland Security and intelligence devouring yet another $150 billion annually – none of the great austerity crusaders have stepped forward to protest, and for abundantly good reason: no less than 300,000 American contractors depend on government resources, including more than 40,000 on the military. The surprising fact is that Republican occupants of the White House frequently trump Democrats as tax-and-spend politicians, all the while carrying on about public frugality, small government and free enterprise supposedly essential to "American values." Dwight Eisenhower's 1961 farewell **mea culpa** regarding an out-of-control "military-industrial complex" revealed an obvious truth: eight years of Ike's conservative rule had nurtured a mammoth peacetime war economy and security-state – a regrettable but "necessary" (in his words) Leviathan that flourishes to this day. Ronald Reagan, warning that "government is the problem, not the solution," presided over federal spending that grew from $678 billion in 1981 to more than $1.2 trillion in 1989, thanks to repeated tax increases in support of ambitious new rounds of spending for the Pentagon, intelligence agencies, law enforcement, war on drugs, savings-and-loan bailouts and space program ("Star Wars"). Reagan's blusterous austerity crusade amounted to little more than an ideological mirage, with the U.S. national debt **quadrupling** from 1980 to 1992, during the Reagan and first Bush presidencies.

George W. Bush? With "free market" Republicans in control of both the White House and Congress from 2001 to 2006, federal outlays actually **rose** more than ten percent. Bush's military budget for 2009 reached a staggering $805 billion – up from $358 billion when "big-spending" Democrats were in power. And this did not include skyrocketing taxpayer largesse for the long wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Bush administration elevated the national debt to roughly $10.7 trillion, nearly double the $5.7 trillion inherited from Bill Clinton. Tea Party "populists," nowadays hellbent on reversing Barack Obama's "state-worshipping" initiatives, conveniently mention little about **these** budgetary sprees. No less than Democrats, the new Republicans are entirely content with an arrangement where corporations and government work profitably (if sometimes fitfully) in tandem – part of the same controlling system of interests and power.

The visionary prophets of small government have proven ready to earmark many trillions of dollars to ensure U.S. global supremacy. Like the vast majority of current Republicans, except for libertarian Ron Paul, Romney intones that the U.S. must have "the strongest military in the world," the ostensible requisite for a safer, more democratic planet. Few of the austerity vigilantes have come forth with even mild criticism of the most bloated, over-extended war economy and security state in history – with its more than 1,300 governmental entities aligned with the Pentagon, intelligence agencies, homeland security, the war on drugs and military operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Yemen with an even more daunting (and economically calamitous) war against Iran looming ahead.

One notably extravagant Pentagon scheme, first developed under President George W. Bush and routinely

backed by the government cost-cutters, is the super F-35 Joint Strike Fighter built by Lockheed-Martin. With a price tag (so far) of nearly $400 billion, the military has ordered 2,500 of an aircraft that figures to be useless for "asymmetric" warfare of the sort faced by the U.S. in the Middle East and beyond. Hobbled by recurrent technical problems, the F-35 has undergone endless rounds of tests since its first takeoff in 2006. The small-government partisans have been embarrassingly silent concerning this boondoggle. In the meantime, with Santorum, Romney and Gingrich competing for the mantle of most bellicose warmonger against Iran, the custodians of Big Government have little to fear.

If the new generation of Republicans is so anxious to "starve the beast," it is worth asking what any potential success might produce. What might corporate interests, reliant as they are on normalcy and routine, hope to gain in the event massive taxpayer outlays are severely reduced? What if those hundreds of thousands of government contracts, subsidies, bailouts and R&D sources of profits were to vanish? What if the public infrastructure – roads, bridges, water facilities, power system – were to fail to meet its ever-mounting demands or mass consumption boosted by unemployment insurance and kindred social programs were to implode? The unequivocal answer surely is that the system would quickly veer toward material, social and institutional breakdown. Jettison Obamacare? Tens of billions in federal dollars earmarked for insurance companies would suddenly vanish. Reduce Medicare? Big Pharma could anticipate the same outcome. Scuttle environmental protections and junk the EPA, as Republican leaders plaintively urge? An imminent disaster of untold proportions lurks, as the fragile American economy could never survive the resulting ecosystem disintegration. Dependent for every transaction on a healthy and supportive natural environment (the locus of all natural resources), corporate growth and profits would soon turn to dust. Even those hated regulations – for example, curbing reckless Wall Street investments – serve ultimately to protect giant financial institutions from their own worst excesses.

Thanks to federal generosity, the U.S. nuclear-power industry is now poised to launch its long-awaited comeback: in January 2012 a consortium of southern utility companies managed to win Nuclear Regulatory Commission approval for two atomic energy reactors in Georgia, at an estimated cost of $14 billion. In the face of sobering lessons from the 2011 Japanese nuclear meltdown Westinghouse has begun construction of twin 1,100-megawatt reactors, with at least 20 more reactors on the drawing board in the next few years. Most of the exorbitant costs, as always, will be paid through taxpayer subsidies – a setup endorsed by both parties, though again especially favored by "cost-cutting" Republicans. As stipulated by the decades-old Price-Anderson Act (renewed in 2005), the federal government will be saddled with a $600 billion insurance fee to cover a potential meltdown and other risks endemic to nuclear power. Ever desperate for government subsidies and other payouts, the nuclear industry faces not more than a nine billion-dollar liability in the event of catastrophe.

The generally-obscure truth is that slash-and-burn Republicans are considerably less serious than their fiery rhetoric suggests – some perhaps conceding (though always in private) that any Tea Party utopia might well come at an untenable price – not least being a severe undermining of the power structure's capacity to rule, to conduct everyday business with a modicum of routine and order. If the Rand-Norquist-inspired crusaders are indeed willing to carry out their wrecking dreams, they would in their frugal wisdom succeed in destroying not only what remains of the New Deal legacy but the very foundations of a capitalist order in which the corporate interests they embrace already control a vast preponderance of wealth and power. Such anti-government radicals of course prefer a media-enhanced image of hard-nosed, principled accountants just trying to balance the budget and save the country from onerous debt – while simultaneously attacking the horrors of state power and perhaps saving Western Civilization in the process. Ample historical evidence, however, points to something fundamentally different: the new Republicans are waging a holy war not against big government but rather against labor, consumers, the poor and the environment.

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Globalization and Global Welfare: A Critical Excursion

Jason L. Powell, Sheying Chen

Introduction

As we move into the global century, several aspects of social and economic life are changing and post-industrial shifts are unparalleled by virtue of the interconnectedness that brings together the corners of the globe. New technologies, new economic relationships, new social processes, and new political developments are all characteristics of globalization (Hudson and Lowe, 2004: 22) in a post-industrial age featured by information, innovation, finance and services. As the world has contracted, people's quality of life has changed regardless of where they live. In fact, the propagation of free market mindsets in emerging economies has created collective network connections with considerable good but pervasive inequalities as well (Walker 2001).

A fundamental aim of this paper is to argue that these changes are part of a economic transition to post-industrialism associated with risks and inequalities that shape human experience in the midst of a formidable global financial climate. There is an obvious tension with this. On the one hand, life expectancy, health statuses and per capital incomes are at an all-time high and many feudal practices have been relegated to the past (Phillipson, 2006). On the other hand, vast numbers of people struggle with poverty and significant pockets of poverty portend more than lack of income. Those living on the bottom of the socio-economic ladder labor under the burden of avoidable, lifestyle diseases, hunger and related maladies, not to mention myriad social risks (Turner, 2008). Those on the upper reaches of the same ladder garner disproportionate shares of the resources and are able to support comfortable lifestyles (Esping-Anderson, 1990).

Global Poverty and Inequality

Around the globe there are bona fide challenges facing nation-states as they attempt to adapt to the impact of modifications in morbidity, mortality, and need gradients among diverse segments of their populations. In the face of rapid demographic transformations resulting in fewer casualties from acute diseases, aging of populations and tumultuous economies, there are widening disparities and considerable quality-of-life inequalities within and between populations. In developing countries, China being one of the most striking cases in point but with parallels in a number of other developing countries the differential in per capital incomes of urban and rural people is at least a factor of three with virtually no top quartile wage earners residing in rural areas (Powell and Cook, 2010). There is a tangible rural to urban migration for economic gain, thereby creating even greater disparities as those left behind barely eke out subsistence livings.

It is impossible to overstate the risks of planetary poverty. More than 2.5 billion of the planet's population live on less than US $2 a day and nearly a billion still have less than US $1 daily (Chen & Ravallion, 2007). As might be apparent, in this day and age poverty creates conditions in which rationality is redefined, nation-states struggle to control circumstances, not to mention criminality, low birth weights are ubiquitous, ill-health a fact of life, illiteracy

rampant, malnutrition commonplace, environmental degradation seen as the cost of doing business, and notions of social justice are brought face-to-face with priorities said to have greater standing (Beck, 1999). Focusing on the extent of the disparities for just a moment: not only is there asymmetry but real immiseration as well – only about five percent of the world's income is earned by the poorest 40% of its people (Estes, Biggs and Phillipson, 2003).

According to the 12th Annual World Wealth Report (2008), the wealth of people around the world with more than US $1 million in assets grew faster in 2007 than the world's economy. The world's economy exhibited a 5% gain in 2007; compared with a growth rate of over 9% among those with at least US $1 million in assets. Furthermore, the average wealth of these high net worth individuals (HNWIs) climbed to over US $ 4 million, exclusive of their residence. Interestingly, the greatest growth among HNWIs occurred in Eastern Europe, Latin America and Asia led by Brazil, Russia, India and China. When the "mass affluent" population (those with less than US $ 1 million but with substantial assets nonetheless) is added to the picture, the result is that the richest 20 percent of the world's population controls more than 75% of its wealth. In the past few decades there has been some striking gains among a relatively small percentage of the world's population (approximately 10 million out of 6.7 billion people can be classified as HNWIs) who are tapped into robust gains and wealth generation strategies (Annual World Wealth Report, 2008). The ascendancy of those forces concentrating high net worth wealth and capital accumulation among a narrow upper-crust is also capable of producing abject poverty among other segments of the population (Arias and Logan, 2002:197; Jessop, 2002). It is the richest 1 percent of wealthy outliers who are benefiting from speculation and the deregulation of commerce and free trade (Powell and Cook 2010).

Some estimates conservatively place the gap between the richest and poorest nations at an all time high of more than 50 to 1 (Clark, 2007). Even with the stalling of mature economies, the gulf between the most advantaged and the most disadvantaged in developed countries is no less dramatic; factor in the impact of gender, ethnicity or other social impediments and the complexity intensifies as formidable inequalities shape well-being (Powell and Cook, 2010). The disparities extend well beyond vital income differentials to quality of life issues, education, structured dependencies or social exclusions resulting from policy decisions (Townsend, 2007). Navarro (2007) and others add their voice to Peter Townsend's assertion by noting that escalating differentials can be attributed in no small part to interventionist strategies adopted and endorsed by national governments. Not surprisingly, as a consequence of the richest segments of the population having far greater assets and control over their lives, they feel they have more in common with their counterparts in other regions than they do with their less affluent opposite number in their own regions (Hoogvelt, 1997). Cross-cultural comparisons are extraordinarily valuable in helping lay out causal connections and for double-checking inferences. For example, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has a reliable cross-national comparative database of indicators of social policy expenditures in 30 member nations and their state sponsored social welfare provisions entitled Social Expenditures (SocX) in the period 1980-2003. It covers public expenditures for typical forms of welfare including old age, survivors, incapacity-related benefits, health, family, active labor market programs, unemployment, housing and other social policy areas (education excepted). Shalev (2007) points out that if health and pension benefits are combined as a share of GDP, countries like Sweden rank at the top by devoting some 14% of its GDP to health and pension protections. Data for the period 1980-2001, the latest available on the OCED web-site, suggests that Germany expends about 8% and the United States and Japan about 4%.

Globalization and Reformation of Economic Power

The proliferation of adjuvant ideologies evolving out of burgeoning free-market economies along with an accompanying diffusion of instrumental rationality, standardization, commoditization or secularism have become embedded in our thinking, challenging all other relational metrics of daily life. In the process, modes of interaction and standards of assessing relational status or personal worth are recast. In both developed and emerging economies the nature of work and the meaning of careers are also undergoing major reformulations. There is a global softening of labor markets linked to downsizing of local employment opportunities, redundancies, a spate of subcontracting arrangements, and an economic volatility abetted by technological innovations that chip away at employment security, wage or benefit packages bringing a degree of economic and existential uncertainty to greater numbers of people. Of course such changes are not distributed evenly across all forms of employment, further exacerbating inequalities. It should also be stressed that adversity does not appear to strike women and men equally – and it is certainly

reasonable to say that disadvantage begets gendered disadvantage when downturns occur (Cook and Powell 2010). Women are disproportionately among the most disadvantaged and with age even greater hardships accrue to them. Adding to the intricacies of these unparalleled changes is the velocity with which they are taking place and the fact that they are accompanied by a deepening division between those whose principal pursuits are in subsistence or service sector markets and their counterparts who are primarily involved in large-scale export, international sectors, or equity markets. Together these forces are bringing about a profound imbalance within and between populations as one group shares in the generation of wealth while the other becomes increasingly dependent and is being subordinated to decisions made in the other sector, by a cartel half a world away (Bauman, 1998).

This is not to say that states are mere minions of transnational interests but it is no longer the case that nation-state sovereignty can be taken-for-granted in the policy realm. Nor is it necessarily the case that state policies are as all-powerful as they once were in shaping daily life (Dallmayer, 2005; Fraser, 2005). As Evans and Cerny (2004) so cogently assert, the welfare state of the last century has been replaced by a competitive state of the 21st century, always mindful of its global positioning (see also, Hudson & Lowe, 2004). Foucault (1978) coined the phrase "non-sovereign power" when he was discussing issues of bodily control. By drawing a nice analogy Yapa (2002:15) proposes that a parallel concept may provide insights into the vagaries of post-industrial public-sector decision making. To make sense of domestic versus international priorities and their effect on daily life, scholars would do well to come to terms with the notion of "non-sovereign power" as it applies to social justice, autonomy, monetary policies and capital mobility, and other forms of extra-national pressures emending local policies. We would assert that to date there has been a real lag between transnational developments and the way analysts think of social policies. Appadurai (2001) attributes the stumbling blocks in conceptualization to "…the disjunctures between various vectors characterizing this world-in-motion that produce fundamental problems of livelihood, equity, suffering, justice, and governance" (Appadurai, 2001: 6). In his characterization, proximate social issues have causes that are hardly local and call for non-parochial perspectives if they are to be addressed.

As Giddens maintains, one of the most significant impacts of globalization is that it has brought an "intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" (Giddens, 1990:64). As a consequence, few governments are eager to make decisions separately from their reliance on global enterprise; it is as though they are in a situation of shared sovereignty, having to negotiate between domestic, international, corporatist and transnational interests (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Hill, 2006; Kennett, 2001; Navarro, 2007). NGOs such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have also become architectural partners in local policy deliberations by sanctioning preferred welfare policies as a condition of their support of monetization (Deacon, Hulse, & Stubbs, 1997; Dembele, 2007; Hart, 2002). Even so, nation-states nonetheless serve important administrative functions in a world dominated by transnational corporate interests and it is unlikely that governmental responsibilities are either going to be usurped or allowed to wither in light of their functionality (Hill, 2006; Navarro, 2007). It is not too far fetched to say that certain transnational interests see themselves as having universal jurisdiction, assertions of state autonomy notwithstanding.

With the spreading of these transformations has come a reshuffling of local priorities, with governmental emoluments directed or redirected to areas defined as having the greatest public importance and bringing the greatest returns. Of course the realities behind that assertion are deserving of close scrutiny as the policy process is unquestionably political and the state must mediate rival claims as it serves as the principal mechanism by which revenues are collected and resources distributed. Meanwhile, social entitlements, expenditures and daily experience for people who may not fully grasp the raison d'être behind their situations reflect these same priorities. Hill (2006) suggests that social policy regimes are regularly structured to be consistent with other forms of social stratification within a country. To the extent there is a convergence in social welfare policies around the globe it might not be mere coincidence that social stratification and social class divisions are growing more pronounced in the face of globalization. In light of global economic flows, the salience and permeability of national borders, whether in Europe, the western hemisphere, or in the East are a different matter than they were even half a century ago (Kearney, 1995).

In terms of both economics and domestic social policies, the impact of international economic relations has recontoured the landscape, so to speak, all the way to the regionalization and appropriation of economic relations. What were once bold lines of demarcation are now dotted lines more suggestive of administrative spheres than jingoistic borders. In the global century, deregulated markets are tightly integrated with political and social transformations, affecting local circumstances and communality (Geetz, 1973). All in all, the globalizing influences

of the early 21st century are producing a distinctive era in social history linked to the emergence of transnational actors as well as economics and technologies that are helping fuel the shifts. Global economic change portends more than alterations in per capita income, the nature of financial products and currency markets, or the rapid circulation of goods, communication or technologies. It is precursor to broad cultural and political shifts that challenge pre-contact arrangements, notions of social justice and solidarity, as well as local interaction patterns. In a post-modern world, globalization is creating interlocking dependencies linked to the ways in which priorities are ordained by transnational interests. As Chen and Turner (2006) point out in a discussion focused on the welfare of the elderly but equally applicable to all social welfare, the accrual of public benefits reflects the invisible hand of market forces, the invisible handshake of tradition and the invisible foot of political decisions. Despite avowals about the secularity of modern life, economic-thinking, what might be termed spreadsheet logic is accorded near theological status, its canons seen as universally applicable and providing appropriate precept for adjudicating what is considered fair and just. These tendencies are abetted by what is sometimes called the cyber infrastructure, or more simply, informatics, reinforcing these shifts and creating a digital divide separating those on either edge of the diffusion of innovations. Of course there is more to this technological transformation than the appearance of new ways to communicate, it has also paved the way to a post-fordist formulation that Castells (2000) labels network capitalism.

Globalization and the Social Contract

We do not mean to imply that globalization comes as a unified package; it is nonetheless true that major changes have resulted from an ability to move capital around as summarily as desired to gain leverage, possibly destabilizing local financial and labor-markets in the process. Real questions have emerged about the autonomy of nation-states and the balancing of altruistic social expenditures with economic participation on the world stage. The tensions between social protections and global corporate connections are contributing to what can aptly be called "social deficits" in which people are left to fend for themselves to the extent that they are able. In the face of inflation and related economic adversities, slashing social spending is routinely offered as a fitting resolution preferable to raising taxes for wealthy individuals or corporations (Mishra, 1999). The global span of information technologies and the advent of the global compass held by transnational corporations means they are able to shift extraction, manufacturing, fabrication and many service functions to whatever locale offers the most favorable economic returns, including tax structures. These and other consequences of globalization are fraught with new risks and ambiguities in daily experience and in the way matters of worth are defined; along with the many positive aspects that are undeniably part of the process associated with privatization.

In a synopsis of a few of the more evident effects of globalization, Navarro (2007) points to the privatization of services, public assets and other public provisions in asymmetrical fashion; deregulation of labor and currency markets as well as other forms of commerce; free trade; escalation of an accompanying anti-interventionist rhetoric; encouragement of individualism and consumerism. A number of commentators have noted that a corollary of globalization results in an unprecedented pattern of social risk. As Townsend (2007) so elegantly points out, the globalization of the marketplace is changing the face of dependency. It is as though the configuration of risks has shifted from settling on just those poor, down and outers living along society's margins to those derailed by restructuring of labor markets, the dramatic spread of employment in service sector jobs, shifts in the types of career patterns that so characterized the 20th century and the role of informatics affecting employability of middle-class workers.

These risks are not grounded merely in the absence of resources but in an absence of personal autonomy and by people's position relative to others. Add to these factors the fact that as they wrestle with the issues, national and local governments are assailed from multiple fronts: pressed by transnational interests to provide open trade liberalization for private enterprise and pressed by the growing need for social protections and labor policies to sustain the working populace and those whose lives have fallen through the proverbial social safety net. Ever more inclusive protections call for targeted expenditures at exactly the time when expenditures are hemmed-in by capacity to levy taxes of any type but especially progressive taxes and by powerful interested constituencies. The neoliberal globalizing drive has disenfranchised workers and their representatives in ways that have eroded their ability to bargain for benefits. Many commentators have noted that governments have generally adopted a laissez faire stance when for one reason or another they have chosen not to intervene in the disempowerment of the citizenry (Navarro, 2007).

As a facet of a much broader movement toward privatization, governmental social services are adopting a market-based management model and relying on non-governmental agencies (NGOs) to take up the slack. There is a wide array of subtypes and expenditure patterns associated with every form but an underlying logic in nearly all instances is a push toward commodification or cost-effectiveness of the programs (couched in terms of return on investment measured by market-driven stipulations), in contrast to their ability to genuinely affect lives. Policy recipients not likely to provide economic returns on governmental investments in them tend to be defined as burdensome charity cases. There are extensive changes that may be adapted to local contextual factors reflecting long-standing norms, values, religions, policies, existing social metrics and institutionalized arrangements even as they embody overtones imposed by international priorities (Dallmayer, 2005; Fraser, 2005). Unraveling the relative importance of domestic arrangements and transnational influences can be a tricky task, to say the least. It involves both an in-depth grasp of domestic issues and an international perspective, an awareness of transnational forces impinging on local decisions and sophisticated methodological and theoretical frameworks.

The commodification of social services, as it is sometimes called, is abetted by a transfer of issues of citizenship to a forum which is no longer native in its scope but transnational; marked by intergovernmental structures, multinational corporate influence and population changes (Ascoli and Ranci, 2002; Phillipson, 2006:202). There is another layer of complexity added by a worldwide tendency to view a number of social issues through a medical lens (e.g., Kutchins & Kirk, 2003) and the insecurities experienced by the citizenry in general are without parallel in world history. What might be described as apodictic, self-evident truths of tradition tend to lose their currency and help demarcate generational and participatory categories from one another.

In the face of an unswerving drive to be players on the world's stage, enhance market share and survive economic rip-tides, nation-states must balance the demands of competing claimants – leaving them few options but to make hard choices. Not only do they have to adjudicate where to put scarce resources and which groups are deserving of protection or support, but few actions are indemnified against the next economic shortfall meaning they will have to review their priorities anew each time the economic tides turn. It has always been true that in times of plenty promises about solutions to societal woes are an easy pledge to make; during times of scarcity it is a different story and keeping even the best-intentioned promises oftentimes creates real conflicts. Societal-level redefinitions of what is fair and just are a common means to solutions that do not always do well by citizens in need of assistance, undermining personal sense of security and identity as well as social solidarity (Powell, 2010).

An illustration of a macro-level problem may be helpful for thinking about the type of quandary involved. As nation-states undergo economic development via participation in global commerce, per capita incomes generally increase, never mind for the moment internal disparities, life expectancies increase and demands for healthcare mount. Continued change and desires to remain viable in the global economy mean a country will face enduring challenges in providing social safety nets, medical interventions or financing health care protections. To focus on just the health care issue: despite subsidized provisions for indigent citizens, most healthcare coverage around the world is linked to employment and economic productivity (workfare) and as employment is destabilized so too is healthcare. Needless to say, employment-based systems are costly, leading to cost shifting which also serves to grant license to employers to cut jobs and move production around to minimize the expense of doing business (ironically, economic reform in former socialist countries took the same direction, e.g., Chen, 2004). For those not covered by employment-based plans, subsidized coverage is oftentimes available but financed by taxes and premiums or by governmentally mandated insurance groups saddled with high expectations and expenditures. But social policies supportive of indigent care for those not involved in economically productive activities are often singled out as a cost sink and are among the first issues put on cost-cutting agenda (Jessop, 2002).

In order to comprehend the underpinning of certain forms of inequalities it is also important to examine some of the transformations that are altering people's lives. One post-modernist reality of the 21st century is the existence of a digital divide between those who have always known how to navigate in key-stroke technologies and those "ancients" who learned it later or not at all. Those who are comfortable with the technology have the world at their fingertips and no longer depend on local relationships or role models for solace or validation. The result is an indisputable social segmentation. Whatever norms of reciprocity had existed before are likely to falter and fray under the impact of interdicting worldviews in which the deep grammar of sociability is no longer meaningful to those versed in the newer modes of activity. At the same time, there is an erosion of communities of like minds with shared representations cutting across society at large and fostering social solidarity. Instead they are replaced by segmented, smaller communities and a blurring of ways of knowing the world. Beck, Bonass and Lau (2003:

6) characterize the effects of technological innovation as "revolution through side effects" and suggest a deep-seeded societal segmentation is a likely upshot and should not be surprising. Addressing comparable consequences, Dasgupta (2006:159) phrased it succinctly: "globalization has thus created an identity crisis, since many are neither local nor global and are overloaded with changing stimuli…resulting in a 'don't care' attitude, commercial interactions among family members, a rise of individualism and a disequilibrium…."

Transnational private enterprises cannot be ignored as they are altering the landscape but they are not doing so single-handedly. It is fair to say there are both private and semi-public but non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved. Multilateral NGOs are playing an especially crucial role and certainly a role that is influencing developing countries as they sort out their welfare regimes. For example, since the issuance of the Berg Report in 1981, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have become major players on the world's stage oftentimes stipulating structural adjustments and preferred policies nation-states should adopt as a condition of support and in order to attract direct capital investments or other fiscal cooperation, including monetization. One illustration is that the World Bank began urging diminutions in pay-as-you-go (PAYG) pension provisions in favor of means-tested pensions and private provisions in the mid-1990s. The World Bank and the IMF have been staunch advocates for over three decades for broadly defined market-led welfare policies as a preferred alternative to un- or under-funded public welfare (Dembele, 2007; Wade, 2007). Encapsulating both the criticisms and the confluence of forces fueling such a movement, McMichael (2000) asserts that the drive for economic integration pays precious little attention to nation-building, national interests or public sector regulatory control. As a consequence, even nonprofit, social enterprises tend to be "doing good badly" (Tekula, 2010).

Although there is a remarkable absence of consensus, social welfare is customarily taken to mean statutory governmental intervention designed to provide supportive services and resources to those in need. Right away one question that has to be addressed revolves around eligibility requirements and stipulations of entitlement. Such issues as gender are very much a part of the state, as are discussions of family responsibilities and welfare policies. At the risk of extreme simplification, whether women are eligible for social benefits and services in their own rights or as members of a male-breadwinner family is an abiding question whenever welfare regimes are examined. By the same token, gender ideologies are very much an aspect of poverty, labor markets and other market experiences, or the myriad inequalities that cut across the life course and through virtually every facet of experience (Calasanti, 2001; Hatch, 2000; Sainsbury, 1994; 1996).

These same forces also affect lives in even more subtle ways beyond the realm of income, access or protection. Just one case in point out of scores of similar situations should suffice to illustrate our contention. It is fair to say that institutional arrangements and structural realignments have altered time and temporality as they have altered space and other normative aspects of life. Containing our focus to the issues discussed thus far; the ebb and flow of transnational capital markets operate around the clock and penetrates virtually every aspect of governmental policy and, accordingly, daily life. Analysts generally concur that there has been a compression of time in many corners of the world as they are pulled into global market flows (Powell, 2010). As should be fairly obvious, any attenuation of earlier subjective temporal reckoning requires a recalibration and re-integration as new templates are incorporated into mental models of what life is about. Analysts have asserted that globalization brings a dilation, fragmentation and acceleration of the sense of time unsettling to many (Lestienne, 2000). But, as with so many other aspects of globalization, the results do not settle on all people in equal fashion. For those who live along the margins of such change, feelings of being in-control and the clarity of their proleptic futures may be challenged as the pace, and types of engagements in their lives are restructured. Considered in a broader sense, temporal reorganization is also impacting event timing and thereby the shape of life, views of dependency and definitions of personal worth. As normative perspectives on the shape of life are reformulated and/or personal functionality wanes, the chances increase that some subgroups within the population will lose track of their referential guidelines (Moody 2006).

In her insightful analysis of German pension provisions, Scheiwe (1994) brings a fresh perspective to discussion of how institutionalized welfare rules also structure temporality. She broadens the focus considerably in her examination of time politics and gendered times in legislation that grants standing to many market-related definitions of time and discounts others associated most frequently with women's roles outside the market or which result from discontinuous market-related activities deemed to be below time thresholds written into public welfare provisions. The gendered differentials in recognizing life's events, their timing and related circumstances serve to create essential inequalities in financial and other types of well-being. Time and temporality, sense of the future, and eligibility for entitlements impose structure on lives in ways that may not have been intended but are highly salient, nonetheless.

For the most part, a definition derived from the legendary Beveridge Report published in the midst of World War II in Britain has been utilized to identify and operationalize major features of the welfare state (Finer, 1999). Yet that formulation begs the question of whether that world and those circumstances still exist and how they may have been modified by post-industrial or globalizing influences. We would assert that a definition of social welfare must extend beyond questions of delivery to include its financing and function. Almost certainly the provision of non-governmental services through NGOs or volunteer agencies and programs should be included as well. Ambiguities not withstanding, it is hardly surprising that scholars looking at social welfare in a comparative focus have noted that there is a fairly direct correlation between national prosperity and percentage of GDP directed at supportive programs (Hill, 2006). However, within groups of nations (such as OECD, G-8, or G-20 countries) there are differences based on governmental types or economic developments and, we assert, in terms of underlying principles of moral economy that have shaped the formulation of welfare, whether that be public or private.

Conclusion

Inequality is an outstanding issue in the study of post-industrialism while globalization has widened its consequences such as planetary poverty and gender stratification. The potential reasons lie in the reformulation of economic power associated with burgeoning free-market economies and accompanying diffusion of instrumental rationality, standardization, commoditization or secularism. In contrast with the economic downturn and global softening of labor markets which cry for greater social protection, the welfare state of the last century has been replaced by a competitive state of the 21st century, as a "non-sovereign power" mindful of its global positioning but less powerful in shaping daily life among social forces including the role of NGOs. However, nation-states still serve important administrative functions in a world dominated by transnational corporate interests. With few options and having to make hard choices, welfare provision has seen trends toward commodification of social services while globalization is affecting social contracts as well. In the face of all these challenges to justice and governance, there must be a twin track approach: social welfare needs to be redefined and extended while market economy must be guided by moral principles that embody fundamental human values.

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Globalization Versus or Pro the State?

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Introduction

"State is the name of the coldest of all cold monsters.
Coldly it tells lies, too; and this lie crawls out of its mouth: 'I, the state, am the people.'"
(Nietzsche, 1985)

Saying that the State is in retreat implies to presuppose a relation of structural domination between globalization and the State. The question to ask is as following: is globalization the origin of the weakening of the State? Has the power of the State even weakened? In a rigorous sense, globalization is a structural and historical shift in power, "a process whereby state-centric agencies and terms of reference are dissolved in a structure of relations between different actors operating in a context which is truly global rather than merely international" (The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations, 1998: 201). Hence, globalization means multiple, overlapping and extensive interpenetration of national economies to the point where the importance of national and international networks declines relative to the weight of transnational and global networks. Yet there is a controversy over the extent to which globalization is merely an economic tendency or more. There is a controversy about the impact of globalization on policy choices and on the outcome of regulatory reforms.

Overall, globalization has been alleged to challenge domestic institutions. "**Orthodoxies**" argue that the State is in retreat and has entered into a new phase of abandonment (Hardt and Negri, 2001; Strange, 1997). "The essence of the State is that its sovereignty and its autonomous political organisation render it capable of delivering legitimacy inside a well defined territory. The international system […] used to constitute a bastion of the State and the ultimate proof of its sovereignty and autonomy. The constant and increasing interpenetration has however the potential of transforming the international system into a system in which this external bastion is becoming eroded and finally undermined." On the other hand, "**heterodoxies**" argue that the process of globalization is suffering from exaggeration (Mann, 2001). What needs to be elucidated is if globalization is: (i) an all-encompassing and supreme phenomenon influencing States **ad capite ad calcem** or, (ii) function of the adaptability of States – of the differential capacity of these latter.

The present paper argues that the **ut supra** line of arguments share a common ground, namely the dichotomy between the political – State – and the economical – globalization. In order to palliate to this reductionist and mechanistic dichotomy, this paper will show that the State and globalization constitute a dyad.

The "Orthodox" Interpretation: Globalization Versus The State

According to Hardt and Negri, the world has entered a new phase in the abandonment of the concept of the State. They postulate that globalization is transforming governance to the extent to which "sovereignty has taken a new form, composed of a series of national and supranational organisms" (Hardt and Negri, 2001 : xiii). Hence, a new form of sovereignty has occurred: the emergence of the empire, characterized by the absence of a territorial centre of power and characterized by a decentred apparatus of rule. In other words, empire is an order that suspends

history, it is an order fixing an existing state of affairs for the whole eternity, which in Fukuyama`s terminology corresponds to the end of History.

Under globalization what has been weakened is the very autonomy and sovereignty of States via international and transnational organisations and institutions. Indeed, ranging from monolithic economic institutions defined under the Bretton Woods accords (International Monetary Fund; World Bank) to the recent juridical institutions (International Criminal Court), States seem at least a **prima facie**, to be both, under the umbrella of a global governance and embedded into a complex interdependence. Following Shaw, the global State provides a structure where the juridical sovereignty of nation-States is undermined (Shaw, 2000). An authoritative framework consisting of the dominance by a single set of new forms of institutions governing the various State centres has been created. There is a shift between the idea that the State is in principle able to determine itself and its future agenda and the global economy, the international organizations, the global and regional institutions, the international right and the military alliances which form an ensemble and which shape and reduce the options available to individual nation-States (Held, 1995).

The deficit of the State is made visible through three theses: (i) there is a structural deficit of the control by the State over its territory (e.g.: transnational fluxes of money; immigration); (ii) there is a crisis of legitimacy due to the incapacity of the State to define its future in a sovereign manner; (iii) a global governance system compensates the impotence of States, that enables a transfer of sovereignty aggravating the crisis of the State. Succinctly, the nation-State at term will get replaced by cosmopolitan structures of governance (Beck, 2006). However, it must be noticed that the dialectic of risks (environmental, security) which strengthens the crisis of the Sate is at the same time providing the means for going beyond it.

Succinctly, the State as a welfare State is in retreat, on account of the rapidly shifting economy, driven by markets, and having real consequences on the lives of individuals. The velocity of social, economic and technological changes as well as the shifting of ownership in the forms of mergers and take-overs results in unpredictable relationships and makes the State move towards assuming the role of a merely economic planner, instead of being a monitoring entity and an apparatus serving as a device for service delivery.

However, where the shoe pinches is that the "**orthodox**" interpretation ignores the variation of globalization in its multidimensionality and multidirectionality. Globalization has accompanied profound transitions and acts in dissimilar manners according to the concerned State. Globalization has not achieved to impose a new paradigm, a new doxa and praxis in a homogenous and self-governed way/autonomous.

The "Heterodox" Interpretation : Globalization Pro The State

In a "**heterodox**" interpretation, globalization is a mere exaggeration and corresponds to a semantic construction explaining the retreat of the State. Indeed, first of all, it is not the State **per se** which has weakened (e.g.: the State as a sovereign power) but one specific historical form of the State: the welfare State. Second, even the retreat of the welfare State is the product of post-industrial endogenous processes, which are as follows: (i) growth of service affecting welfare provisions and; (ii) expansion of governmental commitments (e.g.: negative impact of population aging) (Mishra, 1999). Furthermore, at a geographical level, contemporary capitalism is more transnational than global, since it operates exclusively in three regions, called "the core": Europe, North America and East Asia. Globalization is thus helping to create a trilateral order based on the nation-State system.

The very notion of globalization is thus problematized – since the economy today is more international than global – because nation-States have still significance in terms of maintaining domestic economies and economic relations beyond national boundaries. The role of the nation-State's **vis-à-vis** the global economy is characterized by an embedded autonomy.

Globalization and the State are social phenomena. Both phenomena are instituting and incorporating within the social structure norms – **nomos**. Globalization cannot be set into an autarkic system. Globalization cannot work without the State on account of the fact that there is a relational framework, a dyadic structure existing between globalization and the State. Based on the syntaxical structure of Clausewitz's sentence – "the State is the continuation of war by other means" – we can infer that the State is the continuation of globalization at the national level and **vice-versa.** The State is the depositary of a normative and economic legitimization of globalization. The State through its form of expression and application has been transformed by having been shifted from an overarching

authoritarian figure to a more flexible and fluid structuration under globalization.

Globalization offers thus a general frame into which States are the main actors. However, the advent of globalization rests on the precondition of the existence of powerful States. Hence globalization, does not just provide a skeleton and arena for States, it is itself an actor. Both the State and globalization are legitimizing each other and each of them contains the preconditions of their mutual existence. It is usually thought that globalization is a purely economic phenomenon, however since it imposes norms and is itself constituted by the norms of the State, then it follows that it corresponds to an inherently political phenomenon as well.

There is no **ubi maior minor cessat** between globalization and the State. In the dyad globalization – State, both variables are independent and dependent at the same time. The State did not fade away, but the dynamic and forms of expression of the State have been transformed. The integrational model of the State prevailing **ante** 1990 has shifted towards a competition model. If globalization is more broadly understood as aiming to install a model having universalistic foundations, then it is not surprising that the State is no longer the first instance creating identity and defending categorical interests. Indeed, the individual has become increasingly multidimensional and thus his propensity to recognize himself in collectives of defence of categorial interests is declining. The individual has acquired a pluridimensional identity on account of the many objective and subjective determinants of memberships. More specifically, it can be argued that because systems of differentiation inside our societies tend to evanesce, the State and the democratic system entered into a new crisis. However, it is not a crisis **per se**, rather the State calls for an updated form of democracy, able to cope with the societal and global transformations. Succinctly, the relationship between the nation-State and the global context is a mutual one, on account that State policies are also involved in the international division of labour.

Conclusion

"Globalization has not ended the rise and rise of nation-States."
(Mann, 2001)

To conclude, globalization has provoked changes to the State. Globalization is mainly incarnated within neoliberalism and has accentuated democratic lacunas, because monitoring capacities in the field of democratic norms and institutional implementations have not been provided. Therefore, the democratic quality of the State has been weakened and limited (Weyland, 2004). Neoliberalism has not consolidated the Marshallian sequence of democracy – civil, political, social rights – and on this basis has occasioned a democratic deconsolidation. To this extent, globalization accounts for a retreat of the State as a democratic builder and universal welfare provider of services. However, it must be kept in mind that globalization is not static and neither exogenous. Globalization and the State are forming a dyad without which, one could not exist without the other. Globalization is the **alter** of the State and **vice-versa**. There is no pyramidal relation of authority between globalization and the State. Some trends strengthen both nation-States and transnationalism and hence, globalization has differential impacts on the different States in different regions.

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Time for a Digital Detox? From Information Obesity to Digital Dieting

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Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?[1]
— T.S. Eliot

Like Superman, this article commences its transition with a telephone box.

The 3 Network in the United Kingdom is advertising its services, but both the message and the platform for that message is unusual and – indeed – ironic. Digital access is sold through the language of a buffet. Instead of unlimited food, unlimited data can be 'eaten.' Yet the platform on which this connection between food and information is made is a rare object in an era of private, mobile telephony. A public telephone box becomes a banner and backdrop to sell a gluttony of private access (and excess) of data.

Such an irony – or wilful blindness to injustice – was predicted by the intellectually courageous Neil Postman, in his 1993 book Technopoly,[2] argued that celebration of technological change blinds enthusiasts with the belief that – inevitably – benefits will spread throughout the world.[3] That has not happened. The speed and scale of

information architecture in some European and North American regions and nations encourages binge searching, media gluttony and information obesity. There is a cost of this excess for the rest of the world,[4] creating assumptions that more media creates greater meaning and that information availability is synonymous with knowledge creation.

Postman did not doubt the efficiency of the computer in education. He remained worried about how the computer "is altering our conception of learning."[5] Nearly twenty years have passed from the publication of Technopoly, but the outcomes of Postman's assumptions are unfolding. Unless information literacy scaffolds learning, consumers will shop online but ignore, displace and forget the costs and losses to learning and citizenship. Peter Morville is right: "information literacy helps individuals succeed."[6] But it also enables dynamic questioning of collective injustice and inequality. Put another way, the gap between "all you can eat data" and the digital dieting required to manage it, requires attention.

To show how a consumerist anaesthetic is masking the pain of crumbling public education, health and libraries, it is necessary to intervene in the narratives of hyper-individualism, personal choice and the digital divide. By aligning postcolonialism, internet studies and media studies, I probe the consequences of the information glut and the fetishization of the new rather than the useful. This is an article of advocacy and argument, exploring how our language, models and metaphors for the online environment have become descriptive rather than innovative and interventionist.

Information Obesity

> We are living in the middle of the largest increase in expressive capability in the history of the human race. More people can communicate more things to more people than has ever been possible in the past.[7]
> — Clay Shirky

> There is almost no disincentive to unconstrained spinning, trafficking in poor information, and downright lying.[8]
> — Brian Eno

A new menace is threatening to overwhelm our cities and towns. It is not the percentage of women wearing a dress larger than size fourteen. It is not the beer gut protruding over the belt of contemporary masculinity. It is not the loss of fitness in young people through playing on a Wii rather than with a football. Instead, the problem – so clearly revealed by Kate Moss – is that our culture ridicules extra flesh but not excessive ignorance. If "nothing tastes as good as skinny feels,"[9] then why does ignorance taste better than thinking before she speaks? To put it another way, why is eating more important than reading?

Answering this question requires thinking about the consequences of information obesity. I am interested in two concurrent, yet oppositional movements: the proliferation of information for the digitally literate at the same time as information literacy is more difficult to attain because of a decline in funding for schools, universities, libraries and educational infrastructure. To understand this starvation of information literacy in an environment of information glut, I summon and reconfigure an unusual model to understand and manage this paradox.

One of the causes for obesity is the proliferation of food around us. A study of eating habits from Brian Wansink's Food and Brand Lab at Cornell revealed that his subjects made over two hundred choices about food each day.[10] We could be thinking about climate change or the pile of dishes in the sink. Instead, Wansink shows that our thoughts are filled with food. Do we pop into Subway for a sandwich? Do we march into the corner deli for a healthy three bean salad wrap or – what the hell – order a home delivery of an extra large pepperoni pizza with a stuffed crust and garlic bread? And, why not open a cheeky chardonnay to accompany the calorific blowout?

The energy and time spent making these food choices is enormous.[11] Even when not eating, we are thinking about eating. Only the truly determined and disciplined can avoid being overweight in such an environment. We eat because there is food around us. This is "mindless eating."[12] We eat more than we think. We think about food more than we consciously know. Wansink argues that most are on 'see food' diet. When we see it, we eat it. He suggests if foods are removed from the environment, then choices are reduced and there is a greater chance to lose weight.[13] One factor is common to all successful diet plans. They restrict the number of choices that the person makes about food during the day. While nutritionists criticize the Atkins Diet, the South Beach Diet or the Cabbage Soup Diet, these eating plans are successful, at least in the short term. Success is not only created by restricting the amount of calories, but also by reducing the number of choices made about food.

I am arguing that Wansink's ideas can be applied more widely. It is a powerful metaphor and model. We not only live in an environment of abundant food but an excess of information. Hundreds of choices are made each day about which book to select from the shelf, website to visit, magazine to buy in the supermarket aisle or podcast to download for a train trip. The scale of these choices explains Google's success. Google is the Atkins Diet of search engines. Through the application of the PageRank algorithm, websites are ranked, organized and delivered.[14] Choices – and thinking about those choices – decrease. A word or phrase is typed into a friendly box. Even if it is spelt incorrectly, the algorithms will return information to the user. It is not quality data, but is the informational equivalent of a Big Mac, Fries and a Coke.

Here is an example of this process. I want to find some source material about postcolonialism. I type "postcolonialism" into Google.[15] The first return is Wikipedia, a generalized, collectively written and edited, unreferenced presentation on the topic.[16] This type of source is adequate if the searcher requires a quick definition for personal interest, but it is not the specialist knowledge required for formal education. Intriguingly, a small amount of knowledge and information literacy can make a great difference. This time, in entering the Google search box, I not only type "postcolonialism," but also nominate three of the major theorists in the field: "Bhabha," "Balibar" and "Spivak."[17] The list is completely different. Suddenly the universities appear in the rankings, along with the specialist writers. Wikipedia disappears.

This very simple experiment with keywords confirms that the consequences of information obesity are not sourced from Google but from a searcher's lack of expertise. One structural way for educators to ensure that students are aware of the limitations in their knowledge and learn how to analyse and judge the type of materials they are receiving is to create assessment and curriculum that blocks easy data mining. Removing the reliance on Wikipedia, widening search terms and increasing specialist knowledge in academic disciplines means that students do not rely on shortcuts (and scholarly satiation) from simple sources.

Andrew Whitworth's investigation of information obesity confirmed that all forms of obesity – with food or media – require more than a culture of blame on individuals to shift patterns of behaviour.[18] It is necessary to organize information and production. To enact change, there must be a movement beyond personal guilt and into collective and corporate responsibility. If a fast food restaurant did not exist, then it could not be visited. If Wikipedia did not exist, then it could not be used in schools and universities. More practically, if high quality food was both accessible and reasonably priced – or online and offline books and articles were freely available for students to use – then the temptation to snack on the cheap, quick and easy would be less compelling. Instead of blaming individuals for bad behaviour, an alternative is to open public recreation centres or parks rather than another fast food restaurant, or improve public libraries, rather than perpetuating the ideology that 'everything' is online and 'we' are born with the skills to interpret, analyse and rank.

The strength and the weakness of Google is that it is relative intuitive to find a small amount of information, using already existing knowledge. It creates a culture of satisfaction. We are hungry for an answer. Google provides it, just like when we are hungry for food and a McDonalds' drive through offers an easy option for calories. We do not think about the other choices we could have made. We are satisfied. However the point of education, the point of learning, is to move from what we know to what we do not know. The goal of education is not to satisfy, but to challenge, confuse, irritate and unsettle, to agitate truths we have accepted in our lives. The problem with Google is that a searcher can only enter vocabulary and terms they already understand. If a student does not know who Etienne Balibar is, then he or she cannot add his name to a search for postcolonialism. Therefore, Google will always make the searcher comfortable, finding what is already known, in a basic language. For teachers, such a realization presents profound consequences. It is necessary to understand what brings students to learning, including their motivation and previous experiences of education. This is a challenging process, as Diana Laurillard confirms, "it is not easy to penetrate the private world of someone coming to an understanding of an idea."[19] Similarly, it is difficult to pierce and research the space between a searcher and a search engine.

We cannot put words into a search engine that we do not know. Therefore attention is required on the entirety of the educational context, experience and history that leads into that moment of entering words into a search engine. Because information literacy, vocabulary and knowledge is lacking, Google restricts, reduces and limits the source material that is found and we are not even aware that it does so. Therefore intervention is required. Teachers and librarians must slice and probe the intimate and hyper-personal space between Google and the Googler. One way to defamiliarize this encounter is through carefully configured assessment.

As an example, I asked my MA students to complete an annotated bibliography on a research method. They

can choose oral history, ethnography, practice-led research, photographic-led research, semiotics or unobtrusive research methods. I ask that they find me twenty sources for their annotated bibliography, but with emphasis on particular categories. They must find conventional scholarly monographs, but locating other types of sources is more difficult. The pattern has been the same in the last few years. They arrive in my office: "Tara how do I find refereed articles? There are no refereed articles for oral history." I ask them to repeat the method of their search on my office computer. Yes, they typed "oral history" into Google and did not have the patience to sift the results.

I suggested typing two additional words into Google: "Oral history refereed articles." The results improved. I then proposed they move to Google Scholar. The results again improved. I suggested they move to the Directory of Open Access Journals or Open J-Gate. The results improved. Source after source, the pattern continued. They could not find any podcasts. I added the word "podcasts" into their search terms. Podcasts appeared in the list. But I also suggested that they may consider going to iTunes or Libsyn. Again the results improved when moving to more specialist sites.

Karin de Jager and Mary Nassimbeni, in their evaluation of information literacy programmes in South Africa, confirmed that they are best delivered when integrated into the subject curricula.[20] They showed that the generic models for information literacy through stand-alone training are seen by librarians to be less satisfactory. However their research also confirmed what I had discovered in my teaching:

> There seems to be a measurable discrepancy between students' perceptions about their own information literacy skills, and abilities acquired after interventions, and their actual skills as measured by answers to practical questions.[21]

The crucial recognition logged by de Jager and Nassimbeni was that not only were students deficient in information literacy skills, but they were lacking consciousness about their inadequate information literacy skills. Their study confirmed the cliché that we do not know what we do not know. An integrated and expansive scholarly intervention is required to activate both consciousness and increased skill in information management. In addition, they argue that it must be reinforced through concrete applications in a disciplinary area.

Google has not caused this gap between confidence and ability – consciousness and capacity – to apply logical and dynamic tools to the management of an information environment. What Google has facilitated is the ability to deploy simple vocabulary to return some results. When receiving these links, the novice searcher does not hold the competence to recognize the gaps and absences, nor evaluate the quality of the materials. They do not know what they do not know, lacking information literacy in an age of information obesity. That is why an unthinking deployment of Google or any hardware or software must be questioned. Commitment without consciousness encourages sloppy thinking. It facilitates a culture of equivalence. Food is just food. Information is just food. Actually that is not the case. There is better food. There is better information.

Algorithms like Google's PageRank are bathed in ideologies of logic and rigour. The decision to validate an algorithm to automate and simplify information literacy choices has social consequences. Information systems that start in (and are justified by) empiricism and positivism build structures of social exclusion and differentiation based on 'fact.' An example of this pattern and problem emerged on November 25, 2009 as a series of blogs (re)presented photographs of Michelle Obama with the face of an ape. A well-educated woman was reconstructed through physiognomic categories that would have made Lombroso blush. Because many bloggers linked to the site with horror or racism, the image rose to be the top-ranked return in Google Images for Obama as supplied by PageRank. The Corporation received indignant requests for the week prior to November 25, to remove the disturbingly doctored photograph.[22] Google Public Relations staff deflected criticism, describing themselves as a search engine and not responsible for content. They contended that it was not the Corporation's fault when someone racially abuses the first lady. They simply delivered search results on the basis of (supposedly) neutral algorithms. Inevitably, by the end of the day, the image was removed with an attendant apology.[23]

From one perspective, the Corporation was right to blame 'us' – web users – for either blatant racism or rubbernecking at blatant racism. 'We' searched for the image. 'We' linked to it. 'We' viewed it. 'We' are to blame. If 'we' did not look for it, link to it and bounce it around the blogosphere, then it would never have appeared in Google Images. On closer assessment though, this justification is like blaming a child who accidentally wanders into an adult entertainment centre and does not close their eyes when confronted by pornography.

Such a moment shows the cost of information obesity. Google did not create the racism. Their algorithmic calculations simply confirmed how popular racism can be. But Google is not banal or benevolent. Search engines are not the end of the rainbow of human progress. Instead, the area of my interest is the willingness of (re)searchers

to allow an algorithm to replace personal and collective responsibility to gain sufficient media and information literacies to enable independent, conscious choices. This is intellectual laziness and flabbiness. Google is the start of an information journey. It is not the end. The key is to critique and question a series of damaging assumptions.

Information Obesity: The Assumptions

- If something is new, then it is useful.
- If something is faster, then it is better.
- If something is easy, then it useful.
- Portals, platforms and media used for leisure are intrinsically beneficial in education and the workplace.
- Searching is the same as researching. Clicking is the same as thinking.
- Information is the same as knowledge.
- Cutting and pasting is the same as note-taking.
- Using a search engine is a replacement for expertise in information literacy.
- More media are better media.
- 'Progress' in the United States or the United Kingdom will 'inevitably' trickle down to the rest of the world.

To find better information necessitates movement between search engines, widening vocabulary and recognizing the innovative writers in a discipline or subject. It is also crucial to locate and recognize the gaps in digital migration. For example, there is one E.P. Thompson book available to download to a Kindle and – through an application – onto an iPad.[24] There is nothing in the iBookstore to purchase from Thompson. Conversely, there are many texts from Richard Florida.[25] Such access does not convey educational relevance or excellence, but simply refers to availability.

The pivotal lesson in transforming environments of information obesity is that a few key decisions from the user/researcher can make such a difference. To justify such decisions is similar to trying to convince a friend about the convenience of eating an apple or yoghurt, rather than a home delivered pizza. The pizza tastes better than fruit. The information from Google satisfies the inexperienced searcher because they lack expertise in finding and interpreting anything more complex.[26] Therefore to question and probe not only information obesity but the assumptions used to mask its consequences, it is time to enter a phase of digital dieting.

Digital Dieting

> There is now an almost total disconnection between the validity of a story and its media success.[27]
> — Brian Eno

Ponder the metaphors used to describe the engagement with the web: scrolling, surfing and linking. Each describes superficial movement through material. The question is how to stop snacking on the crust of knowledge and to develop advanced interpretative skills. Using the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) is like eating organic chicken. Google Scholar is the fruit and vegetable section of the information environment. Google is an international information smorgasbord. We could choose to eat salad. However, it is easier and tastier to keep returning to the dessert table for another piece of chocolate cake. It is easier to read blogs than an academic article. It is simpler to watch a YouTube video of another drunken bride falling over at a wedding than viewing an important lecture recorded with a static camera. It is more difficult and requires concentration and effort. It is easier to suck in the equivalent of an information sugar rush, than the slow release of profound ideas, carefully constituted.[28] As Linda Behan confirmed in her discussion of the role of the school librarian, "students want instant gratification, and there are not enough hours in the day to teach them otherwise."[29] Yet one way to circumvent or challenge the desire for immediate and automated results is to put intellectual obstacles in the way, to defamiliarize their encounter with ideas.[30] One strategy I have used is to restrict Wikipedia and Google use from first year students. I am not against Wikipedia for general(ized) information, although it has structural limitations.[31] This is not a stance against wiki-enabled media. In earlier years, I had also blocked Encyclopaedia Britannica and Encarta as academic references. The problem is not (only) the anonymity of wiki-enabled collective authorship. Instead, all encyclopaedias are too generalized for the specialist knowledge required at university. By removing simple and introductory sources, including textbooks, from students, the crutch is gone. By blocking default intellectual options,

consciousness develops in differentiating between general and scholarly information. My imperative to 'ban' Google is simply to challenge students to find better information in different ways. When they know the key authors in the field and have widened their vocabulary, Google becomes much more useful.

To enact this intervention, I supply a detailed study guide and a free collection of readings. While this has been a common practice in many universities in the last twenty years, these supplied materials from academic staff are now even more important. The retraction of library budgets for monographs and journals, along with commercial publishers buying and aggregating journals into expensive packages beyond the reach of many universities means that academic staff must purchase and supply the overwhelming majority of course materials used in their courses. Extracts are then photocopied within copyright parameters and distributed to students. The changes to publishing, with a retraction of scholarly monographs and an increase in textbooks, have further reduced the quality of available material for students. Therefore, academics – to guarantee the quality of student readings from any socio-economic background – are assuming personal responsibility as public institutions and university libraries that used to fulfil this function have been bled of funding. Either academics supply this high quality scholarship to their students, or it is not available for them to read.

When students use these specially prepared materials, rather than wandering through Google, Wikipedia or textbooks, they learn about the subject and gain security and expectations in a new environment. It is digital dieting. Less searching creates more learning. Students arrive at university with little specialist knowledge, uncertain of the level of reading and writing required of them. They are often frightened, away from home for the first time and – understandably – will revert to prior habits and patterns.[32] My decision to excise Wikipedia and Google from their information seeking patterns is not an act of a luddite. Indeed, my goal is to show the value of quality online materials. My imperative is to help new students, rather than to celebrate new media.

The cost of choice in an age of information obesity – which is actually a denial of choice – is that searchers stay in intellectual environments where they feel happy, understood, satiated, literate and untroubled by 'foreign' ideas. The starting point of learning is to have the courage to read defiantly and courageously, jumping into ideas that confuse, unsettle and upset our values and experience. Challenge builds learning. Conformity and comfort enable ignorance. The advantage of Google constructing a pathway through information is that it prevents inexperienced students and citizens becoming frozen and overwhelmed when selecting relevant sources. They do not have to choose. The clean interface of Google automates their search patterns, giving them a rank of websites so that they are never troubled to think about the way in which such a list was assembled. The key in enacting digital dieting is to gently move students from 'selecting' Google as a default option. Even instigating a single change – from Google to Google Scholar – makes an incredible difference. It is also possible to demonstrate the value of alternative search engines that deliver fewer – but more specialist – outcomes.

Name of Search Engine	**URL**	**Specialist Function**
Dogpile	http://www.dogpile.com	Aggregates Google, Yahoo!, Bing and Ask through a metasearch.[33]
Ask Jeeves	http://uk.ask.com/	Maintains a question and answer function, but also a capacity to return precise requests for video and images. It is also possible to view other users' answers to a question.
MP3realm	http://mp3realm.org/	A specialist search engine for MP3s, with additional functions to search for lyrics
Clipblast	http://www.clipblast.com	An expansive search for video files
Files Tube	www.filestube.com	Searches filesharing and uploading sites
Scirus	http://www.scirus.com/	A specialist science search engine
Njouba	http://www.njouba.com/	Searches FTP, Torrent and RapidShare
Ebook search	http://www.ebook-search-engine.com/	Searches ebooks and electronic publications more generally
Sweet Search	http://www.sweetsearch.com/	A specialist search engine for both students and librarians, with mechanisms for human review.

Ms Freckles	http://www.msfreckles.com/	Separates searches by media and type of information
Mamma	http://www.mamma.com/	Metasearch engine, with the capacity to select by the category of results
Picsearch	http://www.picsearch.com/	Specialist picture searcher
Intute	http://www.intute.ac.uk/	Searches for academic research by subject[34]
Google Code University	http://code.google.com/edu/curriculumsearch/	Searches curriculum materials from international computer science departments
Open Library	www.openlibrary.org	A wiki-enabled search engine that aims to record every book and author.
Quotiki	http://www.quotiki.com/	Searches for significant statements and quotations
Lazarum.com	http://www.lazarum.com/2/en/	Search for specialist information on disabilities. It is also tailored to be read with screen readers.
Infomine	http://infomine.ucr.edu/	Built by librarians, it searches some of the deep web.
Zhift	http://www.zhift.com/	Searches web fora
Wink	http://wink.com/	Specialist search engine for people, with emerging focus on social networking.

All search engines automate the search process, but the database of materials from which the selection is made is configured differently for more specific tasks. For example, Bing describes itself, not as a search engine, but a "decision engine." The 'improvement' beyond Google is to further automate the searcher's results. The one advantage of Google Scholar is that students can maintain familiarity with a brand that they know, but the algorithm connects users to higher quality refereed materials. The removal of Google as a default is like removing ice cream from the home freezer. If it is not readily available, then it will not be eaten. Alternatives may be considered.

My goal as a teacher, particularly as a teacher of first year students, is to slow them down. I block data mining and cutting and pasting through careful construction of assessments. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to create an awareness of the different types and modes of information and provide a scaffold to information literacy. I also assemble a checklist for them. Every source they use in University requires asking ten key questions.

- Who authored the information?
- What expertise does the writer have to comment?
- What evidence is used? Are there citations in the piece?
- What genre is the document: journalism, academic paper, blog, polemic?
- Is the site/document/report funded by an institution?
- What argument is being made?
- When was the text produced?
- Why did this information emerge at this point in history?
- Who is the audience for this information?
- What is not being discussed and what are the political consequences of that absence?

This is the list I give my first year students on the day they commence class. Such questions ask that they stop and think before they cut and paste. If I allow the students to use Google and Wikipedia without thinking, snacking on low quality information because it is available, cheap and easy to find, then they never make the realization of how little they know. They never reach the moment of consciousness that they have little idea how to find information.

The issue is not only a lack of reading or a replacement of reading for clicking. Another problem is a dearth of note taking. Students are not taking notes from what they read. Instead, they highlight text. I bring students into my office for a personal meeting to talk about their assignments, rather than simply return papers in class. In 2010, I asked how often they draft. The predictable answer was that they did not draft. They ran a spelling checker

through it and submitted it. That process can be improved. However, I probed them further, asking how they constructed an argument. It became clear that they did not plan the arc of an analysis. Most of the first year students produced highly fragmented papers, with each paragraph offering a different perspective or argument. There was no subtlety or care in building a transition between disparate ideas. I asked them to show me their notes to diagnose the problem. They showed me their notebooks from lectures and seminars. I asked, where were their notes from the readings? Pause. There were no notes from the readings.

There are a few problems emerging from these first year students. They can be taught to draft and edit their prose. They can be taught how to gain information literacy and find quality research materials rather than mush. I am however left to ponder how a generation of students has entered university unable to take notes from what they read. It means that they endlessly return to the original source, choosing over and over again what may be relevant. Taking notes is a moment of decision making, selecting important information that is appropriate to a discipline, level of education or assessment. After locating and selecting quality materials from the information glut, note taking is an important second stage in information dieting.

Without notes, these students are locked into information obesity. They do not read a book or article, make a choice about what is important, take notes and put away the original text, being able to use the notes for assignments. They are not in control of the information environment. This problem can begin to be solved by working on how students select information in the first place. The wonderment I see in students faces when they discover Google Scholar or seeing how adding a few authors' names in a search engine can improve the quality of a source is remarkable. Another key strategy that helps students determine the quality of materials is to start reading books and articles from the back. It is empowering for students to evaluate the sources that the writer has used to configure the analysis and judge the calibre of the argument from the sources.

Education – learning – is slow, gradual and incremental. Google is fast. That is why Google's algorithm seems to have more value than librarians or teachers: not because the Corporation is benevolent or correct, but because it simplifies choices and appears to reduce the cost to staff working in information management. Instead of working hard(er) to find complex references and emerging scholarship, it is easier to follow the crowd, follow the algorithm and access the links on the first page of Google. Food choices are similar. At the end of a long day, we can either prepare a vegetarian risotto or dial up for a pizza. But simply because an action or behaviour is easy does not mean that it is beneficial. Those of us interested in education and libraries, information and knowledge, need to start with simple interventions and tactics for digital dieting and then instigate more complex information scaffolding. In my case, I supply quality materials to students and a long further reading list, cutting away the reliance on Google and Wikipedia, while configuring assessment that embeds information literacy.

These thoughts on information obesity and the necessity for digital dieting crystalized during an MA seminar for Media Literacies at the University of Brighton. In the last seminar of the module, one of my students described her intellectual paralysis when confronted by information choices every day. Each morning when waking up, she is frozen with the scale of choices. Will she read her course guide? Will she search online? Will she go to the library? Instead, she checks her telephone for messages, answers emails and returns to her Facebook profile, which she 'accidentally' leaves open most of her working day.

After working through her patterns, we realized that she makes choices by not making choices, living in Brian Wansink's "mindless margin." She worries about the hours spent messaging, commenting and updating and asks me to help her with time management. Actually, time management is not her problem. Information management is her challenge. If she closed Facebook after a designated thirty minutes a day, constructed daily learning goals and followed the recommendations of teachers and librarians while monitoring citations of important authors via Google Scholar, then her information environment becomes less threatening and chaotic. There would be no metaphoric Mars Bar calling her name. By not checking Facebook updates every five minutes, forcing herself not to leave one task until it is completed and checking for information that she does not need, she is making choices not to make choices. She develops experience in planning and organizing her intellectual environment, understanding the consequences of refereeing and learning about quality assurance models in education, differentiating between leisure and learning, time passing and time management. This is a pivotal realization for schools and universities. Google is a great way to find products to purchase. We have now reached a layer of maturity in the web environment where one size search engine does not fit all. The information literacy skills used to find shoes may not be appropriate to find scholarly resources.

Strategies to Move from Information Obesity to Digital Dieting

- Reduce the media involved in achieving a learning outcome. Use fewer media to create more meaning.
- Reduce the dependency on learning materials (like PowerPoint slides) that can move through time and space. Make information choices in real time and space. Do not delay decision making.
- Increase thinking. Reduce cutting and pasting.
- Use scaffolding assessment such as research plans and annotative bibliographies.
- Introduce a few significant assessments, rather than multiple small assessments.
- Ensure that the key readings are international, current and model excellence for the students.
- Demand interpretation of important scholars, rather than paraphrasing of key ideas.
- Update assessment each year, ensuring student feedback on assessment from previous years is embedded into current practice.
- If a mode of teaching and learning is not working, then change it by reducing the number of assessments or alter the media of delivery.
- Develop a community of learners who care about each other's progress. Reduce competition, increase community. Use social media to build social relationships.

The imperative is teaching students the differences between scholarly and general information and naturalizing information literacy processes for evaluating sources. This encourages students to stretch and try new strategies, new search engines and new methods. It involves all of us – as learners and readers – to extend ourselves to seek out new ideas and intellectual opportunities. The implementation of digital dieting enables the skills required to handle the proliferation of information. But this intervention in personal search practices of students is not enough. Besides moderating information obesity and initiating digital dieting, it is necessary to activate social skills to not only shape information into knowledge, but to see the other side of the argument and position all truths into the context from which they emerge.[35]

Digital Justice

> Although there is a real threat that the computerization of society will intensify the current inequalities in relations of class, race, and gender power, there is also the possibility that a democratized and computerized public sphere might provide opportunities to overcome these injustices.[36]
> - Douglas Kellner

> Changing our minds is our hope for the future.[37]
> - Brian Eno

It is completely understandable that students (and citizens) are confronting difficulty in their searching and learning processes. The digitization that we are witnessing is arguably of a scale of the movement from scroll to codex. By increasing the opportunities to read refereed scholarship and write evocative assignments from it, students improve their marks and decrease stress. By reducing dependency on social networking, higher quality information becomes the foundation of the intellectual diet. Deciding to avoid the information equivalent of chocolate cake and ice cream ensures that space is available for the fruits of scholarship.

Reducing the information choices being made reorients the focus to the quality, rather than the speed and scale, of returns. Less is more. Such a principle can also apply to the configuration of the sensory experience for learning. As the Open University has shown through their history, sound-only teaching resources defamiliarize the way in which students think about ideas.[38] With the eyes at rest, easy visual literacy is not an option. For difficult intellectual work that is abstract, sonic media platforms are often an option,[39] slowing students' decision making and interpretation of information, encouraging alternative modes and patterns of thought.[40]

Instead of recognizing this specificity and value – using fewer senses to initiate greater learning – podcasts became vodcasts. Show notes accompanied the sound. Supposedly the addition of visual and print-based resources increased the potential of sonic media. But what if we gain more meaning from fewer media? Could there be positive consequences in using our senses in different ways to create unusual environments for listening, learning

and thinking that are distinct from the patterns and processes of our daily lives? Even if there is doubt about my assumption that fewer media creates more meaning, there is no doubt that fewer media – less sensory information – creates different types of learning. Even more importantly, by reducing the senses and media in operation, a consciousness develops about platform selection and the building of knowledge.[41]

Searching for information is a quest for meaning and understanding.[42] Much of the history of education is based on the selection of ideas, research and media to create a curriculum for students that extends and tests them, rather than leaving them satiated, satisfied and compliant.[43] Media platform selection is the crucial moment in learning. A powerful and important consequence of distance education – that is enhanced through media platforms that shift content temporally and geographically – is that it removes students from the campus and slots learning into personal and professional responsibilities. There are many more citizens who have a chance to participate in education who could never commit to classes in a conventional university environment. There are social and economic costs when physically separating teacher and learner, library and learning. But media proxies can build relationships and manage the loss of face to face teaching and learning.[44] To ensure that the proxies are successful requires planning, deep understanding of available educational options and opportunities, curricula expertise and a powerful feedback mechanism to ensure the careful alignment between learner, curriculum and community. Media choices and literacies should be determined by the environment of the student, not the staff.

Distance education, through its history, has been mediated by the dominant popular cultural platform of its time.

> Correspondence courses (paper and post).
> Radio and television (schools of the air).
> Open Universities (integrated print, radio, television and summer school packages).
> Video and teleconferencing (synchronous media elements added to asynchronous education).
> Internet and web (integrating portal, delivery system, information and communication hub)[45]

Media transformations have been woven through the history of schools and universities, widening participation in higher education. The paradox with such a media-led model for building social justice in education is that the very groups who were excluded from higher education are often the groups without the disposable income for the hardware and software to overcome this injustice. Therefore, the best of distance and online education is able to carry forward elements of old media into new education. Such a strategy not only ensures that a larger number of potential students holds the literacies to commence study and be welcomed into the online environment, but that the best media are chosen for a learning moment, rather than simply assuming that the newest media will be appropriate.

The great gift of social media, like Facebook, YouTube, Flickr and Twitter, to education is that it is **social,** forming networks of communication and connection between students and staff. Distance education – in its paper-led mode where readers and study guides were sent to student by post – was individualized learning, with occasional weekends or summer schools where scholars would travel to a venue for intensive lecture and seminar sessions. Through social media, distance education is enhanced, allowing students to create much more natural relationships throughout the academic year. They are friends on Facebook, meet in asynchronous virtual learning environments and connect through Google Wave or Ning. Such platforms and portals may not enhance the attainment of learning outcomes, but they do enable learning to be a part of living.

The challenge is to ensure that such strategies are implemented globally. While globalization (and globalism) remains a contentious term, often aligned with westernization and free trade, it carries hope for diversity, modernity[46] and innovative trans-local relationships. Amartya Sen confirmed that,

> We cannot reverse the economic predicament of the poor across the world by withholding from them the great advantages of contemporary technology, the well established efficiency of international trade and exchange, and the social as well as economic merits of living in an open society.[47]

> The central issue of contention is not globalization itself, nor is it the use of the market as an institution, but the inequity in the overall balance of institutional arrangements – which produces very unequal sharing of the benefits of globalization. [48]

Globalization is a statement of interdependency that has particular applicability to international teaching and learning. There is a gap in higher education provision between developed and developing nations.[49] But information architecture and information literacy can be improved.

Digital justice must be a priority. One of the great problems emerging from the phrase the 'digital divide' is that it is a passive description, encouraging complacency. It conveys an inevitability to inequality, whether discussing the disparity between nations, regions, urban and rural environments, races, classes, genders or age. It encourages descriptions of difference, rather than initiating action to listen, understand and intervene. The digital divide was tethered to phrases like the information society and the information revolution. Mobile media and mobile telephony agitated such categories.[50] However the digital divide is based on the assumption that access to technology is a proxy for learning how to use it.

An example of this slippage is the One Laptop per Child (OLPC) Australia project,[51] which is part of the laudable philanthropic goal that every child in the world should have access to the XO laptop. However it is based on the assumption that access to a computer will inevitably develop information literacy. The OLPC confirmed this misunderstanding between access and literacy: "we do not focus on computer literacy, as that is a by-product of the fluency children will gain through use of the laptop for learning."[52] There is confusion between access and information, technology and learning, worsened through the complex contemporary colonial relationships. Or, as Python language author Guido van Rossum stated, "I've thought for a while that sending laptops to developing countries is simply the 21st century equivalent of sending bibles to the colonies."[53] Access is the preliminary stage in the project of learning. Intervention does not end at this point, with attention required on far less fashionable topics such as professional development for staff, careful configurations of curriculum, lifelong learning and shaping source material that is both internationally relevant and locally appropriate.

The challenge for policy makers and educators during the next moment in internet history is no longer about tracking early adopters but universal access intertwined with universal programmes for information literacy. Finland has taken the first step. On July 1, 2010, Finland became the first nation in the world to transform broadband access into a right of citizenship. The reason for such a decision is that broadband is no longer only an enabler of entertainment and leisure, but the basis of social justice and equality. The aspiration is to provide the entire population with a 100 megabit per second connection by 2015. Such a decision means that telecommunications companies must ensure all residents have access to broadband connections with a legally enforceable minimum speed. Suvi Linden, Finland's communication minister, confirmed to the BBC that, "We consider the role of the internet in Finns' everyday life. Internet services are no longer just for entertainment."[54] It is neither special nor an option extra. It is a public service.[55] Computers are simply terminals. Their usefulness is determined not only by the network into which it is connected, but the information literacy of the user. This decision by the Finnish government is one way to guarantee regional equality. In Finland's case, the great benefits are to both education and small to medium-sized businesses in regional areas.[56] It is also facilitates more isolated areas participating in trans-local and trans-national trade.

For large nations such as South Africa, Canada and Australia, such a universal service obligation must be the goal. It will require persistence and commitment. Australia has instigated waves of political strategies and visions for broadband rollouts by governmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations, businesses and charities. None has met expectations. At its most basic, these schemes have failed because it is not economically viable to connect many remote and regional areas of the nation. Simply because it is not economically viable, does that mean that the investment in infrastructure is not important? In Australia, the broadband blackspots are really broadband blackouts in northern and central Australia. While the regional differentiation in African nations is more difficult to determine because of the proliferation of mobile telephony,[57] Kholadi Tlabela, Joan Roodt and Andrew Paterson's important Mapping ICT Access in South Africa demonstrates the value of this developmental objective in implementing national ICT infrastructure. This is the goal of the Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa.[58] The USAASA recognizes the necessity, both socially and economically, of this scheme and has instigated a suite of indicators to and for access that offer a global template. Their indicators of ICT access and rollout are configured in four tiers.

> Access to telecommunications, computers and the internet in a household.
> Access to public telecommunication service centres
> Access to telecommunications services in areas seen as under-serviced
> Support for under-serviced areas with regard to telecommunications[59]

Most significantly, Tlabela, Roodt and Paterson created an integrated modeling for information management, stating that,

> many of the information-management skills that are particularly necessary in a digital environment can be learned using books and other sources of printed matter.[60]

This is a crucial and far-reaching realization. As explored in the first part of this article, attention to vocabulary disciplinary knowledge and understanding the impact of refereeing are skills to be learnt in printed and analogue environments and can be transferred online. This argument is verified by Bill Cope and Mary Kalantzis's discussion of the movement through on and offline texts.

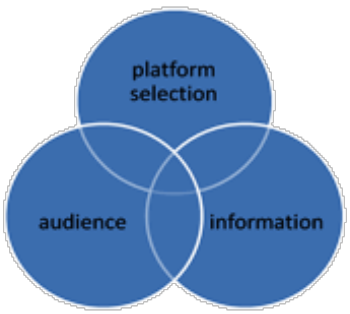
> The idea that books are linear and the Internet is multilateral is based on the assumption that readers of books necessarily read in a linear way. In fact, the devices of contents, indexing and referencing were designed precisely for alternative lateral readings – hypertextual readings, if you like. And the idea that the book is a text with a neat beginning and a neat end – unlike the Internet, which is an endless, seamless web of cross-linkages – is to judge the book by its covers. A book does not begin and end at its covers, despite the deceptive appearances of its physical manifestation. It sits in a precise place in the world of other books, literally when shelved in a library, located in multiple ways by sophisticated subject cataloguing systems, and intertextual positioned by the apparatuses of attribution (referencing) and subject definition (contents and indexes).[61]

There is money to be made in celebrating and selling new media. However the costs of occasionally bizarre obsolescence practices have created a culture of waste. I call this 'the iPad effect.' Apple created an artificial wedge between the smartphone and the laptop, opening a market. The process is working so well that the purchasers of a product like the iPad then created a series of articles,[62] books,[63] blogs,[64] podcasts[65] and vodcasts[66] where consumers try to discover reasons why they bought it. This is information obesity. Instead, digital dieting commences by asking what do I want to achieve, rather than how I can use this hardware or software. Old media is not obsolescent, but provides the scaffolding into the current media environment. Put another way:

> Old media + New Media = Now Media.

Recognizing the benefits of digital dieting, spending more time in planning and developing information literacy and less money on software and hardware with no clear purpose will not only create efficiency and consciousness but a greater chance of addressing inequality.

Digital justice requires reflection, intervention, commitment and respect, asking how already existing media can be used to activate information literacy and media literacy. These are overlapping fields and literatures in the management of 'new media,' but the key distinction is that media literacy is particularly focused on platform selection, or the relationship between form and content, signifier and signified. Information literacy is propelled by not only the search for data, but by ensuring a scaffold is in place for evaluation and assessment. Digital justice necessitates the deployment of both subjects and strategies, adding the variable of understanding exactly who is – and could be – using media and information to improve their learning and lives.



To build digital justice necessitates clarity about the type of information to be expressed, which can then be shaped for the required audience. Only when specifying the information and audience can the best media platform be selected. Such a process activates a sociology of the web. There is a match between the audience for a particular platform, in terms of age, region and gender, and the target for the information. One study from Pingdom.com aggregated Google Ad Planner data to reveal the mean age of social networking users.

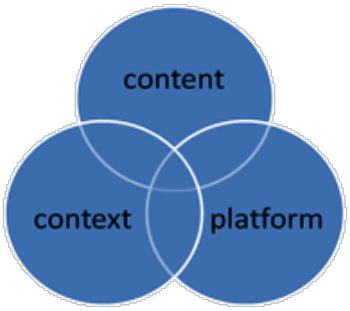
Estimated Average Age of Users on Social Networking Sites

Name of Site	Average Age of Users
Classmates.com	44.9
LinkedIn	44.3
Delicious	41.3
Slashdot	40.4
Twitter	39.1
Digg	38.5
Stumbled Upon	38.5
Facebook	38.4
FriendFeed	38.4
Ning	37.8
Reddit	37.4
LastFM	35.8
LiveJournal	35.2
Tagged	34.4
Hi5	33.5
Friendster	33.4
Xanga	32.3
MySpace	31.8
Bebo	28.4

Source: Pingdom.com, http://royal.pingdom.com/2010/02/16/study-ages-of-social-network-users/, February 16, 2010

Further, the average age of Second Life users is 32.[67] Assuming that 'the young people' are populating social networking sites is incorrect. Therefore the reason for schools and universities buying an island for the purposes of teaching and learning must be questioned,[68] unless attracting older students is the goal.

The imperative is therefore not the celebration of user generated content, but understanding a user's generative context.



Put another way, policy makers, librarians and teachers must configure a careful relationship between audience, context and goal. This goal can be selling a product or developing a learning outcome. However the greater clarity that can be deployed in determining detail, the more effective and trackable the results will be.

If such relationships become the first step in developing education, consumption, production and citizenship, then waste is reduced. If the investment continues to be in a platform rather than the literacy required to use it, then confusion will continue between tools and applications, information and knowledge. All technological decisions are tempered by the issue of relevance. The focus is on what can be used or produced, rather than the new or 'the next big thing.' Such a process requires the acknowledgement and recognition of information obesity/obsolescence and applying strategies for digital dieting. Together, these two moments of consciousness and intervention enable strategies for digital justice.

This process requires planning and commitment, rather than allowing a search engine or any hardware or software development to automate media choices. Without this intervention, the consequences of information obesity will be waste for some and starvation for others. Both states will be normalized as inevitable. The responsibility remains on teachers and librarians to claim a position of leadership in challenging inequalities and normalizing assumptions about progress, technology, learning and living.[69]

For example, these photographs were taken by one of my students during an autumnal day in Brighton. They feature books – or more precisely journals – in a skip outside the university library. I do not know what was more disturbing or interesting: that a university was binning books or that so many of my students stopped, pulled out their mobile phone or camera and took a photograph. They were aware of the dissonance, the wrongness of this image. They knew there were alternatives in this digital age to analogue waste. The jarring of an institution of knowledge – a place of learning – throwing publications in a bin stayed with many of my students and haunted them through their study.

From these photographs, I offer an argument to consider. The digital divide has been present through the internet, the web, e-commerce and the migration of public services online. The digital divide surfs other inequalities created through colonialism, ageism, class, regionality, gender and education. But in a Web 2.0 age, the consequences of the digital divide are greater than in the earlier moment of digital history. When libraries are threatened, information obesity must increase. To extend the metaphor, Gary Thompson stated that "the campus library should be the 'gymnasium for the mind.'"[70] Without a library, googling literacies become flabby. When scholars and citizens are intellectually extended by specialist search engines,[71] Open Access environments,[72] the Public Knowledge project[73] and experienced librarians,[74] then intellectual fitness is sustained.

The strength of the read-write web means that some communities and individuals have never had more platforms, media, opportunities to communicate and express themselves. Pippa Norris noted at the start of the 2000s, before the proliferation of the read-write web, that gains in productivity through the leaps in information technology increased the inequality between affluent nations and those still developing infrastructure, skills and literacies.[75] The most obvious examples of this productivity gap in the last ten years is not only the penetration of internet and broadband,[76] but plug in and play hardware[77] and Word Press, Drupal and simple content management systems to enable website building for those with little knowledge of html coding.[78]

For those who were excluded from web 1.0, the costs of being excluded from the read-write web are even greater. Not only because new devices are being created,[79] but because these new devices are being accompanied by a programme of destruction of analogue books, journals, sounds and visions.[80] There is a sleight of hand – a social amnesia – that ensures those heavily connected in the online environment simply forget about those without the technology, desire or capacity to participate in this participatory culture. This is not a question of access. This is not a question of broadband black spots, but literacy black spots. For example, Clay Shirky's book title is instructive: Here comes every-body: the power of organizing without organizations. The issue is: who is part of Shirky's 'every-body?'[81] Starting the book with the 'movement' that emerged to return a stolen mobile phone that had been lost in the back of a New York City cab,[82] the argument focuses on the 'sharing' rather than the doing. Absent in his critique of "traditional managerial oversight"[83] is traditional colonial relationships. While focusing on how information flows through hierarchies, the presence of colonialism as a powerful and present hierarchy remains invisible in his analysis.

Even for those empowered by colonial history, Shirky's ladder of sharing, cooperation and collective action does not explain the concurrent hyper personal consumption, credit card debt and the credit crunch. If 'every-body' is a socially anarchist communitarian, why is so much of identity, work and leisure meshed with personal spending?

> We live in a culture where we are encouraged to shop, shop, shop, and buy, buy, buy. When we're in boom times, we flaunt our conspicuous consumption, free of guilt. When the economy is in the doldrums, we are still encouraged to keep the economy – and our credit cards – 'stimulated.' Every day I get at least 10 emails from online stores and boutiques announcing, 'SALE! SALE! SALE!" ... I was a kind of Shopping Borg, filling up any spare time I had with browsing and buying, until it began to constitute my major social activity.[84]

Not only is leisure facilitated and extended online, but it is also merged with consumerism. The assumptions about 'every-body' being online or everyone shopping are a misreading of social networks. The analogue blinkers – the blinkers to poverty – are damaging. By celebrating the online sharers, communities and networks, the difficult questions about the (mis)alignment of social communitarianism and individual consumerism remain unasked.

I remain inspired by students, citizens and scholars who – on a daily basis – do not choose the easy, automated and default option, but select the difficult, challenging and complex. Information obesity allows us to wallow in online gluttony. It is necessary to take action and be active in addressing digital justice. This is a living and exciting process. I have the privilege of teaching students from all over the world, including from many formerly colonized nations. These scholars are courageous, leaving what they know to become what they can be. One of my former MA students, Maggie Wouapi, in her dissertation, offered a corrective to the past and a pathway to the future.

> Through the history of feminism, too many white women have spoken on the behalf of women of colour. Podcasting provides an opportunity to change these power relationships and tell a different story. Enough. The time has come for Cameroonian women to hold a microphone. The time has come for Cameroonian women to speak into it. The time has come for Cameroonian women to be incorporated into iTunes.[85]

In finding research to assist and scaffold the next generation of the academy through their teaching and learning, I returned to one of the most inspirational researchers it has been my privilege to read. His words, views and writing are the foundation for my thoughts on identity, race, nation and media.

Eric Michaels is known for many research projects, but is best remembered for his studies of the Warlpiri community in central Australia.[86] In the 1980s, he investigated the role and function of television in Yuendumu, at the edge of the Tanami Desert. Michaels did not enact a conventional anthropological case study. Bringing forward the Canadian tradition of communications through Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan, he created a fresh and bright strategy for thinking about difference and justice. He attacked readers for lazy and compliant thinking, demanding that they revise assumptions about race, modernity and information. At its most basic, Michaels' scholarship questioned whether 'we' have a right to know. Decades before controversies about Facebook's privacy settings, he warned that there is no right to photograph. There is no right to record. There is no right to broadcast. Instead, the Warlpiri, and the rest of us, have the entitlement to hide our images, voices, views and ideas. He validated information restriction, arguing that profound lessons must be learned not only from first peoples, but also from the first information economy. The point of postcolonialism is not to impose modes of information on others, but to listen, learn and create more just ways of thinking about knowledge, information and the economy.

In the long term, the outstanding analysis from Pippa Norris that digitized infrastructure and architecture increases inequalities between developed and developing nations may be incorrect. Certainly, there is a temporary spurt of productivity that emerges from significant software and hardware innovations. But actually, there is a huge amount of waste and failures in hardware and software development: the iPad effect. This pattern repeats the history of the industrial revolution.[87] Britain, as the first industrial nation,[88] fuelled an empire, proliferated a language and became an engine for economic development. But the second industrial revolution in the 1880s and 1890s saw France, Germany and many other nations catch up to Britain's ascendancy.[89] They were able to select the processes that had proven to be successful. The first industrial nation had conducted research and development that subsequent manufacturers could apply.

Similarly, developing nations can use developed nations as a laboratory, to test the useful and disappointing technologies. The benefits of early adoption are reducing.[90] We are reaching an age, not of new media, but now media. Not of new technology, but useful technology. Not of access but literacy. Eric Michaels realized this pattern. The Walpiri waited until the urban white population tested out television, video and video cameras. They waited until the start up price for equipment reduced and the quality of domestic hardware improved. Then they commenced their media productions and television station without the burden of waste.

There is some colonial justice to be found in such a pattern. This is not an imposition of ideas, values and media from the empowered to disempowered. This is learning from the mistakes of the early adopters and ensuring an authentic alignment of community, culture, history and technology. In re-reading Michaels' research amid an online environment where there is a 'right' to edit, a 'right' to upload, a 'right' to tag, a 'right' to comment and a 'right' to abuse, Michaels' corrective that information should be controlled and restricted is powerful. In a Facebook age, such an argument is an intellectual car alarm reminding us to read rather than comment, listen rather than talk and think rather than upload. Michaels showed that difference should be respected, but it is also a font of learning for

the colonizing, the lazy and the self-entitled. The strategy to manage information obesity is not only digital dieting, but recognizing that digital justice is no longer an aspirational dream for early adopters, but integral to economic development and high quality learning throughout the world.

The phrase 'digital divide' created the expectation that a group of haves who – with philanthropy – would 'give' technology to the have-nots. However the pattern of development for information and communication technologies in Africa is revealing different patterns, strategies and successes. Florence Ebam Etta and Sheila Parvyn-Wamahiu's study of community telecentres[91] triggered Richard Fuch's statement that "Africa is now creating its own Information Society."[92] Schoolnet Africa South Africa[93] is a clear example of this tendency. The wider capacity of telecentres to integrate old and new media, with the goal of sharing information and communication, has created profound successes. This is not a question of developed and developing nations, or colonizers and colonized. As Michaels showed in the Warlpiri use of television in the 1980s, there is no singular path to progress and development. There is no specific configuration of modernity. There are mobilities and modernities. There are also internets and webs. The set pieces about digital democracy, participatory culture, social media social networking, the digital divide and citizen journalism are looking not only tired but naïve. As Jack Goldsmith and Tim Wu argue, "information does not, in fact, want to be free. It wants to be labeled, organized, and filtered so it can be discovered, cross-referenced, and consumed."[94]

The goal is to create knowledge dissemination that enables new and specific examples, models and modalities from African nations to move beyond the continent. The emergence and proliferation of open access, online refereed journals based in Africa are increasing. South Africa is the home of many of these journals, but other nations both contribute and share editorial duties. Fine examples include African Nebula,[95] based in Osun State University in Osogbo, Nigeria, Global Media Journal African Edition[96] from Stellenbosch University, the International NGO Journal,[97] the Pan African Medical Journal from Uganda,[98] the South African Journal of Information Management,[99] and the South African Journal of Education,[100] all show both rich content and quality scholarship. More research and publishing is required, based in Africa but disseminated throughout the world.

Besides these scholarly journals are emerging, sonic media is an area where Africa can lead the world. Because of the proliferation of not only radio in Africa, but also of high level auditory literacies, the capacity of podcasts for education and business will be an area for expansion. Podcasts have not reached their full potential in Europe, the Americas, Oceania or South East Asia. Yet the capacity to time and space shift sonic media, produced on accessible hardware and software, ensures that voices and views can be moved around the world in a way that suits both the producer and consumer. Maggie Wouapi showed in her research how podcasting can be a carrier of information about the web, scaffolding the movement of citizens to other platforms.[101] Podcasts, because of the size of the sonic files, can operate in and through existing infrastructure in regional and remote areas.[102]

Social inequality matters. We are entering the environment end-game in the war over resources. Digitization has not and will not create a web-housed agora creating global democracy.[103] As Siva Vaidhyanathan asked, "how did we get from 'liberty, equality, fraternity' to 'rip, mix, burn?'"[104] Digitization makes the hyper-connected feel like they are part of a democracy. Yet it also makes users politically deaf and blind, not aware of the voices and views that are not part of the conversation. The screen is a barrier, blocking consciousness of those who are not uploading and downloaded.[105] The disengaged remain disconnected and the disconnected disengaged. The digital divide creates a normalization of European and North American 'development' but such an ideology does not even function in Europe.[106] The infrastructural and information literacy gulf between Finland and Greece or Sweden and Spain shows the deception in this generalization.

By committing to digital justice rather than lamenting the digital divide, citizens of the world can avoid a global monoculture, celebrate, preserve and encourage local languages in and through ICTs and acknowledge how colonialism changed, shifted and warped the developmental structures of African nations. These legacies are linguistic, cultural, religious and educational. They are a reminder that the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are over. It is time to remove the electronic tags.

The Commitments to Move from The Digital Divide to Digital Justice

- All citizens hold the right to access high quality information.
- All citizens hold the right to be literate, including both information and media literacy.
- Open access materials are better materials.

- The postcolonial internet creates networks of dialogue, improvement, challenge and questioning about technological choices – rather than the imposition of media, ideas and attitudes – throughout the regions of the world.
- Educate do not discriminate.
- Ask do not answer.
- Listen do not talk.
- Think do not assume.
- What matters in San Francisco may not be of relevance to the rest of the world.
- Ensure that multiculturalism is a foundation of all research about the online environment.

A commitment to this checklist is a way to begin Gerard Goggin and Mark McLelland's goal in, "rethinking the internet as international."[107] They confirmed that it is important to recognize "a range of different histories and experiences,"[108] avoiding generalizations and studying difference rather than assume sameness.

This article commenced with a public phone box and Neil Postman's Technopoly. It seems appropriate to return to his inspirational words. He knew that simplistic enthusiasm for technological change creates unfounded assumptions that the efficiencies and productivities of new media will 'inevitably' spread throughout the world. That has not happened and without intervention will not. Indeed, Postman recognized the confusion between the simplicity of moving information through space and being about to build knowledge from it.

> The problem to be solved in the twenty-first century is not how to move information, not the engineering of information. We solved that problem long ago. The problem is how to transform information into knowledge, and how to transform knowledge into wisdom. If we can solve that problem, all the rest will take care of itself.[109]

Once we – as citizens of the world – can differentiate information on the basis of quality, value and relevance, then the enthusiasm for the new, shallow and banal will dissipate. The unproductive and simplistic confluence between online access and social justice means that those who are not online and 'participating' in Facebook updates, LinkedIn connections and uploading mobile phone footage to YouTube will remain invisible. The disengaged and disconnected are invisible. This is not democracy. This is colonialism with a hard drive.

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9. K. Moss, in M. Wardrop, "Nothing tastes as good as skinny feels," November 19, 2009, Daily Telegraph, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/celebritynews/6602430/Kate-Moss-Nothing-tastes-as-good-as-skinny-feels.html

10. B. Wansink, Mindless Eating: why we eat more than we think, (London: Hay, 2009), p. 1

11. Wansink confirms that, "if the candy dish sits on your desk, you consistently have to make that heroic decision whether you will resist the chocolate that has been giving you the eye all day. The easy solution is to lose the dish, move the dish, or replace the candy with something you personally don't like," ibid., p. 81

12. B. Wansink, Mindless Eating, http://www.mindlesseating.org/

13. In this discussion of bodily – rather than information – obesity, I do not wish to contribute to the pressures and oppressions confronted by those with a weight beyond the currently configured norm. I am applying a model of food control to information management. I want to log however the powerful critique of the weight

management 'industry' by Paul Campos of The obesity myth, (New York: Gotham Books, 2004)

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16. Jaron Lanier argued that, "Wikipedia provides search engines with a way to be lazy," You are not a gadget: a manifesto, (London: Penguin, 2010), p. 143

17. "Postcolonialism Bhabha Balibar Spivak,"http://www.google.c o.uk/search?q=postcolonialism+Bhabha+Balibar+Spivak&hl=en&rlz=1T4TSEH_en___GB360&sa=2

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22. Crix, "Why is the first image result of First Lady Michelle Obama in a Google image search a horribly racist caricature?" Google Web Search Help Forum, November 12, 2009 http://www.google.com/support/forum/p/Web%20Search/thread?tid=348c3e78fa6cd9e1&hl=en,

23. "Google apologizes over the racist image of Michelle Obama," Novinite.com, November 25, 2009, http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=110371

24. "EP Thompson" search in the Kindle Shop, http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Ddigital-text&field-keywords=E.P.+Thompson&fsc=-1&x=17&y=13

25. "Richard Florida" search in the Kindle Shop, http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Ddigital-text&field-keywords=Richard+Florida&ih=11_4_0_0_0_0_0_0_1.49_190&fsc=-1

26. Another key element of this argument is that the focus is on content creation rather than content understanding. Nicholas Carr stated that, "as user-generated content continues to be commercialized, it seems likely that the largest threat posed by social production won't be to big corporations but to individual professionals – to the journalists, editors, photographers, researchers, analysts, librarians, and other information workers who can be replaced by, as Horowitz put it, 'people not on the payroll,'" The Big Switch: rewiring the world, from Edison to Google, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2008), p. 142.

27. Eno, op. cit., p. xxiii

28. It is important to log the consequences of the Amazon effect: the more 'we' click, the more the type of information, goods and services we see is limited. Similarly, by 2007, the personalized search became the default for those with a gmail address and Google account. This personalization means that we keep finding people like ourselves and information that keeps us satisfied rather than challenged.

29. L. Behen, Using pop culture to teach information literacy: methods to engage a new generation, (Westport: Libraries Unlimited, 2006), p. 5

30. J. Lanier called this "contrarianism," with the goal of constructing "an alternative mental environment," You are not a gadget: a manifesto, (London: Penguin, 2010), p. 23

31. T. Brabazon, ""Where fans put Franz before the archduke," Times Higher Education, March 20, 2008, http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=401163

32. Behan confirmed that, "one unsuccessful research session breeds more Googling. When attempting new methods and slowing down to evaluate material results, students turn in frustration to what they know best and with what they are comfortable. Don't we all?" ibid., p. 7

33. Please refer to their study in collaboration with Queensland University of Technology and Pennsylvania State University, Different Engines, Different Results Web Searchers Not Always Finding What They're Looking for Online, April 2007, http://www.infospaceinc.com/onlineprod/Overlap-DifferentEnginesDifferentResults.pdf.

34. This site also includes free tutorials on information literacy.

35. The role of librarians in this process is crucial. As John Budd confirmed, "among the numerous concerns related to librarianship is the goal of informing people, of providing shape and form to their thoughts and questions," Self-examination: the present and future of librarianship, (Westport: Beta Phi Mu Monographic Series, 2008), Kindle edition, locations 38-42

36. D. Kellner, "Globalization, technopolitics and revolution," Theoria, December 2001, p. 18

37. Eno, op. cit., p. xxvii

38. A.W. Bates, in reviewing the successes of the Open University, showed the importance of media choice

and selection in distance education, including the history of audio cassettes for OU courses. He stated that, "Audio cassettes are low costs; all students already have facilities at home; they are easy for academics to produce, and cheap and simple to distribute; students find them convenient to use; and, when designed properly, they encourage student activity. (UK OU audio-cassettes are rarely lectures)," Bates, "Technology for distance education: A 10-year perspective," in A. Tait, (ed.) Key issues in open learning – a reader: An anthology from the journal 'Open learning' 1986-1992, (Harlow: Longman, 1993), p. 242. The Open University chose audio cassettes because they were low cost, accessible, able to be produced by academics without intervention from technicians, and convenient to use. In terms of educational design, lectures were noted as inappropriate in developing effective sound-based OU educational strategies.

39. Please refer to T. Brabazon, "Socrates in earpods: the ipodification of education," Fast Capitalism, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2006, http://www.uta.edu/huma/agger/fastcapitalism/2_1/brabazon.htm

40. My valuing of sonic media in education here extends beyond Stephen Abram and Judy Luther who argued, "many of us in the information profession are great text-based learners. For most of the rest of the world, reading is not a primary learning behaviour," from "Born with the chip," Library Journal, May 1, 2004, p. 36

41. An example of this reflexive work is G. Kress, Literacy in the New Media Age, (London: Routledge, 2003). Kress asks how - in the era of multimodality - the forms and functions of writing transform. Will this multimodal screen culture transform – and return - writing into a transcription of speech or become more iconographic?

42. This meta-function of the search was brilliantly explored in Sharon Markless (ed.), The innovative school librarian: thinking outside the box, (London: Facet, 2009)

43. Robin Mason and Frank Rennie stressed the importance of "selecting the media palette," from E-learning and social networking handbook: resources for higher education, (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 43

44. A fascinating study of distance education course for teachers in rural areas in South Africa – based on a study of programmes from the University of Pretoria, is Jill Fresen and Johan Hendrikz, "Designing to Promote Access, Quality, and Student Support in an Advanced Certificate Programme for Rural Teachers in South Africa," Vol. 10, No. 4, 2009, http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/631/1322

45. These five modes of education technology are based on D. Kember, Reconsidering open & distance learning in the developing world: meeting students' learning needs, (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 124

46. I wanted to note some of the troubling anti-modern(ist) tendencies of writers about social media. For example, Clay Shirky stated that, "our social tools are not an improvement to modern society; they are a challenge to it," op. cit., p. 107

47. A. Sen, "How to judge globalism," from F. Lechner and J. Boli (eds.), The Globalization Reader, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), p. 18

48. ibid., p. 20

49. I follow Kember's determination of the difference between developed and developing nations, because it is dynamic: "I will interpret a developed country as one which has levels of participation in higher education close to half of an age-group and has therefore achieved mass higher education. Developing countries are those which have not," op. cit., p. 61

50. I note Emlyn Hagen's study, The digital divide in Africa: cross-sectional time series analysis of the African Digital Divide factors, (Saarbrucken: VDM Verlag, 2007). In this short book, he notes that "half of the world's population has never made or received a phone call and (perhaps the same) half of the world's population lives on less than $2 a day. If this is not just a statistical coincidence, is there causality between the lack of telecommunication and poverty?" p. ii. However through his study he realized that there are some statistical coincidences in such a statement with mobile telephony being the agent of change. However the slow transformation in the period from the early 1990s through to the early 2000s, the period of movement between web 1.0 and web 2.0, has had an impact in Sub Saharan Africa in particular. Although forming 11% of the world's population, this group only held 0.9% of the global telephone lines in the early 1990s. By 2002, it had lifted to 1.5%, p. 5.

51. One Laptop Per Child Australia, www.olpc.org.au

52. "About OLPC," www.olpc.org.au/vision/about

53. G. van Rossum, EeeUser forum, http://forum.eeeuser.com/viewtopic.php?id=56874, May 14, 2008

54. "Finland makes broadband a 'legal right'," BBC News, July 1, 2010, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10461048

55. The ubiquity of information technology as a service or utility is the basis of arguments in Nicholas Carr, The Big Switch: rewiring the world, from Edison to Google, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2008), pp. 2-17.

56. Suvi Linden referred to it as a "one of the governments most significant triumphs in regional policy," in Tracie McDaniel, "Finland makes broadband a legal right for every citizen," Daily Tech, July 1, 2010 http://www.dailytech.com/Finland+Makes+Broadband+a+Legal+Right+for+Every+Citizen/article18910.htm.

57. One proxy to track this differentiation is through the percentage of households with access to landlines, with the Western Cape being the highest and Limpopo being the lowest. Please refer to K. Tlabela, J. Roodt and A. Paterson (with G. Weir-Smith), Mapping ICT access in South Africa, (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2007), p. 9.

58. Universal Service and Access Agency of South Africa, http://www.usa.org.za/

59. ibid., p. 6.

60. Tlabela, Roodt and Paterson, op. cit., p. 124

61. B. Cope and Mary Kalantzis, "New Media, New Learning," in D. Cole and D. Pullen, Multiliteracies in motion: current theory and practice, (New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 89

62. T. Brabazon, "iPad and the academy," Times Higher Education, July 14, 2010, http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=412505

63. J.D. Biersdorfer, iPad: The Missing Manual, (O'Reilly Media, 2010)

64. "Just another iPad blog," http://justanotheripadblog.com/

65. "The iPad possibilities," iTunes, http://itunes.apple.com/gb/podcast/the-ipad-possibilities-podcast/id354085981

66. "Daily App Shows," iTunes, http://itunes.apple.com/gb/podcast/dailyappshow-ipad-edition/id366674023

67. T. Walsh," Second Life stats expanded," Clickable Culture, March 7. 2007, http://www.secretlair.com/index.php?/clickableculture/entry/second_life_stats_expanded_early_2006/

68. "Second Life Universities and Private Islands," Simteach.com, http://www.simteach.com/wiki/index.php?title=Second_Life:_Universities_and_Private_Islands

69. Gretchen Schwarz deals with this professional development issue through media literacy. She states, "today's teachers deal with diversity at every level. Many seem unprepared. Media literacy incorporated into teacher education and professional development may benefit teachers by helping them understand the 'other,' by helping them challenge media notions about gender, race, class, etc.; by introducing them to alternative pedagogies; and by offering them resources and techniques to empower their own students ... media literacy integrated into teacher education and development may specifically offer a means of improving teaching for diversity," from Media literacy prepares teachers for diversity," Academic Exchange, Spring 2004, p. 224

70. G. Thompson, "Information literacy accreditation mandates: what they mean for faculty and librarians," Library Trends, Vol. 51, No. 2, Fall 2002, p. 229

71. Infomine, http://infomine.ucr.edu/

72. Directory of Open Access Journals, http://www.doaj.org/ and Open J-Gate, http://www.openj-gate.com/Search/QuickSearch.aspx

73. Public Knowledge Project, http://pkp.sfu.ca/

74. LION, http://liontv.blip.tv/

75. P. Norris, Digital divide: civic engagement, information poverty and the internet worldwide, (New York: Cambridge university Press, 2001), p. 5

76. Internet World Statistics, 2010, http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm. The impact of fibre bandwidth by submarine cables in Africa through 2009 and 2010 is discussed in the Africa, Internet Broadband and Digital Media Statistics Tables, May 2010, https://www.budde.com.au/Research/Africa-Internet-Broadband-and-Digital-Media-Statistics-tables-only.html?r=51

77. R. Michelle Green published a fascinating study of users and resisters in "Unpacking "I don't want it" — Why novices and non–users don't use the Internet," First Monday, Vol. 11, No. 9, September 2006, http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue11_9/green/index.html. Green confirmed that already existing users were able to deploy the enhancements of the online environment that actually made it easier to use.

78. G. Berger, "From "now" to "next" in African newsroom's use of ICT: the case of Nika", paper delivered at the SPI-KAF conference, Kampala, 22 May 2008, http://guyberger.ru.ac.za/fulltext/now%20to%20next.doc.

79. Jaron Lanier recommended care and caution in the selection of both new platforms and new ideas. He stated, "some of the so-called we 2.0 ideas are stinkers, so we ought to reject them while we still can," You are not a gadget: a manifesto, (London: Penguin, 2010), p. 3

80. John Berry confirmed that there is never an easy transition between the old to new. There is a necessity to create a continuous learning environment. However his question remained how to manage such a transition through an environment of budget cuts, from "Arizona's new model," Library Journal, November 1, 2002, pp. 40-42

81. C. Shirky, Here comes every-body: the power of organizing without organizations, (London: Penguin, 2008)

82. ibid., p. 1-10

83. ibid., p. 39

84. P. Christmass, "Confessions of a shopaholic," West Weekend, July 31, 2010, p. 21

85. M. Wouapi, The subaltern can podcast: is podcasting the future of radio in Cameroon?, MA Creative Media thesis, University of Brighton, 2010, p. 33

86. Many of these studies are included in E. Michaels, Bad Aboriginal Art: Tradition, media and technological horizons, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994)

87. Leslie Sklair stated that "the main difference between the First World of advanced industrial societies and the Third World of less developed societies commonly revolves around the issues of the level of industrialization and its consequences," from Globalization: Capitalism and its alternatives, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 12

88. P. Mathias, The first industrial nation, (London: Methuen, 1969)

89. W.O. Henderson, The Industrial Revolution on the Continent: Germany, France, Russia 1800-1914, (Quadrangle Books, 1961)

90. G. Gimenez, "Investment in new technology: Modelling the decision process," Technovation, Vol. 26, No. 3, March 2006, Pages 345-350.

91. F. Ebam Etta and S. Parvyn-Wamahiu (eds.), Information and communication technologies for development in Africa Volume 2: The experience with community telecentres, (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 2003)

92. R. Fuchs, "Preface," ibid., p. xiv.

93. SchoolNet South Africa, http://www.schoolnet.org.za/

94. J. Goldsmith and T. Wu, Who controls the internet: illusions of a borderless world, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 51

95. African Nebula, http://www.nobleworld.biz/africannebula.html

96. Journal Media Journal Africa Edition, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2010, http://sun025.sun.ac.za/portal/page/portal/Arts/Departemente1/Joernalistiek/Global%20Media%20Journal/Global%20Media%20Journal%20-%20Home

97. International NGO Journal, http://www.academicjournals.org/INGOJ/index.htm

98. Pan African Media Journal, http://www.panafrican-med-journal.com/

99. South African Journal of Information Management, http://general.rau.ac.za/infosci/raujournal/

100. South African Journal of Education, http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_serial&pid=0256-0100&lng=en&nrm=iso

101. To listen to her sonic notes on this project, please refer to "Tara Brabazon talks to Maggie Wouapi about her MA Creative Media Dissertation," http://www.archive.org/details/TaraBrabazonTalksToMaggieWouapiAboutHerMaCreativeMediaDissertation

"Tara Brabazon talks to Maggie Wouapi about the development of her Cameroon podcasting project," http://www.archive.org/details/TaraBrabazonTalksToMaggieWouapiAboutTheDevelopmentOfHerCameroon

"Tara Brabazon talks to Maggie Wouapi about the strengths and weaknesses of podcasting in Cameroon," http://www.archive.org/details/TaraBrabazonDiscussesWithMaggieWouapiTheStrengthsAndWeaknessesOf

"What is the role of the artefact in practice-led research?" http://www.archive.org/details/WhatIsTheRoleOfTheArtefactInPractice-ledResearch

"Tara Brabazon talks with Maggie Wouapi for her final MA Creative Media Podcast," http://www.archive.org/details/MaggieWouapiTheFinalMaCreativeMediaDissertationPodcast

102. "The sound of education," Internet Archive, 2010, http://www.archive.org/details/TheSoundOfEducation

103. Pippa Norris stated that, "the optimistic claims that the interactive capacities of digital technologies will facilitate a new era of direct democracy, characterized by widespread citizen deliberation in affairs of state, like a virtual Agora, while attractive as a normative ideal, is ultimately implausible in practice as soon as we understand who becomes involved in digital politics," op. cit., p. 18

104. S. Vaidhyanathan, The anarchist in the library, (New York: Basic, 2004), p. 15

105. M. Kent, "Digital Divide 2.0 and the Digital Subaltern," Nebula, Vol. 5, No. 4, 2008, http://www.nobleworld.biz/images/Kent3.pdf

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[107] G. Goggin and M. McLelland, "Internationalizing internet studies: beyond Anglophone paradigms," from G. Goggin and M. McLelland (eds.), Internationalizing internet studies: beyond Anglophone paradigms, (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 4.

108. ibid., p. 10

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Digital Reproducibility and the Culture Industry: Popular Music and the Adorno-Benjamin Debate

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Introduction

The correspondence between Theodor W. Adorno and Walter Benjamin – two central figures in the development of critical theory associated with the Frankfurt School – has been called "one of the most significant documents in the history of neo-Marxist literature" (Buck-Morss 1977: 139).[1] Adorno and Benjamin shared an instant intellectual kinship, and throughout his life Adorno was greatly influenced by Benjamin's method for tracing fragmentary elements into constellations of interconnected relationships (Jameson 1990; Jay 1984). But their correspondence also revealed significant disagreements, especially in an exchange of letters that expressed Adorno's negative responses Benjamin's essays on art, Kafka, Baudelaire and nineteenth century Paris (Adorno et al. 2007: 100-41).[2] A "debate" or "dispute" between Benjamin and Adorno has since been identified about everything from aesthetics and mass culture to dialectics and Disney (Arato and Gebhardt 1982; Buck-Morss 1977; Hansen 1993; Lunn 1982; Rosen 2004; Wolin 1982).

The ideas of Benjamin and Adorno occupy an increasingly central position in the academic fields of art, literature, media studies, musicology and philosophy (Benjamin 2005; Ferris 2004; Gibson and Rubin 2002; Gumbrecht and Marrinan 2003; Hansen 2011; Hanssen 2006; Hanssen and Benjamin 2002; Huhn 2004; Middleton 2006; Subotnik 1996). However, in another example of how the discipline's mainstream has failed to incorporate the insights of critical theory and cultural studies (Agger 2007), Benjamin and Adorno have made a smaller impact on sociology – including the sociology of culture and media sociology – although there have been important exceptions on the margins of the discipline (DeNora 2003; Witkin 2003). My argument is that Adorno and Benjamin's conflicting exchange over mass culture and technological reproducibility has extraordinary sociological implications for understanding contemporary media and the contradictions embedded within them. My specific focus will be the music industry and the consequences of digital technologies for the production, exchange, and consumption of music.

While the debate between Adorno and Benjamin spans a wide range of aesthetic, philosophical and political issues, I will focus on their divergent appraisals of the emergent mass culture or "culture industry" (Bronner 2002; Held 1980; Jay 1973; Kellner 1989). Influenced by the playwright Bertolt Brecht, Benjamin maintained that technologies of reproduction were closing the distance that traditionally separates people from culture while also enabling audiences to become involved as participants and producers. Adorno rebuked Benjamin for these optimistic assessments and countered by further developing his critique of popular music, arguing that standardization was an inevitable product of the commodification of music and that all forms of mass culture effectively pacified their viewing or listening audience; his aesthetic and political loyalties remained with the "serious" forms of music he sharply distinguished from popular music. Benjamin, on the other hand, sensed that the capitalist production of culture was inherently contradictory, as he supposed that media technologies based on reproducibility would allow people to appropriate, de-contextualize and re-contextualize cultural forms in ways that had initially been undertaken by the avant-garde.

The Forces and Relations of Production in Digital Media

I suggest that the debate between Adorno and Benjamin be reframed in Karl Marx's terms as a contradiction between the productive forces and the social relations of production. For Marx (1978), productive forces include all that give people the power to appropriate and transform nature through labor, especially technology and advancements in the labor process, while the relations of production refer to the ownership of these productive forces, the social organization of productions, and the relationships between classes. He theorized that there was a fundamental, internal contradiction in capitalism between the relations and forces of production, particularly because capitalists depend on technological innovation in competing with one another to maximize profit, and yet this technological dynamism also systemically creates periods of crisis and tends to undermine profitability in the long run.[3]

In their debate over mass culture, Benjamin tended to focus on the technical dimensions of reproducibility through media, while Adorno was more concerned with the relations of domination and control embedded in the culture industry. My argument is that the debate between the two theorists expresses an ongoing contradiction within the media and culture industry, a contradiction that has become more intense in the contemporary digital age. The point here is not to issue a verdict in the debate between Adorno and Benjamin, but rather to understand the debate between them as representing two sides of an ongoing dialectical contradiction. Since the mid-20th Century when Adorno and Benjamin were debating the consequences of emerging forms of mass media, the contradictions they identified have accelerated and intensified. On the one hand, the digitalization of media has multiplied the possibilities of reproducibility, threatened the system of private ownership through copyright and further eroded the distinctions between production and consumption among audiences. Meanwhile, the means of cultural production have been increasingly centralized in the hands of a small number of multinational firms, with these firms developing into conglomerates whose holdings across multiple forms of media have facilitated the further commercialization of culture.

In sum, while the productive forces of digital media create possibilities for socialization and democratization, the social relations of the global media conglomerates tend toward further privatization and centralization. My argument thus intersects with the one recently made by Christian Fuchs (2011) with regard to Google. Utilizing the same concepts of relations and forces of production from Marx, Fuchs writes:

> At the level of the technological productive forces, we see that Google advances socialization, the co-operative and common character of the online-productive forces: Google tools are available for free, Google Documents allows the collaborative creation of documents; GMail, Blogger, and Buzz enable social networking and communication, YouTube supports sharing videos, Google Scholar and Google Books help better access worldwide academic knowledge, etc. These are all applications that can give great benefits to humans.

This statement is especially applicable to the consequences of digitalization for music. These same productive forces have made it easier and cheaper for people create and exchange music, especially digital technologies that have enabled the free online exchange of music in spite of the recording industry's efforts to maintain private ownership. Here we confront the central contradiction between the development of digital productive forces and the capitalist social relations based on centralized corporate ownership. Fuchs summarizes the other side of this contradiction embedded in digital capitalism:

> But at the level of the relations of production, Google is a profit-oriented, advertising-financed moneymaking machine that turns users and their data into a commodity. And the result is large-scale surveillance and the immanent undermining of liberal democracy's intrinsic privacy value. Liberal democratic values thereby constitute their own limit and immanent critique.

Benjamin on Technological Reproducibility

Writing his now famous artwork essay[4] in 1936, Benjamin sought to understand the consequences of emerging media technologies for art and culture. In more traditional societies, authenticity and an "aura" had resided in the artwork's uniqueness and singularity in time and space. In modern society, technologies that facilitate the reproduction of images and text cause the erosion of this aura based on singularity, originality and authenticity. Benjamin (2008: 20) acknowledged that "the work of art has always been reproducible" through imitations and replicas, yet

maintained that "the technological reproduction of artworks is something new." The woodcut allowed graphic art to be mechanically reproduced for the first time during the Middle Ages, followed by printing and the reproduction of writing. The next stage evolved during the nineteenth century, first with the introduction of lithography, then with the advent of photography, and finally with the reproduction of sound at the end of the century. A reproducible work of art is dislodged from tradition and authenticity, thus dispelling the aura that derives from a unique presence in time and space. As Benjamin (2008: 22) put it:

> [W]hat withers in the age of technical reproducibility of the work of art is the latter's aura...It might be stated as a general formula that the technology of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the sphere of tradition. By replicating the work many times over, it substitutes a mass existence for a unique existence.

Benjamin expressed deep ambivalence about the erosion of aura when writing about Baudelaire (2006), and also in his essay on storytelling (1968), but in the artwork essay he welcomes it as nothing less than a revolutionary development. He begins by paraphrasing Marx's prophecy that capital would eventually create "conditions which would make it possible for capitalism to abolish itself" (Benjamin 2008: 19). Aura and authenticity had been connected to what Benjamin (2008: 24) called the "ritual function" of art, whereby the artwork was endowed with a kind of magical or religious power that conferred a sense of distance from its audience. This sacredness endured even once art was secularized, finding expression in Romanticism's call for l'art pour l'art (art for art's sake), but he also found that the Italian Futurists were creating a fascist form of aura with an aesthetic of political violence and war. In contrast, Benjamin hoped that reproducible media like film could close the distance from its audience and thereby facilitate a kind of critical scrutiny that is unthinkable when art is the revered object of ritual. In an oft-quoted passage, Benjamin (2008: 25) imagined that a new revolutionary culture was being born:

> [A]s soon as the criterion of authenticity ceases to be applied to artistic production, the whole social function of art is revolutionized. Instead of being founded on ritual, it is based on a different practice: politics.

Benjamin maintained that a more participatory culture in which audiences took a critical approach would replace the contemplative stance of individuals absorbed by sacred artworks. He cited daily newspapers as one example:

> For centuries it was in the nature of literature that a small number of writers confronted many thousands of readers. But this began to change toward the end of the past century...It began with the space set aside for 'letters to the editor' in the daily press. (Benjamin 2008: 33)

In this more participatory culture, "the distinction between author and public is about to lose its axiomatic character" (Benjamin 2008: 33-34). The model for Benjamin's vision of the merger between production and consumption in the age of technological reproducibility was provided by Bertolt Brecht's epic theatre, which sought to shock the audience by disrupting its taken-for-granted assumptions and involving them as collaborators in the performance. Benjamin's other key source of inspiration was the technique of montage practiced by French symbolists, Dadaism and the Surrealists, and Soviet constructivists. As reproducibility liberates objects and images from their original context of time and space, it becomes possible to recombine and juxtapose the leftover cultural fragments in ways that create new meanings while destroying traditional ones. Media technologies enable techniques of montage to spread beyond the art world:

> It has always been one of the primary tasks of art to create a demand whose full satisfaction has not yet come... Dadaism attempted to produce with the means of painting (or literature) the effects which the public today seeks in film. (Benjamin 2008: 38)

Benjamin (1978) had introduced his argument for the socialization of the means of cultural production in his 1934 address at the Institute for the Study of Fascism in Paris, titled "The Author as Producer." Focusing on literature, he began with the issue of "political tendency" in writing and emphasized the form of literary production over its content because "the bourgeois apparatus of production and publication can assimilate astonishing quantities of revolutionary themes, indeed, can propagate them without calling its own existence, and the existence of the class that owns it, seriously into question" (Benjamin 1978: 229). Revolutionary intellectuals – Benjamin specifically refers to writers and photographers – are in danger of having their work co-opted by the capitalist media, and therefore they must struggle to socialize the apparatus of production and break down its specialized division of labor. Here again, he refers to the example of Brecht's epic theatre:

> What matters, therefore, is the exemplary character of production, which is able first to induce other producers to produce, and second to put an improved apparatus at their disposal. And this apparatus is better the more consumers it is able to turn into producers—that is, readers or spectators into collaborators. (Benjamin 1978: 233)

Adorno on the Culture Industry

In a letter written to Benjamin in 1936, T.W. Adorno referred to the artwork essay as an "extraordinary study" but objected to "certain Brechtian motifs" he found there (Adorno et al. 2007: 120-21). Adorno accused Benjamin of harboring "the anarchistic romanticism of blind confidence in the spontaneous power of the proletariat in the historical process" (Adorno et al. 2007: 123). By this time he had begun to develop his notorious denunciations of popular music. In an essay published in 1932, "On the Social Situation of Music," Adorno (2002a: 425) disparaged "light music" because "as pure commodity, it is the most alien of all music to society; it no longer expresses anything of social misery and contradiction, but forms rather in itself one single contradiction to this society." In his letter to Benjamin, Adorno discussed his impending completion of an essay that summed up his infamous criticisms of jazz: "It arrives at a complete verdict on jazz, in particular by revealing its "progressive" elements (semblance of montage, collective work, primacy of reproduction over production) as facades of something that is in truth quite reactionary" (Adorno et al. 2007: 125).

Adorno then responded to Benjamin directly with a critique of popular music titled "On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening," published in 1938 after he had taken refuge in the United States from Nazi Germany. Here Adorno (2002b: 289) lamented the standardization of music resulting from its transformation into a commodity form: "everything is so completely identical that preference in fact depends merely on biographic details or on the situation in which things are heard." In the essay "On Popular Music," published in 1941, Adorno identified the problem with popular music as one of standardization, by which he meant that songs sounded the same but also that the individual parts within a song were interchangeable with each other. He thus focused on the capitalist imperatives to minimize the costs of production and eliminate risk, which in the realm of popular music meant that songs would be formulaically duplicated if they became commercial hits:

> As one particular song scored a great success, hundreds of others sprang up imitating the successful one. The most successful hits, types, and 'ratios' between elements were imitated, and the process culminated in the crystallization of standards. Under centralized conditions such as exist today, these standards have become 'frozen'.(Adorno 2002c: 443)

Adorno's view was that the oligarchy of the recording industry was responsible for the generic quality of popular music:

> Large-scale economic concentration institutionalized the standardization, and made it imperative. As a result, innovations by rugged individualists have been outlawed. The standard patterns have become invested with the immunity of bigness—'the King can do no wrong'. (Adorno 2002c: 443)

While economic concentration and the desire to minimize risk and production costs leads to formulaic types of popular music, Adorno believed that this standardization must be disguised, for otherwise there would be resentment from mass audiences. The music industry needs to maintain the illusion that its star performers have become successful on the basis of their own merits and that consumers have freely chosen to enjoy the songs that have been marketed to them. Adorno (2002c: 445) referred to this as "pseudo-individualization," which he defined as "endowing cultural mass production with the halo of free choice or open market on the basis of standardization itself." Pseudo-individualization could certainly be found in the creation of celebrity, but Adorno also heard it at work within individual songs, where superficial differences such as a song's "hook" and even the improvisational moments in jazz served to conceal the systematic standardization of popular music. Once the balance between standardization and pseudo-individualization is achieved, the process of advertising and promotion that Adorno called "plugging" is used to saturate the public with hype. This plugging is facilitated by the culture industry's control over the various organs of the media:

> Provided the material fulfills certain minimum requirements, any given song can be plugged and made a success, if there is adequate tie-up [sic] between publishing houses, name bands, radio and moving pictures'. (Adorno 2002: 447)

Adorno's condemnation of popular music shares some affinities with that of conservative critics of mass culture like Matthew Arnold. Adorno has been widely criticized for his elitism and what some have seen as his racist judgments about popular music, particularly his attacks on jazz (Huyssen 1983; Gendron 1986; Gracyk 1992; Wilcock 1996; Witkin 2000; see also Paddison 1982). But unlike Arnold, who feared that mass culture would lead to cultural and political anarchy, Adorno believed that the commodification of culture and music would facilitate what he called "social cement" to refer to conformity and the reproduction of capitalism by pacifying mass audiences. The only signs of resistance he could find were among those listeners, presumably like himself, who rejected popular music altogether:

> To dislike the song is no longer an expression of subjective taste but rather a rebellion against the wisdom of a public utility and a disagreement with the millions of people who are assumed to support what the agencies are giving them. Resistance is regarded as the mark of bad citizenship, as inability to have fun, as highbrow insincerity, for what normal person can set himself against such normal music? (Adorno 2002c: 464)

Nevertheless, Adorno never articulated why some listeners could resist the onslaught of popular music or how such refusals might translate into political action.

Reproducibility, The Recording Industry, and Popular Music

The dispute between Adorno and Benjamin arose less from an intrinsic incompatibility between their views than from their radically different points of departure, with Adorno singling out the commodified relations of the culture industry as Benjamin considered the consequences of new media. I will examine three dimensions of popular music that have developed historically through conflicts between the centralizing and standardizing processes of the culture industry and the democratizing consequences of technologies that effectively socialize the ownership of music. Table 1 is intended to be a guide for how the argument will unfold as I consider the historical conflicts that have shaped the field of popular music.

Examining the relations between capital and reproducible technologies in the recording industry, we first discover that the crisis of the digital age represents the most intense manifestation of an enduring history of conflict, for new technologies are just as often a threat as a boon to the profits and private ownership of the major labels. Next, we examine how these divergent forces have created a bifurcated field in which the hybrid forms of music created by a growing number of musicians on the margins of the industry contrasts with the major labels' increasing focus on a releasing a restricted number of standardized products geared toward short-term profit. Finally, the divergent perspectives represented by Adorno and Benjamin illuminate two ongoing forms of struggle among musicians, one in subcultures that try to remain independent from the major labels and mainstream audiences, the other among musical producers who blur the boundaries between production and consumption in ways that challenge private ownership.

Table 1. Capital, Technology, and Popular Music

	The Culture Industry, Relations of Production (Adorno)	Technological Reproducibility, Forces of Production (Benjamin)
Capital and technology in the recording industry	Centralization of capital; absorption of companies into conglomerates spanning multiple forms of media.	New media increase profit (7-inch and 12-inch vinyl, CDs) but also the threat of piracy (DAT, MP3)
The production of music	From centralized standardization (40-50s) to an "open system" (60s-90s) to conglomerate contraction	Access to technology enables greater participation in music scenes; production and consumption merge.
Resistance and social struggles over music	Anti-corporate forms of independent music; aesthetic of authenticity opposed to mainstream music.	Sampling and remix in hip hop and mash-ups; legal conflicts over private vs. common ownership of music

Capital and Technology in the Recording Industry

An examination of the political economy of media today reveals a continuing process of what Marx (1977: 777) identified as the "centralization of capital," for the vast majority of the media and entertainment produced for world consumption is owned by a shrinking number of multinational conglomerates (Bagdikian 2004; Croteau and Hoynes 2006; McChesney 1999). These larger processes of economic transformation have made a significant impact on all aspects of the music industry: record labels, radio, retail, and live performance. The recording industry, following a torrent of mergers and acquisitions, is presently dominated by the 'Big Four' – Universal, Sony, Warner and EMI – that sell over 80 percent of the music in the U.S. and over 70 percent worldwide.

The problems posed by digital reproducibility have affected all the media industries in various ways, but within the recording industry the crisis is especially pronounced and seemingly intractable. The illegal exchange of free music has continued to increase with the use of more decentralized servers that allow people to share and download MP3 files, despite the industry's successful lawsuits against Napster and other peer-to-peer online services. The recording industry has undertaken several attempts to stop what it calls "internet piracy," including some highly publicized lawsuits against file-sharing consumers, but these have not only been ineffective but further antagonized musicians and consumers. In the U.S., sales from recorded music have fallen by more than half from their peak level of $14.6 billion in 1999, at the dawn of the MP3 and Napster, to $6.9 billion in 2010.

The contradictions between technological reproducibility and the culture industry have reached new extremes in the digital era, but the history of popular music is rife with instances in which new technologies have both endangered and enriched the industry at different times. During the years that Adorno was developing his critique of the culture industry, recorded music in the United States was indeed the standardized product of an oligarchy in which a small number of firms and powerful interests dominated. In 1948, American radio broadcasting consisted of four national networks and their local affiliates, and four companies accounted for 81 percent of all the top-ten hit records (Peterson and Berger 1975: 160). However, during the first half of the twentieth century, recordings were not the primary commodities of the music industry, which was still based on live performance, songwriting and publishing, and selling sheet music. Sound had been recordable and reproducible since the nineteenth century, but records and phonographs were still too unwieldy and expensive for mass consumption.

Musical recordings began to increase in importance after World War II, as Columbia developed the 12 inch, 33 1/3 rpm vinyl record and RCA followed with the 7 inch, 45 rpm single. The major labels invested in the research to develop a more accessible medium for recorded music, but their unintended effect was to give the smaller, independent labels a chance to compete in the market for commercial pop, thereby decentralizing the industry. One key advantage of the 7 inch, 45 rpm record – the standard format for pop music until the mid-1960s – was that it was much less breakable than its larger counterparts, and therefore could be packaged, shipped, and distributed in mass quantities. Meanwhile, the number of local radio stations multiplied as the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) granted a backlog of licenses after the war, when the networks had their sights on the emerging medium of television. These smaller, independent stations were unable to provide the variety of programming offered by the networks, and so much of their airtime was devoted to playing records. This gave the independent record labels, particularly those specializing in rhythm and blues or country music, an unprecedented opportunity to get their music on the air at the growing number of stations that catered to specific tastes or regional styles (Gillett 1983; Peterson 1990).

The recording industry would be significantly decentralized by the end of the 1950s: whereas the largest four record companies had over 80 percent of the market for hit singles through the 1940s and still maintained 74 percent as late as 1955, by 1959 their portion of Top Ten records had declined to just 34 percent (Peterson and Berger 1975: 160). Over the next two decades, the recording industry enjoyed its time of greatest profitability, chiefly by selling rock music to the sizeable baby boom generation. The industry was re-centralized in the process, although now the major labels adopted a new strategy that dispersed creative control to subsidiaries and independently contracted producers (Lopes 1992; Dowd 2004). After a sales slump in the early 1960s, the recording industry reaped massive profits from the Beatles and the other groups associated with the British Invasion, followed by the folk rock and psychedelic groups centered in California, as rock music became the central medium of cultural expression among great numbers of young people. Beginning in the second half of the 1960s, the 33 1/3 rpm LP – mainly used for jazz, folk, and classical music whereas the 45 rpm, 7-inch was used for pop records – became the preferred medium of rock music, and a new format of 'album-oriented rock' emerged on FM radio stations distinguished from the AM stations dedicated to hit singles.

By 1974, the music business as a whole had become a $2 billion industry, which at that time was roughly equal to the revenues generated from professional sports and motion pictures combined (Chapple and Garofalo 1977: xi). The industry was also re-centralized in a flurry of mergers and conglomeration. In 1973, the largest four record companies were, for the first time in two decades, responsible for more than half of all Top Ten records (Peterson and Berger 1975: 160). As rock music became big business, the infrastructure of the industry also expanded to include talent agencies, managers, concert promoters, lawyers, journalists, and magazines like Rolling Stone. In short, by the mid-1970s, while the rest of American industry slumped, popular music had grown into a multi-billion dollar business, the recording industry had been recentralized by a small number of large companies utilizing a decentralized approach to production, and many people had discovered new ways to make money from various aspects of the music and its performance.

Despite their ability to regain control of the market while undergoing extraordinary growth, the recording industry continued to see technologies of reproducibility as a potential threat. The British Phonographic Industry even launched a campaign during the early 1980s using the slogan "Home Taping Is Killing Music." The development of digital technology in the form of the compact disc (CD) was initially the catalyst to a major period of growth from 1983-84 until the industry's peak sales year of 1999. Compact discs did not yet have the capacity to be recordable or rewritable, so the recording industry profited handsomely as consumers replaced their old record collections with compact discs and repackaged box sets. In the meantime, the recording industry squashed the development of the Digital Audio Tape (DAT) that would have allowed consumers to make perfect reproductions of music recorded from a CD. As Sony was poised to introduce their newest invention, the other major labels insisted that Sony manufacture DAT with copy protection technology in place or else they would refuse to license their label's music (Knopper 2009).

Although Digital Audio Tape was squashed, advances in digital technology still made it possible to copy data from personal computers to recordable CDs. The most threatening form of reproducibility to confront the recording industry has proven to be the compression of audio content into an MP3 file. People began exchanging MP3 files through the internet in the late 1990s, with Napster eventually emerging as the most popular site for the free exchange of music. Napster would be sued, first by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), then by the band Metallica and the rapper Dr. Dre in 2000, and found guilty of violating the recently passed US Digital Millennium Copyright Act. Meanwhile, the RIAA also launched a highly publicized campaign of lawsuits against thousands of individual consumers who were sued for $750 per illegally downloaded song. Napster was effectively shut down by the recording industry, but the free exchange of music has continued online with new sites that were developed utilizing more decentralized methods of file sharing.

The RIAA estimates that only about one-third of the music acquired by U.S. consumers in 2009 was paid for, and while the extent of online piracy is impossible to know with any certainty, it claims that American internet users download somewhere between $7 billion and $20 billion worth of digitally pirated music every year (http://www.riaa.com/physicalpiracy.php?content_selector=piracy-online-scope-of-the-problem). A key reason for the industry's woes is the public's low regard for the music business. The highly publicized Napster case created a backlash against the major labels and the wealthy musicians who filed suit, and the RIAA suits against consumers – for example, a 12 year old living in a public housing project named Brianna LaHara made the cover of the New York Post in 2003 after the RIAA sued her mother, eventually settling out of court for $2,000 – only served to further increase the public animosity. The RIAA's anti-piracy campaign appeals to the notion that consumers "support the artist" when they legally purchase their music, but the exploitation of musicians by record companies is well known (see Albini 1997). As one industry insider summed it up, "The average kid thinks, I'm not stealing from the bands; I'm stealing from the record companies, and the bands say the record companies steal from them already. They could care less" (Sheff and Tennenbaum 2007: 342). Established artists like Prince, Nine Inch Nails, and Radiohead have released musical recordings independently of any record company by simply allowing them to be downloaded from their websites. Radiohead took an innovative step with the release of In Rainbows in 2007 in the form of an "electronic tip jar" that allowed people downloading the album to decide how much or how little they wanted to pay for it. In bypassing record companies altogether, the members of Radiohead claim that they made more money from In Rainbows than all their other best-selling albums combined (Kot 2009: 236).

The Production of Music

The dialectic between centralization and reproducibility constructs a field of popular music that is shaped

something like a pyramid, with standardization at the highest levels of the industry's mass marketed pop in contrast to diversification and hybridization in the lower regions where music is created within local scenes or specialized niche genres. As Adorno foresaw, the most commercially successful and popular forms of music have tended toward standardization because the recording industry, like the culture industry as a whole, seeks to maximize profit and minimize risk. In the years prior to rock & roll's breakthrough in 1955-56, the centralized dominance of the recording industry by an oligopoly of four companies resulted in relatively homogenous forms of popular music: most of the hit records were performed by established or fading stars, hit records tended to stay at the top of the charts for longer periods of time, and a larger numbers of hits were cover versions of previously recorded songs (Peterson and Berger 1975: 161). The majors were initially antagonistic in their response to rock & roll as it emerged in 1955-56, largely because of the controversy surrounding the music's sexual connotations and association with black culture, but also because many within the industry dismissed it was a passing fad. The major labels purchased the contracts of some of the most successful white musicians, or in other instances paid socially acceptable artists to record compromised and sanitized versions of songs that had been originally performed by rock & roll musicians.

The music industry's greatest period of accumulation spanned from the mid-1960s through the late 1970s – in terms of musical trends, from Beatlemania through the last days of disco. Especially in the early years of 1967-68, relations between countercultural musicians and representatives from the recording industry revealed deep conflicts of cultural ideals about music and commerce. For example, in late 1967 an executive at Warner Bros. Records dashed off an enraged letter to the management of the Grateful Dead as the band was recording its experimental sophomore album, Anthem of the Sun: "this is the most unreasonable project with which we have ever involved ourselves… You are now branded as the most undesirable group in almost every recording studio in Los Angeles" (http://www.lettersofnote.com/2011/02/grateful-dead-has-many-problems.html). Before long, however, the majors would discover that they could capitalize on the burgeoning youth culture more effectively if they utilized semi-autonomous subsidiary labels run by younger people with a more organic connection to the music. By the 1970s, rock had become the highest selling form of popular music for an expanding market of baby boomers, and the music had splintered into more specialized genres (country rock, heavy metal, singer-songwriters, southern rock, progressive art rock) that could be marketed to particular taste groups shaped by various social differences. But while the musical spin-offs became more numerous, the sounds and styles of what has been consecrated as "classic rock" solidified during these years into a general standard of musical, visual and discursive elements.

The punk explosion of 1976-77 presented a challenge to the solidifying rock music establishment, exposing and ridiculing its conventions through a negative example of short songs, short hair, and bleak attitudes. Punks attacked mainstream rock music for functioning as what Adorno had called "social cement": relinquishing the voice of dissent it developed during the 1960s, rock music had become complacent, both aesthetically and politically, in the process of attaining commercial success within the culture industry. Much of punk's provocation was generated by the appropriation and juxtaposition of seemingly incongruous signs – from safety pins to swastikas – in ways that Benjamin and Brecht termed a "shock effect" that disorients the naturalized uses and meanings of cultural constructions (Grossberg 1986; Heddige 1979; Marcus 1989; Savage 1993). Punk subculture formed an alternative network of independent media through a "do-it-yourself" (DIY) ethic, which maintained that people should not be content with being consumers and spectators but instead could become active participants in producing a subterranean network of independent labels, college radio stations, and self-published fanzines. Seizing the means of communication to show that anyone could make music or publish a fanzine, punks were trying to demystify what Benjamin might have seen as the "aura" that surrounded rock music once it became a big business characterized by musical virtuosity, spectacular performance and larger-than-life celebrities.

The fusion of production and consumption was also fostered in the practices of sampling and turntable scratching, which were essential elements in the evolution of rap and hip hop from the late 1970s through the 1980s. Both developed initially from DJs who played records at parties, not in the intended manner but instead by isolating the "break beats" in any given song where the rhythm section evolves into an especially funky groove. (Chang 2005; Potter 1995; Rose 1994; Schloss 2004; also see Forman and Neal 2004) The advent of digital samplers, which hip hop producers began utilizing in the second half of the 1980s, enabled the DJ to move beyond the turntables to loop and remix snippets of sound into a recycled musical pastiche. Sampling fulfills Benjamin's prophesy that technological reproducibility would enable montage – the practice in which cultural fragments are appropriated, juxtaposed, and reassembled in ways that create new meanings – to be extended beyond the modernist avant-garde into mass media and mass culture (Goodwin 1988; Schumacher 2004).

The divergent processes of corporate concentration and digital reproducibility have shaped the music world into a commercial pyramid with standardized pop at the summit and a proliferating number of musical styles and hybrids subsisting in local scenes and cyberspace. Following the mergers of the 1990s, labels began slashing the size of their rosters to focus on a smaller number of more commercially dependable pop acts. The "open system" that developed with the ascendancy of the record industry in the late 1960s and early 1970s began to tighten and narrow through global conglomeration in the late 1990s; a large number of "alternative" performers who had been signed in the early part of the decade were dropped by their labels during this time (Knopper 2009; Kot 2009; Park 2007). As one former music industry executive put it: "Corporations want irrational growth, but the music business has historically worked on long-term artist development. Now there is an incredible lack of patience for developing artists. Where you program for your parent company's immediate gratification, you sign stuff that's easy to digest, not what you consider brilliant" (Sheff and Tannenbaum, 2007: 339). Likewise, after their acquisition of radio stations in every region of the U.S., Clear Channel narrowed its playlists, censored "controversial" performers, and eliminated the diversity of local media in favor of homogenous programming (Klinenberg 2007).

Meanwhile, the opportunities for ordinary people to create, record and distribute music have continued to increase with each new development of technological reproducibility and the exponential growth of independent media outlets. Computer software and digital technologies have made it cheaper and more convenient for musicians to do the work of recording and mixing that once could have only been done in a studio, while the internet provides innumerable outlets for distribution, promotion, and networking with audiences. By 2008, over 5 million bands had created MySpace pages that allow musicians to upload their songs, post tour dates, and communicate with fans (Kot 2009: 213). The increasingly unnecessary role of the major labels was especially evident in 2010, when the group Arcade Fire released The Suburbs, an album that debuted at the number one position on the charts in America, Britain, Canada, and Ireland despite being released on the independent Merge Records from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, a label that has been owned and operated since 1989 by two musicians from the local indie rock scene. Following the release of The Suburbs, Arcade Fire played a concert at Madison Square Garden that sold out in just a few hours and was streamed live to an estimated 1.8 million viewers, and then at the 2011 Grammys they became the first independent recording group to receive the award for Album of the Year, winning out over Eminem, Katy Perry and Lady Gaga.

Resistance and Social Struggles over Music

Finally, Adorno and Benjamin and their corresponding emphasis on the culture industry and technological reproducibility illuminate two different sources of conflict between musicians and the industry. Adorno's elitist defense of "serious" music and dismissal of the popular is often criticized in the academic world, but his kind of opposition between commercialism and quality music is commonly upheld and espoused within local scenes and subcultures. The DIY network of independent media that have supported various underground scenes since the late 1970s was constructed in opposition to the major labels, which are perceived as a homogenizing and standardizing force in music, driven by the profit motive to exploit their musicians and consumers without regard for the quality of the music (Azerrad 2002; Hesmondhalgh 1997; Moore 2007; Thompson 2004). So-called "indie rock" has developed into a cultural milieu akin to what Pierre Bourdieu (1993, 1996) termed a field of cultural production where economic capital and symbolic capital are diametrically opposed, as was the case in the literary world of nineteenth century Paris analyzed by Bourdieu. In the artistic field, symbolic capital accrues for artists who appear disinterested in commercial success by taking an approach of "art for art's sake," while conversely those who take a mercenary approach to artistic production, or those who achieve mass popularity or the consecration of official powers, are symbolically devalued because their art is suspected of compromise. Similarly, in the music field, the commercially successful are often discredited or accused of "selling out," while many less popular musicians have accumulated symbolic capital through their eccentric creations conceived on the margins of the recording industry.

If Adorno's perspective prompts a search for commercial independence and creative autonomy from the culture industry, Benjamin's encourages an investigation of contradictions within the dynamic between media and capital that present opportunities for subversion. Discarding the fetish for originality, Benjamin directs our attention to the social conflicts facilitated by reproducibility, suggesting that digitalization facilitates the erosion of distinctions between production and consumption in the development of a participatory culture. In short, if Adorno's critique anticipates the anti-corporate aesthetic of indie rock, then Benjamin's summons the DJ engaged in sampling and remixing within contemporary hip hop and electronic music.

Like file sharing, sampling poses a threat to notions of authorship and the private ownership of music, and so the record companies and other established interests in the music industry have subjected it to a number of legal challenges over questions of copyright and fair use (Schumacher 2004). In 1991, the rapper Biz Markie and his record company, Warner Bros., were successfully sued for the use of an unauthorized sample. For many years, the precedent in this ruling would stifle much of the creative energy that had been developing around the practice of sampling in hip hop music. After the decision against Warner Bros., any record company releasing a rap album would be compelled to clear all samples with their publishers, and in most cases the fees were prohibitively expensive. Many rap and hip hop producers began using live instruments and limited the number of samples they used in response to the ruling, as it would no longer be legal to record a densely sampled album like those from the late 1980s. However, a subculture of DJs continued making sample-based hip hop by avoiding samples from popular songs in favor of "digging in the crates" for rare records that might be found in the bulk storage of record stores or at thrift shops, garage sales, or flea markets (Schloss 2004). In 1996, DJ Shadow released his debut album, Entroducing…, that was composed entirely of samples – most of them culled from obscure sources discovered in a massive archive at a record store in Sacramento, pictured on the album's cover with two DJs digging for records – that is widely acclaimed as a pioneering work in the development of sample-based, instrumental hip hop.

The legal conflicts over copyright and the use of digital technologies of reproduction escalated during the initial years of the twenty-first century. Across all forms of popular culture, the evolution of digital technology has enabled the creation of an infinite variety of media collages. Musical "mash-ups" featuring popular songs by well-known artists began to circulate in bootleg form, with some DJs investing creative energies into their mash-ups and remixes in the way others had done with sampling or turntable scratching. Because of both its musical and its legal significance, the crucial event for the evolution of mash-ups was the 2004 release of Danger Mouse's The Grey Album, which skillfully mixes an a cappella version of Jay-Z's The Black Album with the Beatles' self-titled double record commonly known as The White Album. After The Grey Album was released, EMI, the owner of the publishing rights to the Beatles' music, sent cease-and-desist letters in an attempt to halt distribution and have existing copies of the record destroyed. But EMI's reaction backfired and sparked a counterattack of its own, as more than 150 websites engaged in electronic civil disobedience by making The Grey Album available for a day that organizers called "Grey Tuesday" on which more than 100,000 copies of the album were downloaded illegally.

Conclusions

From a contemporary perspective, the opposing viewpoints of Adorno and Benjamin about what used to be called "mass culture" appear less like incompatible positions in a debate than complementary illuminations of an enduring and fundamental contradiction between media of reproducibility and the private ownership of capital. In fact, Benjamin suggested that there was a dialectical harmony between their perspectives in a letter that expressed his reactions to Adorno's criticisms of his "Work of Art" essay: "I tried to articulate positive moments as clearly as you managed to articulate negative ones. Consequently, I see strengths in your study at points where mine was weak" (Adorno et al. 2007: 140). The root of the conflict between capitalism and reproducibility is the contradiction originally identified by Marx between the socialization of the productive forces through technological development and the centralization of ownership in the social relations of capital. Indeed, Adorno (2002d: 279) also approximated Benjamin's thinking when writing about the technologies of sonic reproduction independently of their ownership by the culture industry, particularly in an essay on phonographs where he expressed hopes that the creative spirit of music could still be communicated to a wider audience in a recorded medium: "There is no doubt that, as music is removed by the phonograph record from the realm of live production and from the imperative of artistic activity and becomes petrified, it absorbs into itself, in this process of petrification, the very life that would otherwise vanish… Therein may lie the phonograph's record most profound justification, which cannot be impugned by an aesthetic objection to its reification" (also see Levin 1990).

Viewed from an aesthetic standpoint, the Adorno-Benjamin debate is an entrée to a host of issues regarding cultural forms ranging from literature to music, particularly the enduring conflicts over authenticity, modernism, artistic subjectivity, the role of the avant-garde, and the opportunities, or lack thereof, for artists to intervene in wider political struggles. It is little wonder, then, that these two thinkers both occupy an increasingly prominent position in the theoretical braches of the arts and humanities. From a sociological standpoint, however, we can identify another

side of the intellectual clash between Adorno and Benjamin, one that appears less like a debate between individual theorists than two trajectories of social thought which correspond to diverging aspects of the media and popular culture. If there was a dispute between them, I have suggested, it is because their ideas express a fundamental contradiction between the socializing consequences of productive forces based on reproducibility and the privatizing and centralizing processes stemming from the social relations of the culture industry.

Instead of being perceived as expressions of contradiction, the positions of Adorno and Benjamin have generally served as points of departure for two competing approaches to the study of media and popular culture. Adorno established a style of cultural criticism that centers on political economy, the social relationships of capital and labor, and the conformity of consumer culture, but one which also tends to make condescending assumptions about the duplicity of consumers and the seamless nature of capitalist control over popular culture. Benjamin, on the other hand, has become one of a number of patron saints within interdisciplinary cultural studies, where the activities of audiences and consumers are examined with an eye for the agency exercised in the ability to resist dominant meanings and reclaim cultural commodities to create original meanings. What I hope to have demonstrated by examining the case of popular music and the history of its conflicts between capital and technology is the need to transcend this debate (also see Grossberg 1995), and that the key to establishing a new synthesis in the study of culture and media is to understand these positions as complementary parts of a contradictory whole.

Endnotes

1. The correspondence between Adorno and Benjamin has now been completely collected and translated published (Adorno and Benjamin 1999), but the focal point of their exchange has been a series of letters that were published in the New Left Review in 1973 and then included in book form accompanying essays by Bloch, Brecht, and Lukács on the topics of modernism, Marxism, and aesthetics (Adorno et al. 2007).

2. The relationship between Adorno and Benjamin was further complicated by the fact that Benjamin was financially dependent on both the Institute for Social Research and Adorno himself for what was, by all accounts, a very precarious existence. The exchange of letters that expressed the intellectual differences between Benjamin and Adorno were written in response to Benjamin's submissions to the Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung, the Institute's journal which helped support Benjamin with a small stipend. At the same time, after moving the Institute from Frankfurt to New York, Adorno and Horkheimer were trying to persuade Benjamin to take refuge with them in the U.S , with events in Europe becoming increasingly dangerous. These circumstances shaped the correspondence between Adorno and Benjamin, and Benjamin's willingness to revise subsequent drafts of his essays in order to appease Adorno and Horkheimer's concerns. In the politicized atmosphere of the late 1960s, as the German New Left had begun to vilify Adorno, some accused the Institute of sanitizing Benjamin's language and editing his essays to make them less Marxist and radical. However, given the political passions attached to Adorno and Benjamin during those times, according to Buck-Morss (1977: 139) "this interpretation is misleadingly one-sided" (also see Jay 1973; Wiggershaus 1995). It is essential to clarify that my approach does not subscribe to technological determinism or the "analytic Marxism" of G.A. Cohen (2001), who maintains that Marx assigned causal primacy to the productive forces. As David Harvey (2006: 98) put it, "Of all the misinterpretations of Marx's thought, perhaps the most bizarre is that which makes a technological determinist of him." In the first place, although Marx did believe that technology is essential for disclosing the development of productive forces, he did not equate the two. More important, productive forces and social relations are in reality inseparable parts of a totality, whose motor force is never simply a one-sided determination but is instead a dialectical process of contradiction and conflict.

The usual English translation of this essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," neglects Benjamin's addition of the suffix –barkeit (-ability, as in capability) to the final word, and as Samuel Weber (2008) has shown, Benjamin's use of –barkeit was a key element in his thinking and writing, for it attached a sense of potential and process to verbs that otherwise indicated a completed action. As the essay has gained influence, its four different versions have been compared in light of the revisions made for its eventual publication, and the second version has generally been considered the most complete while also the most daring because it maintains direct references to Marx, fascism, and socialism. Thus, in the most recent collection of Benjamin's texts on media, it is the second version which is reprinted, and that is the version I will refer to in this paper. However, the different variations and slightly modified translations are still similar enough that it should not cause difficulties for those only familiar with the version in Illuminations, Benjamin's most well-known and frequently reproduced collection of essays.

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The Exploitation of Expertise: Adjunct Academics and The Commodification of Knowledge

Leanne McRae

Henry Giroux wrote in a recent edition of Fast Capitalism that the rise of the adjunct academy in universities is symptomatic of a decline in the democracy of knowledge. He evocatively argues that "protecting critical thought must involve safeguarding the pedagogical and political conditions that make it possible."[1] These conditions include, among others, the validation and respect for knowledge and its evolutionary process into expertise as crucial to the creation of critical citizens and transformative social contexts. The rise of adjunct labour in universities is representative of a widespread disengagement from the higher intentions of pedagogy to cultivate the evolution of expertise or indeed stimulate the formation of knowledge scaffolds as a key prerequisite in free thought and critical interpretive abilities in students. Instead, compliant consumers with knowledge-for-hire, and work-ready graduates, are objectives validated both inside and outside the university. These shifting educational outcomes are not due to the inabilities of adjunct staff to appropriately instruct university students, or to reflexively deploy expertise. They are a result of the contextual conditions that define adjunct labour and that have resulted in the widespread and long-term adoption of sessional work as appropriate employment at universities. Giroux goes on to make clear the consequences of these intersecting educational and employment philosophies and to affirm the corrosion of education for democracy that is being stripped back by decisions to reify an emphasis on processing information, rather than activating knowledge scaffolds that can build expertise.

> Unless the attack on academic labor is understood within the larger disciplinary measures at work in university – measures that aim to eliminate any social formation that can potentially engage in critical pedagogy, challenge authority, and collectively assume power – the issue of contract labor will appear incidental to the larger transformations and politics now plaguing higher education. Put differently, higher education needs to be defended as a crucial public sphere, and faculty autonomy and student empowerment should be regarded as central and powerful components of that vision.[2]

The connections between students and the staff that instruct them – which now is composed almost entirely of adjunct staff at many universities at all levels of their learning – frame and define the manner in which students come into knowledge and develop critical abilities in interpretation and democratic engagement with the social sphere. This interface marks a nexus of competing and cohering ideologies about education, criticism, and work that Giroux argues is reshaping new generations of citizenry in disadvantageous ways.

Giroux's words resonated as I read them. As a member of the adjunct academy for over ten years now, I experience the deep chasm of grief for myself and my students as I move through my daily teaching experiences, informed and overwhelmed by the contexts of educational decision-making and classroom consciousness that are being shaped by neoliberal learning philosophies. This article takes Giroux's warning as a starting point but moves further to unpack adjunct working conditions to define the decline in respect for knowledge and expertise functioning to validate the exploitation of academic labour and the delivery of functional rather than formative learning experiences to students. It also uses the adjunct academy to think through the contemporary intersections between learning, training and democracy that are collapsing and corroding in current educational contexts – springboarding off Giroux's usage

of Paolo Friere to ponder the relationships between critical pedagogy and the adjunct academy. This article aims to demonstrate how adjuncts work within, for and against these ideas in their daily composition of a living wage and efforts to cultivate a functional and reflexive education for their students. This article argues that adjunct academics currently do extraordinary work when faced with these conditions to both create and interface with the critical needs of students. As a result, adjunct academics embody a nexus through which the conditions of capitalism and current educational outcomes connected to knowledge-as-a-commodity can be visualised, questioned and addressed. By examining the adjunct academy, the wider pedagogic context, characterised by Giroux as a "military-industrial-academic complex"[3] informing the corrosion of critical pedagogy in higher education, can be unpacked and potently positioned within contemporary outcomes for education, social consciousness, democracy and criticism.

The conditions that adjuncts face are only the beginnings of an authentic intervention into the increasing corporatisation of higher education. Understanding how knowledge and expertise is being valued at universities and in the community, is crucial to unpacking the conditions encountered in the classroom at the heart of the knowledge workshop (the university). The stratification of information is being activated for commodification more than for consciousness raising both inside and outside the classroom. This process is embodied and amplified in the adjunct academy where the value of knowledge-for-hire is embraced, encoded on and through the bodies of adjunct staff and implicitly transmitted to students. In order to build on Giroux's call to deepen and widen the critique of the context leading to the increasing employment and exploitation of adjunct labour, I aim to position the adjunct teacher as a crucial site deploying the "performative practice"[4] of pedagogy where the tensions and tenuousness of the shifting meanings around education, training and critical citizenry are mobilised, questioned and confirmed. These scholars/teachers perform the contradictions interfacing expertise and exploitation currently being normalised in universities.

Shifting the Knowledge Paradigm

Social, political and economic attitudes to knowledge have changed with the rise of neoliberal approaches to education, training and learning. These attitudinal shifts percolate inside and outside of the classroom with parents, policy makers, students and staff all mobilising the capital value of contemporary education shaping knowledge as a commodity. Knowledge as it becomes synonymous with training is commodified and exploitable as students seek out education in order to exchange information for a wage. This is a significant shift in consciousness as teachers become facilitators or instructors, and students seek to contain and control knowledge within codified tests, assessment structures and outcomes that are easily measured, acquired and sold. [5] While educators and education systems, have always mobilised knowledge as a commodity – universities are fundamentally about exploring, exchanging and expressing knowledge – the changes to the way in which these skills are valued by the community mark a significant alteration in the way in which education interfaces with democracy. Pedagogy is now increasingly deployed to codify and contain knowledge in easily accessible and transferrable parcels rather than to challenge, explore and transform critical consciousness. In the desire to tap into and tackle the fundamental issue of access to education and democratic learning for diverse groups, which should form the backbone of any educational policy or procedure, the complex processes of thinking, exploring and dialoguing have been masked. These shifts have not gone unnoticed. Martha Nussbaum, for example, challenges the uncritical deployment of neoliberal ideas about education and maps the potential consequences in Not for Profit: Why Democracy needs the Humanities. She argues that democratic education is impoverished if the interests of the national economy outstrip the rights of a critical citizenry. When the curriculum is framed by the national interests, economic growth, motivated by funding distribution decisions at government level, embodied in adjuncts, mobilised by ideologies of 'access' without meaningful understanding of what this is and manifested in rationalised classroom contexts, national economics and the functional skills required for this sector are promoted at the expense of nuanced and considered socially just thought that can intervene in all sectors of the social framework and not just support the wealth and power of elites.

> Educators for economic growth will not want a study of history that focuses on injustices of class, caste, gender and ethnoreligious membership, because this will prompt critical thinking about the present. Nor will such educators want any serious consideration of the rise of nationalism, of the damages done by nationalist ideals, and of the way in which the moral imagination too often becomes numbed under the sway of technical mastery ... So the version of history that will be presented will present national ambition, especially ambition for wealth, as a great good, and will downplay issues of poverty and of global accountability.[6]

The success of neoliberal education ideas means that the students (guided by the attitudes of parents, teachers and university hierarchies about the role and purpose of knowledge and expertise) operate in the spaces where the translation of knowledge into corporate power and capital accumulation fills out instructional contexts. The idea that education might offer critical thought designed to contradict or question the prevailing race to consumerism, big cars and personal communication devices is often met with overt resistance by the student cohort. As Giroux argues this "is not a student who feels a responsibility to others, but one who feels the presence of difference and troubling knowledge as an unbearable burden to be contained or expelled."[7] The potential for educational transformation is muted as students raised during prosperous times reject the difficulties offered by examining inequality and embrace the seduction of the market as the great equalizer. Capital accumulation solves all problems in this context where the wealthy appear to get away with all manner of illegalities and ethical ambiguities as evidenced in the unfolding global financial crisis where bankers and financiers were largely unaccountable for their decisions that resulted in the collapse of global money markets.[8]

Therefore students demanding value-for-money rarely want the discomfort of a questioning environment or the anxiety of working through an unfamiliar idea. Instead, they want easy concepts, replicated in assignments and traded for passing grades, and functional skills that will serve them in the workplace. They define knowledge as a commodity that can be mapped, measured, bought, sold, tested and traded. Tara Brabazon has aligned these ways of thinking with an uncritical celebration of emergence and deployment of web-based environments in education and the difficulties created when 'googling' replaces research. She argues that "the problem is not Google"[9] but rather "In a fast food, fast data environment, the web transforms into an information drive-through. It encourages a 'type in-download-cut-paste-submit' educational culture."[10] This means that students are rarely processing the information they gather, whether through 'googling' or more sophisticated forms of research, into knowledge by activating and reflecting on the information scaffold provided by curricula. Within this context, "knowledge [is] not only something to create or share, but to exploit."[11] Knowledge is acquired, not processed or struggled over. Students then lack the ability to move into different epistemological hierarchies as they arc through their degrees. Instead of starting with information or data that through assessment and reflection can be processed into knowledge, which then through further and more advanced critical interpretation can become expertise, students are stagnated by abilities and the development of functional skills that conflate data with knowledge. This is why Roksa and Arum discovered in their timely and insightful study into American college campuses that many students are leaving their higher education only marginally better scholars than when they entered college.

> students are likely to learn no more in the last two years than they did in the first two, leaving higher education just slightly more proficient in critical thinking, complex reasoning, and writing than when they entered.[12]

They tracked a series of outcomes for students as they moved through their degrees and found significant disparities in students who were not required to engage in coursework involving "critical thinking, complex reasoning, and writing."[13] and those in courses that specified "more than twenty pages of writing [over the entirety of the unit/module and] ... forty pages a reading per week."[14] The students who were not asked to pursue rigorous reading, writing and coursework were less likely to score highly in their abilities to demonstrate knowledge. Roksa and Arum's data points to a widespread shift in the expectations of faculty and students about the composition of higher education, assessment and coursework that defines the cut-and-paste process of contemporary education-as-training. When adjuncts are employed to facilitate the delivery of course material to students, they work in these ambiguous spaces, both as experts and functional labourers communicating course content within the parameters of exchange, but also, when possible, seeking to embody and transmit complex thinking. The conditions they face activate many murky and ambivalent meanings that unmask the problematic protocols of universities dealing with shifting meanings around education, training and learning.

Adjunct Advantages

More and more adjunct academics are employed at universities and colleges.[15] The amplified rates of causal employment offer a crucible for contemplation where the conditions, outcomes and contexts of the adjunct academy are refracted against the national educational outcomes for students. They appear to be fractured as one set of values and criteria are engaged to recruit potential students (universities as places for the cultivation of knowledge,

opportunity and expertise), while the educational and employment realities are based on the exploitation of the knowledge and expertise of adjunct staff, often with the assistance of beleaguered and overwhelmed full-time and tenured staff.

There are many different adjunct teachers. Some are highly qualified scholars pasting together full-time employment. Others are postgraduate students paying their way through their higher degrees. Some are semi professionals earning extra money outside of their regular employment. The rationale for employment also varies between institutions. Some have rigorous protocols to ensure their adjuncts are university trained, others are more flexible in their understandings of the transitions between theory and practice, placing more emphasis on 'industry experience'. Some universities are caught short when an overload of students enrol in courses and will employ anyone who is available to be in the classroom. In any case, adjuncts often want to teach well, activate their expertise, and provide transformative experiences for their students. Many are interested in "offering a way of thinking beyond the present, soaring beyond the immediate confines of one's experiences, entering into a critical dialogue with history, and imagining a future that [does] not merely reproduce the present."[16] However, as a result of their status as knowledge managers straddling the lines between expertise and experience, adjuncts are often silenced by the needs of the university and the conditions of their work. When adjunct teachers are able to fuse the needs of practice with the theories and knowledges that can lead to critical thought and transformative consciousness, they offer a model of radical teaching. This process however, happens in the unclear spaces of teaching and learning and becomes increasingly difficult for adjuncts to mobilise as they become increasingly exploited by the system in which they work. Not only must they struggle against the usual student resistance to difficult thinking, but also through the institutional ambivalence to their success and the codification of their knowledge as expendable and expedient rather than critical and consciousness-raising. As a result of the tenuousness of their employment adjuncts are often working so many jobs that they have been drained of the energy and commitment to inspire their students. It is easier to work through a group exercise than to probe, pursue and provoke their students into difficult thinking. These adjunct conditions demonstrate how knowledge as a socially transformative pursuit is devalued and only reified when it can be used to grow national economies. Knowledge and expertise is exploitable and only valued when monetary rewards are attached, which is why research staff are well paid and at the high end of university promotions tiers and there is often not enough money left over the pay adjunct staff who are downloading data into the student cohort. [17] This does not mean that universities should become places for the lofty navel-gazing investigative idleness of elites. Universities should be spaces for critical and applicable thinking, problem solving and productivity. But when knowledge in exchange for profit is the deepening purpose and profile of universities – whether profits are made from packing more students into classrooms and selling them ideas about exchanging information for money, or from research intensive academic staff bringing in research funding from private and public sources to university budgets, then we impoverish students and the futures of diverse and sustainable national growth. Adjunct academics provide a solution to immediate budget constraints but not to the crisis in learning currently manifesting that mobilises exploitation of knowledge rather than expansion of it. A 'sustainable education' must meaningfully contradict prevailing ideologies attached to this phrase which predominantly indoctrinates educational consumers in an age of excess and radically unsustainable living and working practices. In this context, 'sustainable education' actually means an economically sustainable education that continues to grow the wealth of education providers and the empowered, and not one which supports the creation of radically engaged citizenry that is able to create and convert knowledge into expertise in the assistance of social justice. If teaching and learning is to change in Australia (and elsewhere) and if we are to authentically create 'sustainable' higher education structures, knowledges and outcomes, and societies more generally, then addressing the current callous conditions of university life as both a student and as an academic needs to be carefully and critically addressed.

Explicit Exploitation

The litany of unfair and inequitable contexts for adjunct work is staggering. The mismatch between the widely adopted ideologies of the benefits of casualised labour – that adjuncts enjoy greater freedom, flexibility and work/life balance – and the realities in which sessionals have to hold down multiple jobs across many campuses just to make ends meet, work far more hours than they are paid for, do not have the luxury of sick days or annual leave, have no office space in which to work or meet with students – is startling. The unfair working conditions of the adjunct

academy are perpetuated at almost all levels of academic work with full-time staff – who are in the unenviable position of having to carry out departmental/university policy – often validating the benefits of adjunct labour, affirming they are 'doing adjuncts a favour' or creating opportunity by offering casual employment. Indeed, adjuncts are often expected to see this offer of work as 'a gift'.[18] This paternalistic attitude is rife in academic departments and is the cancer infecting the employment pool.[19] When full-time and adjunct staff embrace, confirm and perpetuate the neoliberal ideologies that frame the exploitation of casuals as appropriate and desirable, then the war over critically conscious education and the fight for democracy is lost. The exploitation of expertise frames the pursuit of knowledge as functional and not formative. These philosophies are not adopted by all full-time academic staff. But many, in making the best of difficult national educational policy as well as internal funding crises, conform to hierarchical decisions and budgetary constraints determining the shape and tone of their teaching cohort.

Last year I was in a meeting with a senior (tenured) academic who informed me of how wonderful it was for me as a casual academic to have the time to spend exploring research at whim. According to him, I was in a great position to invest my free and flexible time in projects unavailable to full-time academic staff who are often too busy administrating and managing student cohorts as well as juggling their research funding commitments. I sat in silence. I did not mention the fact that I work four jobs and therefore have little time during the week to read course material, let alone conduct detailed research or write papers.[20] On the weeks when assignments are submitted I am often marking two or three classes simultaneously on a two-week turn around, which means I can be marking up to 90 assignments in a week. I did not mention that I am barely paid enough to cover the time spent in preparation and that doing my job well does not guarantee job security.[21] I will be out of contract as soon as the student numbers decline or as a result of the vicissitudes of internal politics and departmental personalities. These realities destroy the myths of casual appointments that encircle a full-time academic's decision making about employment offers. They also point to a series of potentially troubling consequences for the students taught by these overworked employees.

Unfortunately, senior and full-time staff are also victims of these shifting mentalities that perceives adjunct academics as "redundant, superfluous, or entirely disposable."[22] As a result, academic relationships are corroded not only between staff, but between staff and students. Towards the end of the semester I received the following email from the same senior staff member who had advised me of the great benefits of my casual employment.

Leanne McRae

From:
Date: Thursday, 24 November 2011 4:41 AM
To: "Leanne McRae"
Subject: RE:

Dear Leanne

that is very kind of you to give me this feedback; I have heard also from that did a great job and, from what I can observe (eg that there have been no problems!!) it's all gone well. Thanks, also, for your hard work in making the unit work so well.

Just a quick note - we had a lot of people wanting to teach with us and while you were on the list we didn't need you this time. Perhaps we can meet up towards the start of next year and discuss what work might be available for you?

Cheers

There are many things wrong with this email. Such responses are demoralising. More than that, they are damaging. Upon receiving it I was tempted to ask what precisely I needed in my qualifications and experience to get to the top of his 'list'.[23] But I realised how futile such a response would be having the intuitive knowledge that actually, there is no list. Rather, there are pressures from inside and outside the department that determine employment opportunities along a sliding and unpredictable scale of personal relationships, last minute enrolments, and financial costs and benefits. These pressures are framed by the decreasing critical pedagogic functions of higher education "now re-envisioned from the perspective of a new market-driven form of managerialism"[24] that impoverishes reflexive, critical learning structures in favour of training, skills development, functional literacies and staff that can transmit these skills quickly and effectively.

In a time of economic crisis, global financial collapse and teetering national economies, to be sent this email is

disturbing at best, negligent at worst. This email speaks to the widening gap between the conditions of full-time and tenured academic staff and those working in the adjunct academy pasting together a full-time job out of a series of part-time opportunities. But at its core this email is a clear demonstration of the conditions adjuncts are faced with in universities and colleges and the impoverishment of pedagogic and instructional knowledge that goes along with the tenuous and fragmented relationships crafted between staff. These attitudes, located both inside and outside the academy, filter down into classrooms where students are modelled pedagogic outcomes based on the exploitation of knowledge and the demobilisation of critical thought.

Educational Beginnings and Endings

These attitudinal shifts percolate throughout the learning industries and point to the widespread deprioritisation of a critical and ethical education for contemporary students. Not only must faculty compete with student and parent expectations, but also with increasing pressure on their workloads. The decline in full-time faculty has been met with a comparable increase in the workload for those 'lucky enough' to employed on a full-time basis and as a result, the offloading of teaching intensive work to casual, contract or adjunct labour in universities. This demographic shift in the employment structure within higher education has widespread ramifications for how education is delivered and designed, and most importantly, for how education and knowledge is reflected and refracted through the values of a community. Many of the adjunct staff now delivering higher education to students in university classrooms are highly qualified, motivated and engaged. But the way in which this cohort is contracted, treated, paid and valued by the institutions of education, employment and governance convey serious fallibilities in the current structures of contemporary education and learning as well as the outcomes for a thoughtful, equitable and socially just society.[25]

When we impoverish adjuncts and treat them as disposable add-ons to the more profitable and important research-funded full-time staff we teach students that labour is disposable and that critical thinking is displaced within their everyday lives. We model behaviour that is callous and uncritical. We encourage students to think of their labour as disposable and to replicate ideologies that value success only at the highest levels of academic and intellectual work. They carry this ideology with them into their workplaces and spaces where they enable their own exploitation and the marginalisation of fellow employees. We also enable the dispossession and devaluing of knowledge and expertise. We make the pursuit of profit and the accumulation of education/knowledge for strategic capitalist application more important than reflexive and fair employment for all. We teach these students that their education is only important to the extent that it can be applied within a very narrow definition of productivity and social value.

We no longer live in an economic and attitudinal environment where adjunct instructors can be turned into full-time employees and afforded the same level of benefits and privileges of those staff. But we can re-write the meanings attached to and written on adjuncts bodies. We can use the adjunct as a nexus to peel open the parameters of employment and learning currently being deployed. Rather than lamenting the conditions adjuncts face, we can transform them and ensure that the rigour, intensity and integrity of adjunct instruction is appropriately rewarded both monetarily and through more secure and ratified employment contracts that provide a sense of security within the casualised context. Importantly the processes by which adjunct labour can be valued and transformed to the benefit of higher education, the student cohort and the adjunct themselves must be located in the recognition and value of their diverse and dynamic expertise that is currently being exploited instead of respected and reified. We can resist the stratification of academic staff into 'research' and 'teaching' as if they have nothing to do with each other and better equip students with the literacies to deploy and connect functionality and investigation in their everyday lives enabling them to connect up work, their sense of self, and the meanings they deploy to make sense of these contexts. It is this philosophical shift that must take place first instead of a blanket bolstering of the exaggerated and out-of-touch conditions and experiences adjuncts face both personally and professionally in their role as 'disposable' staff in a learning rich environment.

Adjunct staff commit to, and care passionately about, their students and their education, but they often do not have the time or the energy to compose a classroom of engaged and critically transformative instruction. The fact that many do attempt to achieve these outcomes is testament to their level of organisation and commitment to critical pedagogy. But when we trivialise and exploit this commitment, we teach students that life is mercenary, where only the toughest and most callous survive and thrive – only those at the highest ends of profit making,

company organisation, education and government enjoy real success and social value. This stratification of thinking removes a grammar of social justice from the social framework and validates 'affluenza' by focussing opportunity through 'luxury fever' where there is "an across-the-board escalation of lifestyle expectations"[26] feeding into and through education where adjuncts are incorrectly coded as having an abundance of 'free and flexible time' and students are increasingly expecting to use knowledge as a commodity to achieve affluent outcomes. This is not to say that the accumulation of wealth is not a viable or desirable outcome of education, but when it is indoctrinated into educational structures implicitly, subtly and overtly it shifts education into a mechanism whereby the widespread exploitation and demoralisation of other global citizens is approved and even normalised. This is a far cry from Michael Apple's and Paolo Freire's worries that education remain connected to and activated by social justice issues if it is to have any meaningful role to play in the crafting of critically conscious futures.

> Educational work that is not connected deeply to a powerful understanding of these realities (and this understanding cannot evacuate a serious analysis of political economy and class relations without losing much of its power) is in danger of losing its soul. The lives of our children demand no less.[27]

The role of adjunct staff may be desirable in cutting department budgets and rationalising funding, but their embodiment as archetypes of the exploitative structures of contemporary university philosophies in terms of how their time is valued through payment, job instability, deprioritisation of their research interests and limited access to university hierarchies and opportunities is setting a tone within and through education that our students normalise. These attitudes will be carried with them as they move through the personal and professional lives and the widespread disengagement of education from social justice and philosophical outcomes for a critical citizenry will impoverish nation states. We will, according to Martha Nussbaum "be producing generations of useful machines, rather than complete citizens who can think for themselves, criticize tradition, and understand the significance of another person's sufferings and achievements."[28] It is important that we engage with the adjunct academy to examine, critique and question the ideologies that normalise the way these scholars/teachers are valued and treated. Through these means we might intervene in the overarching ideologies that frame their employment and how students are engaged, indoctrinated and shaped inside and outside of the classroom. By better valuing adjunct expertise, we might just save our universities, students, staff and citizenry from exploitation, social decline and disempowerment.

Endnotes

1. H. Giroux, "Rejecting academic labour as a subaltern class: Learning from Paulo Freire and the politics of critical pedagogy," Fast Capitalism, No. 8.2, 2011, http://www.uta.edu/huma/agger/fastcapitalism/8_2/Giroux8_2.html

2. ibid.

3. ibid.

4. ibid.

5. Jonathan Herman recently noted a shift in what counts as valuable knowledge within universities and schools; "a generation of two ago the very worst thing one could say about a teacher was that he or she went blandly "by the book," assaulted students with facts and figures, and demanded that they "regurgitate" names and dates on tests. It was widely understood that learning should nurture critical thinking, creativity, imagination, analysis and synthesis. But now, many students want "just the facts," and they are often baffled by teachers who seem too lazy or recalcitrant to hand them over, who instead haze them with Socratic method, linger on interminable class discussions, and force them to do research apart from consulting Wikipedia. "Less thinking," they seem to be telling us, "more regurgitation." From Get Schooled with Maureen Downey, "Why don't teacher's just teach what is going to be on the test?" posted 30th April 2012, http://blogs.ajc.com/get-schooled-blog/2012/04/30/why-don%E2%80%99t-teachers-just-teach-what-is-going-to-be-on-the-test%E2%80%9D/

6. M. C. Nussbaum, Not for Profit: Why democracy needs the humanities, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 21

7. Giroux, op cit.

8. See L. Story and E. Dash, "Bankers reaped bonuses during bailouts," New York Times, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/31/business/31pay.html posted July 30, 2009, and A. Solan, "What's still wrong

with Wall Street," Time Magazine Business, http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1933201,00.html posted October 29, 2009,

9. T. Brabazon, The University of Google: Education in the (Post) Information Age, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), p. 23

10. ibid., p. 22

11. ibid., p. 25

12. R. Arum and J. Roksa, Academically adrift: Limited learning on college campuses, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), p. 37

13. ibid., p. 71

14. ibid., p. 37

15. Many reports cite the data mapping the increasing numbers of adjunct staff in universities. In Australia, it is estimated "that around 40 per cent of university staff are casual employees. This compares to an average of around 25 per cent in the overall workforce. However, new research using the superannuation records of university staff indicates that there are currently 67, 00 academics employed on a casual basis, comprising 60 per cent of the academic workforce." E. Bexley, R. James, and S. Arkoudis, The Australian Academic Profession in Transition: Addressing the challenge of reconceptualising academic work and regenerating the academic workforce, Commissioned report prepared for the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, September 2011, http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/people/bexley_docs/The_Academic_Profession_in_Transition_Sept2011.pdfp. 1

16. Giroux, op cit.

17. Studies have shown the disparity in pay scales crafted by the concentration of highly paid research staff at universities. "Shifts in the composition of the academic workforce toward the more senior of the classifications also has implications for institutional budgets, as wages at the most senior levels are around twice those of a Level A staff member, reducing the financial base on which to employ more junior staff on an ongoing or long-term basis." Bexley, James, and Arkoudis, op cit., p. 4

18. I. Baranay, "The academic underclass," Griffith Review, No. 11, Getting Smart: The battle for ideas in education, Autumn 2006, p. 41

19. It is also important to note that full-time academic staff experience increased levels of stress as they "must manage the army of sessional staff on top of their work." Bexley, James, and Arkoudis, op cit., p. 1

20. As it happens, this senior academic turned out to be right. The 'free' time I have this semester, as a result of the reduction in sessional hours, was used to write this paper.

21. Different faculties pay adjunct teachers differently. In the last two years payment for marking assignments in Australia has been widely integrated into adjunct pay rates. This initiative is a matter of necessity as adjuncts were increasingly being asked to teach large cohorts and mark their assessments which were taking up significant time chunks of unpaid labour and expertise. The balance of paid tutorial work against unpaid marking work was skewed significantly toward the unpaid apex. Being faced with the widespread disengagement of adjunct staff who were spending their bulk of their out of class time doing work they were not being paid for necessitated the implementation of some form of monetary compensation. However, faculty and university administrators have found ways to circumvent this payment in two key ways that short-change both the adjunct teacher and the students being taught. In humanities departments I have taught in, for example, there are caveats within the marking pay scale. In one university, the pay differs from 'simple' to 'complex' marking varying in rate. Course coordinators are only allowed to claim one assessment component as 'complex' marking for their adjunct staff. Any other assessments must be claimed at the lower 'simple' marking rate. In another humanities department I worked for, course coordinators are only allowed to claim one hour of marking per student at a standardized rate for their adjunct staff. Both these examples result in a short-changing in the education of the students where course coordinators are forced to assess the cohort not based on effective teaching and learning strategies, but by assessments that limit the amount of marking their adjunct lecturers are being paid to complete.

22. Giroux, op cit.

23. I have a Masters Degree, a PhD and 12 years of teaching experience.

24. Giroux, op cit.

25. This paper has not addressed the potential crisis looming for research within the Australian academy as senior academics begin to age and retire and younger adjunct staff who spend the bulk of their time teaching have not had the time to hone their research skills or developed the publication protocols to continue moving knowledge forward in a proactive and transformative manner.

26. C. Hamilton and R. Denniss, Affluenza: When too much is never enough, (Crow's Nest: Allen and Unwin, 2005), p. 9

27. M. Apple, Cultural politics and education, (New York: Teacher's College, 1996), p. 5

28. Nussbaum, op cit., p. 2

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The Cracks in the Walls: Earthquakes, Patriarchy, and Transnational Capital in Haitian Free Trade Zones

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And the Ground Begin to Shake

The January 10th, 2010 earthquake decimated the Haitian capital of Port-Au-Prince as well as large swaths of the countryside. What was striking was that among the first sectors of the country to resume normal activities, even as vital services remained offline and casualties reached horrific levels, were the Free Trade Zones (FTZs), also called Industrial Parks or Export Processing Zones, outside of Port-Au-Prince as well as along the Haitian-Dominican border. My preliminary inquiries—which involved examining accounts of the situation in post-earthquake Haiti in American newspapers—revealed that a great deal of the coverage was focused on rebuilding economically, with a particular emphasis on the importance of apparel factories in FTZs in this process. This cursory reading prompted me to ask two simple questions, what is the significance of FTZs in Haiti and what is the role of the representations of political economy in shaping our perceptions of these spaces?

Answering these questions however, is not so simple—being trained as a Sociologist, my disciplinary instincts pushed me towards a Marxist analysis of FTZs. I looked at them as spaces of exploitation established by the forces of global capital. It is Marx (2003:245) who says, "Constant capital, the means of production, considered from the standpoint of the creation of surplus-value, only exists to absorb labor, and with every drop of labor a proportional quantity of surplus-labor…. The prolongation of the working-day beyond the natural day… quenches only in a slight degree the vampire thirst for the living blood of labor." To be sure there is a temptation to theorize FTZs as the byproduct of Capital's need, née Capital's thirst, for a cheap and easily exploitable source of labor. This would point to the problem of quenching Capital's thirst and posit something like the following: Given that free trade agreements allow for goods to be produced in Haiti with minimal overhead, particularly because of the abysmal working conditions, low wages, and a near complete lack of substantive protections for labor, it was in the interests of Capital (especially because corporations have no allegiance to the people of the Haiti, only to their shareholders) to ignore all other problems associated with the damage caused by the earthquake and focus on rebuilding the so-called 'productive' center of the economy.

While this argument is not without merit, I began to believe as I continued to trace the transnational connections through an analysis of various texts ranging from media coverage to documents produced by States and entities such as the World Bank and IMF, that it was incomplete. Most problematic is that not only does it fail to explain the gendered division of labor in factories inside FTZs, is it not particularly sensitive to the specificities of history and politics within Haiti. Without revision, it would be guilty of the 'economic reductionist' argument, as outlined by Mouffe (1981), which suggests that this variant Marxism always refer back to the economic (as the only vital principle of social organization) in the last instance. Feminists, among others, have called for attention to be paid to other modes of social organization such as gender. Lisa Brush (2003:46) argues that, "Gender is a principle of social organization," that structures everything from domestic practices within the home to complex institutions

and state policies. In regards to Haiti, Carolle Charles (1995b) calls for emphasizing, "the centrality of gender oppression in the social fabric of Haitian society," which she suggests is crucial in producing a feminist resistance to the impingement of Capital in Haitian life, and the misery that it has produced. Given such calls, I believe that an analysis that seeks to understand the complexities and significance of FTZs and the way in which they are represented needs to be multifaceted.

First, we should pay close attention to issues of transnational political economy, in particular ongoing development projects (as well as those in the more recent past) under the direction of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), both organizations that have intervened at critical junctures to shape Haitian politics. Also, we should closely examine the policies of major Western powers such as the U.S. and France, asking how they have influenced development in Haiti, and explore the ownership and political origins of Free Trade Zones.

Second, we need to closely examine the history of gender, governance, and democracy in Haiti as they shape the nature of citizenship and subjectivity. The production of gendered subjects (along with other vital axes of identity) has important material repercussions for the labor that people do both in the home and in the workplace, thereby impacting the very ways in which we relate to one another in our daily lives.

Keeping these issues in mind allows us to link the specific history and politics of economic governance in Haiti to the way in that it is represented today and ask how those representations either resist or reconstitute the institutionally situated forms of power that allows Capital to pursue its project.

To do this, I draw from a wide variety of textual data and argues that FTZs represent an important social artifact that social scientists can use explore and expand upon theories about the complex relationships between state power, politics, representation, and subjectivity. I do so from a transnational perspective, emphasizing that such complex relationships must be able to wrestle with the often ambiguous and difficult-to-define nature of the borders and boundaries that demarcate nation-states and citizens. Moreover, it argues that an analysis of only the political economy of FTZs—that is, one that only argues for FTZs as a site for Capitalist exploitation—is incomplete as it fails to proclaim the importance of social forms such as gender that shape and shift the biopolitical body upon which such exploitation can take place. I suggest, based upon my reading of Haiti's history and politics, and my analysis of the response to the natural disaster, that the way in which Haiti's "problems" are represented has to be accounted for to understand the reproduction of narrowly defined cultural forms (i.e. gender, the main focus here) as a key component in facilitating the relentless advancement of Capital's project.

A Brief Overview of Contemporary History and Legislation in Haiti: Two 'Docs' and a Priest

Though this paper will ultimately point to Haiti's colonial past as an integral piece of the analysis offered, at this point it is useful to outline the more recent past in which significant political events, pieces of legislation, and economic policies have shaped Haiti's current juridicio-institutional framework. The point of departure here is the 1986 fall of the Duvalier regime, in which Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier was disposed of his place as the head of Haiti's government. The uprising against Duvalier ended the nearly three-decade long grip of the Duvalier's that began in 1957 with Jean-Claude's father Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier. The end of the Duvalier Era was marked by a renewed voice for Haitian women in the political sphere. As Gina Ulysse (2006:29) suggests, "Without question, women's collective grassroots action was instrumental in the eventually ousting of Jean-Claude Duvalier in 1986. They were at the forefront of social movements and their organic political activities caused changes that led to the first democratic election held in Haiti in 1990." That grassroots collective action of women propelled Jean-Bertrand Aristide into office in December of 1990 is significant and will be discussed further later in this essay. Yet, the political resurgence of women and women's issues was short-lived. Less than seven months later, Aristide himself was ousted by a coup. Carolle Charles' (1995a) details the manner in which this coup sought to obliterate not only the institutional mechanisms by which Aristide ruled, but the political will of his base, largely comprised of women, through the most nefarious of means including, but not limited to, the rape and murder of any of those in opposition to the conspirators.

Perhaps just as disheartening was the fact that the next two decades, which saw Aristide returned and ousted again and his successor Rene Preval elected, would be a period in which the instability created by the coups would

generate a vacuum in which interventions by foreign governments, the United Nations, the World Bank, the IMF and other transnational entities would remake Haiti in profoundly negative ways. Mark Weisbrot (1997) points out that structural adjustment policies directed by some of these institutions were in place Haiti in the early 1980's, and that Aristide's ascent interrupted the processes engendered by such adjustments. Essentially, Aristide's ouster (in 1990) represents a critical historical switchpoint in the path of Haiti's economic and democratic development. As Winters (2008:288) points out, a large part of Aristide's initial political platform rested upon the promise of instituting a minimum wage and a series of other important labor reforms. Yet such reforms would have been an imposition to the interests of those seeking to exploit Haiti as a cheap source of industrial labor. Even before being deposed, Aristide's leadership was being undermined by powerful foreign-backed interest groups attempting to undermine said policies. The coup was met with immediate disapproval from the U.N., which responded by leveling a trade embargo against Haiti's new military dictatorship. The U.S., at least officially, endorsed the embargo, yet just as quickly backed off from that position. Chomsky (2002:156) argues that the though the embargo was meant to punish the Cedras-led junta, "The Bush administration made it clear, instantly, that it was not going to pay any attention to the sanctions…. Bush established what they called an 'exemption' to the embargo—in other words, about eight-hundred U.S.-owned firms were made 'exempt' from it." This exemption, couched in the rhetoric of not wishing to punish Haitian people for the sins of the Cedras-led junta, was in fact business as usual. Even after Aristide was allowed to return to serve out the last months of his rightfully elected term, it was an essentially pointless exercise, as his political base was decimated by violence.

In the years that would follow, the wheels of neoliberal interventionism would turn. A considerably weakened Aristide, even as he represented a modicum of resistance, would support some neoliberal intrusion. It was in fact Aristide who agreed to break ground on the first textile factory in the newly minted FTZ called Codevi at Ouaniminthe, a region along the Haitian-Dominican border. The Codevi FTZ was a result of a deal stuck between Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and U.S. based, Washington-backed investors. I will elaborate more on Groupo M, the investment group responsible for Codevi later in this paper, but sufficed to say, this type of dealmaking, which pits a vulnerable, debt-burdened and politically destabilized nation against the muscle of Washington and large transnational organizations, is not unusual. As Jane Reagan[1] argues, the plan violated even the sacred principle of private property, by dispossessing framers in Northeastern Haiti of their rightful ownership of the land, in the name of free trade. This dispossession is critical to our ultimate analysis of FTZs and I will discuss it further shortly.

Yasmine Shamsie (2009:652) suggests, "Even the poorest countries with the most profound development challenges are not spared the imperatives of transnational and global markets. In short, their development trajectory must conform to the exigencies neoliberal globalization." In particular, those exigencies produced policies that a weakened Haitian democracy, reeling in the wake of a populist democratic resurgence now in ruins, was unable to resist. Shamsie goes on to outline the emergence of two of such policies, the 2004 Interim Cooperation Framework and the 2007 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. Both policies were founded upon the assumption that comes straight from the playbook of the World Bank and IMF—that poverty reduction is a natural consequent of the reduction of barriers and full participation on the part of the developing nation in global trade. Shamsie (2009:650-651) rightly implores us to "[consider] the context within which Haiti must craft its economic development strategy today: extreme dependence on outside aid and neoliberalism's continued dominance of the established development orthodoxy." That orthodoxy, which is embedded within a web of social relations beyond the economic realm, saturates each of the aforementioned policies.

From the American side, the emphasis was on Foreign Direct Investment in the neoliberalized Haiti, which produced a series of legislation designed to relax or eliminate regulations. This came in the form of the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement Act of 2006 or HOPE. HOPE essentially eliminated tariffs on any importing of apparel made in Haitian textile factories, so long as the fabrics were of U.S. or Haitian origin. The idea was to take advantage of low labor costs so that Haiti could be the assembly site. Predictably, it turned out to be more of a boon for American companies wishing to move manufacturing operations to Haiti than for Haitian people or even the Haitian economy, even after HOPE II, a revised version of the legislation was passed in 2008.

It is on the heels of all of these changes, the years of destabilization from forces endogamous and exogenous, the multitude of policies and laws, of political disenfranchisement that Haiti found itself in such a terrible state. Then there was an earthquake.

Ready to Run

Hartwig (2010:i) concludes, "The adoption of a neoliberal rationale to the disaster in Haiti causes practices which support the notion of political control and economic exploitation, and reproduce global structures of inequality." It stands to reason that the bourgeois point-of-view would overemphasize the need to restart, in particular, the export economy, so central to World Bank and IMF development strategies, as soon as possible. Indeed a look at the rhetoric from U.S. news media would support that thesis. A New York Times (from hereon NYT) article[2] from January 22 points out, "The earthquake effectively shut down most textile companies, many of which are in the capital to be close to the port." The article concludes by quoting Haiti's representative to the IMF (who is interestingly Brazilian, not Haitian), who stresses the need to create jobs opportunities for the population. Another NYT article[3], written just a few days later, describes the scene in a textile factory that makes men's apparel for retailers such as Men's Warehouse and Joseph A. Banks. A factory worker points out, "The walls were still standing, but they are cracked…. It is not safe here." Another woman claims, "I'm sitting [at her work station] in a running position."

The article on the one hand emphasizes to just how poor the working conditions and pay are, but counters, "By Haitian standards, where nearly 70 percent of the workers makes less than $2 a day, it is a modest improvement." This it argues, "in a country where hopes for economic development have long been frustrated."

An Op-Ed from a few days later[4] articulates it thusly:

> Haitians need something more fundamental than relief from the present situation; they need jobs that they can count on for years ahead. For this, the private business sector is essential. Luckily, business leaders are meeting now in Davos, Switzerland, and Haiti is prominent on their agenda.... Haiti is by far the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere, and yet it need not be so, because unexploited opportunities abound there....if private capital would invest, patiently, in Haitian business. (my emphasis)

The real problem for Haiti, as these authors see it, is the lack of transnational Capital having exploited business opportunities there, though they point to Hope II as a step in the right direction, because they argue that it has allowed many garment factories to "become competitive with Chinese garment makers," due to the relaxed restrictions.

Still all of this would seem to fall within the purview of the classical Marxist reading of the situation, that Haiti represents a place in which bourgeois interests have been served by more or less brute force through a long history of colonial repression and now neoliberal repression. While that is true, such an analysis does not quite acknowledge the complexity of how dominance was and continues to be exercised. For one, it ignores a vital aspect of that repression—gender.

Woven into Haiti's long history of colonial control, with its clear emphasis on Capitalist accumulation and exploitation of labor, is an insidious history of the repression of Haitian women. The enforcement of the normative gendered order in Haiti has formed much of the foundation upon which colonial control, even after Haitian independence, has been exercised.

Patriarchy: From Field to Factory

Let us step back into history for just a moment. Carolle Charles (1995a) suggests that gender, in many ways, determined the circumstances under which the Haitian struggle for independence took place. She states (1995a:138), "Women [in Southern Haiti prior to the revolution of 1791] began to protest, demanding equal pay, for equal work." Charles argues that from before the revolutionary period onward, Haitian women have been a driving force, because of their instance on challenging gender-based discrimination, in Haitian liberty. The relationship between the two is perhaps most clear in the era of the Duvalier regime. "The Duvaliest state could manipulate gender categories and ideologies for its own political purposes," claims Charles (1995a:141), a statement that seems all the more reasonable given the nature of the resistance that ultimately ended that regime and led to Aristide's election. If it was women's unified voices that led to a freer Haiti, then of course the silencing of those voices was a top priority in regaining control in the name of colonial and ultimately corporate interests. The Cedras junta epitomized that silencing, using various forms of violence against women including abduction, rape, murder, to instill fear in the Aristide electorate. Charles's analysis, particularly because it argues for gender as an organizing principle in both domination and resistance in Haiti, and also because it points to the transnational nature of those gendered relations,

positing that domination and resistance has occurred as a result of the interaction of forces both endogamous and exogenous to Haiti, troubles Marxist analysis in certain ways. Firstly, it asks how, given that Haiti was the first among Caribbean nations to break away from colonial control, do we see colonial power structures reassert themselves in the relationship established via development projects—the very projects that produced FTZs? Second, it prompts us to ask what is the importance of gender and gender ideology in Haiti's more recent history, from the 1986 ouster of Duvalier until today? Charles' work leads us to see the ideological terrain as one in Haiti in a constant state of struggle. Given this, how might it change the way we should assess U.S.-based media coverage of the earthquake?

It is clear reading the articles from the NYT that there does seem to be a clear articulation of a given ideological frame of reference. Two themes emerged from a reading of NYT articles in the weeks and months after the earthquake the first (detailed earlier in this paper) focused on the need for business to restart promptly and expand quickly, and the second argued for the degree to which Haiti was in a state of chaos, before and after the quake, and argued for a lack of Haitian leadership, before and after the quake.

Again, the first theme might fall squarely into a reductionist Marxist analysis, but the second takes us in another direction. Why, at a time when Haiti was most vulnerable, would there be a need to emphasize chaos and lack of leadership as endemic to Haiti and not a product of Haiti's position within a web transnational connectivities from the U.S. and France, to the World Bank and IMF, and so on? The ahistorical characterization that Haiti's problems are entirely created from within and simply exacerbated by the earthquake is instead about reestablishing the West as a source of patriarchal authority.

Gendering Haiti

"Haiti has long been known for its political tumult, for its coups d'etat, years of authoritarian dictatorship and looting of the national treasury for personal gain," suggests an article[5] from January 16, 2010. It continues, "Before the disaster, the country's politicians were known for their distance from the people. Leaders wore expensive suits, flying first class to Miami and driving around in luxury S.U.V.'s. There was a stiff formality among them, in their use of French, their bearing, their sheltered lives in the hills overlooking the slums."

This sort of framing was typical to many of the stories produced after the quake. I would argue that painting Haitian leadership as heartless despots, without acknowledging the history of French and U.S. influence on selecting those leaders, is a reconstruction of a colonial rhetoric positioning White Westerners as the potential saviors of an oppressed people. Another article[6] refers to having to "manage the chaos," the coordinating of which falls to the U.N. Another article[7] argues for the impotence of Haiti's leadership by describing the following scene:

> The journalists had assembled and the cameras were rolling. Seated at center stage were the American ambassador and the American general in charge of the United States troops deployed here. At the back of the room, wearing blue jeans and a somber expression, stood President Rene Preval, half-listening to the updates on efforts to help Haiti recover from its devastating earthquake while scanning his cellphone for messages. Then he wandered away without a word.

The emasculation of Preval, and positioning of the ambassador and general at the center of the recovery project reveal gender as a constitutive element of reasserting capitalist Western hegemony in Haiti. The emphasis upon a lack of appropriate leadership and the void it creates justifies Western (male) ambassadors and generals taking charge of the rebuilding and legitimates the reopening of free trades zones even as other services remain obliterated. That FTZs appropriate primarily female labor points to the need for Capital to reimpose its rule by structuring the regime of gendered relations, among other things.

I do not want this point to be misread as class rule appropriating gender and race (thereby giving class the position of primacy among those). In actuality, I want to argue for a rereading of Marx which foregrounds the role of the ideological superstructure in producing the conditions that make the economic base a material possibility. Whereas the tendency in certain strains of Marxist thought has been to focus on the economic base in the last instance as structuring ideology and consciousness, I think it might be more productive to focus on the first instance, that is the instance in which gender and racial ideologies (among others) justify the necessary (re)structuring of institutions to make them amenable to Capital's needs. Such a move, I think, allows us to overcome the problem of the extent to which Capital is or is not bound by the State. Focusing on the first instance allows us to think transnationally and prompts us to ask how gender and racial projects around the world are facilitating or resisting the

thrust of global Capital. Thinking transnationally means tracing the connectivities that link the expansion of Capital to the imposition of a particular iteration of gendered relations that makes way for the economic conditions in which exploitation take place, and which define the contours of FTZs. Finally, thinking transnationally means attending to the way in which particular discourses that structure the nature of the economic subject-citizen are circulated on the various fields of representation.

Resistance in Commercial

The title of the film clip[8] is: "Changing Lives at Codevi." A child peers out across a field and in the direction of a white building. He turns with a wide smile. He stands in the factory with a man and woman—his parents? He rides his bike around the factory grounds. The music is soft and rhythmic. Pan across the production floor to women sewing, then back to the child on his bike. The words of the song are translated in neat white letters at the bottom of the screen:

> "If you do not see my tears, it is because I am weeping inside. My soul is filled with hope. And although there is suffering, your cries move my heart. The storm is now behind us. And it gives me joy and strength to see the children on their way back to school. Mothers, mothers rejoice. You and I hand in hand, working for a brighter future. With love and passion. With love and passion. I will not fail in our endeavor. To make change in Haiti, we need to work. To rebuild. To make change in Haiti, I will continue to strive to serve my country. With passion and love.

The child speaks: "The storm is now behind us. We are working towards a change. In memory of all the fallen. And with love and God as our guide." The sound of applause and the final words, still in white but larger and centered, say to the viewer: "Travay se liberte." (work is freedom)

The caption below the clip (found on YouTube) reads thusly: "This video was developed by and created by the workers of Codevi. Grupo M, of the Dominican Republic, has launched the amazing Codevi Apparel Initiative in Haiti, now employing over 6,000 Haitians, 99.99% who have never has a job before. Social and environmental accountability are paramount at this inspiring and life changing project." Now juxtapose this imagery to a documentary clip[9] produced by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), which details the experiences of workers in Codevi's factories. The clip follows the story of a worker named Georges, whose efforts to start a labor union with his coworkers was met with both silence and violence from Grupo M's management. Georges talks about the Dominican military attacking labor organizers with little or no pretense. There are no smiling children.

That Grupo M's propaganda stands in stark contrast to the ITUC clip is unsurprising, but it is worth noting several things about the clip. The Grupo M clip valorizes social and environmental responsibility, and in terms of its imagery, reproduces a hetero-patriarchal representation of family on the factory floor—the marriage of labor and sexual (re)production, no pun intended. Its emphasis on community simultaneously belies the intent and motive of Grupo M, which is to maximize profit at whatever expense to labor, while laying bare its gendered and sexualized ideological foundations.

Grupo M moved into Ounaminthe officially in 2003, having brokered a deal with the World Bank (it was in fact the International Finance Corporation, the World Bank's private lending section) to fund the construction of Codevi[10] shortly after the severely enfeebled Aristide agreed to sign into law a bill authorizing free trade zone creation and according to a report[11] produced by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (IFCTU), the loan extended by the World Bank, "was conditional on the company's respect for freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining." In terms of management since that time, Grupo M's track record is at best notorious and at worst despicable. Any attempts on labor's part to have been roundly rejected as the ITUC clip attests. That Grupo M plays the authoritarian patriarch is testament to its role as a proxy for Western Capital. The apparel manufacturer has a prestigious lineup of name brands, among those Levi's, Hanes, and Nautica. Consciousness about these companies for many Westerners remains lodged almost exclusively in the circuit of consumption with production processes veiled by the intermediary apparel manufacturer Grupo M. While Grupo M, does the legwork of making (or remaking, as the case may be) ready a space for exploitation, all the while generously funded by transnational flows of capital under Western control, the brand names produced and distributed are available to the Western consumer only as a mélange of symbols provided to them by the culture industry. I believe this partition becomes evident in the mass-mediated identities of the name brands, the articulation of which obfuscates their

action as political agents. Lo (2002:213) reminds us (by way of his reflections upon the Frankfurt school) that, "media images enthrall and isolate individuals in the mass audience, producing conforming opinions and making open discussion about the state, for example, all but impossible." The problem is evident when, according to Hardt and Negri (2000) we understand that the state (it being comprised of a coalition of powerful actors, not the least of which is the most profound institution of our time—the Corporation), becomes a "sign disconnected from a referent." (Lo 2002:214) I argue, that this disconnect occurs primarily at the site of production, which I believe is an argument consistent with Marxist epistemology.

A readily apparent example of this revolves around Codevi, Grupo M, and it's most popular brand—Levi's Jeans. In June 2011, an article[12] in The Nation detailed the leak of State Department cables (leaked by Wikileaks). The cables showed just how active Levi-Strauss (the company denies this) was in suppressing proposed minimum wage hikes for factory workers, from around $3 to $5 dollars per day, as far back as 2008 and through 2009. Yet even with the break of the cables by Wikileaks and the follow up story in The Nation, mainstream media emphasized a different news story about Levi's during that timeframe. A few months later in September 2011, Glenn Beck took the opportunity on his television program to denounce Levi's, but the denunciation (Beck said that he is a fan of Levi's jeans but would no longer wear them) was due to an advertisement by the company, which featured a loosely connected group of images, several of which were young people in Levi's jeans standing in defiance of a line of riot police. The ad, Beck claimed[13] was inciting revolution and lauding progressive idealism, saying the following[14]:

> It's hard to believe a company associated with American working-class values, would use global revolutions and progressivism to sell their products, but that's exactly what Levi's is doing in their new commercials. Unfortunately, they aren't even trying to disguise their new efforts to commit to the progressive cause.

Beck's response, in its profound superficiality, in fact reveals wealth of information to us relevant to the line of inquiry for this paper. His analysis is limited to the content of the ad—he and his co-hosts watch and Beck suggests that one particular scene "looks like European socialists, marching…looks again, like some sort of Palestinian kind of march. I mean it's gotta be from overseas cause you can see the guy, you know...in the man-burka or whatever that is." Nowhere in his critique of Levi's Company is the slightest bit of attention paid to the production process by which the products come to be, with the exception of one of his cohosts reading an announcement on Levi's website stating that they intend to comply with the U.N. Millenium Development goals to improve the lives of workers at production sites. Rather than call Levi's out on their hypocrisy, particularly given their lobbying efforts revealed by Wikileaks, Beck and his cadre chuckle at the mention of Levi's promise to comply with the U.N., a villain in the new philosophy of the far right. Beck raises his voice and asks, "What has happened to us? We're sitting passively by, and our neighbors say 'don't worry about it.' Don't worry about it!"

That Beck's disagreement is lodged completely in the ideological realm conjured by the texts embedded in the ad, that 'American working-class values' are threatened not by the oppression of workers' rights in Haitian factories, but by the dramatization of vaguely displayed resistance is telling. What I believe it tells us is what is confirmed by the Frankfurt school, Hardt and Negri, and others when it comes to the problem of resistance to the State, but I will add something; I believe it tells us much about the FTZ as a constructed social space, and how both the missions and machinations of Transnational Capital and the exigencies of the history of gender, governance, and democracy in Haiti come together.

Sovereignty and Biopower in Haiti

Giorgio Agamben (1998:03) forwards the notion of a 'threshold of biological modernity' that he claims, "Is situated at the point in which the species and the individual as a simply living body become what is at stake in society's political strategies." It would certainly seem that the rise of neoliberalism is the harbinger of having reached that threshold. Wendy Brown (2003) points out that neoliberalism is something more than just an extreme variant of economic liberalism, arguing, "The neoliberal formulation of the state and especially of **the specific legal arrangements and decisions as the precondition** and ongoing condition of the market does not mean the market is controlled by the state but precisely the opposite." Insofar as the state has to be concerned with the specific legal arrangements and decisions as the precondition of instituting and insuring market rule, thereby ensuring Capital is free to pursue is vampiric project, the state then must be concerned with the subjugation of all

forms of social relations to markets. I believe this way of thinking emphasizes the first instance and can allow us to reconcile some of the more problematic aspects of Marxian analysis by focusing on what Agamben (1998:06) calls the, "hidden point(s) of intersection between the juridicio-institutional and the biopolitical models of power," of which FTZs are a prime example. Melissa Wright (1999:455) details the 'dialectical stillness' of the maquila in which "Mexican women represent workers of declining value since their intrinsic value never appreciates into skill but instead dissipates over time." She continues, "Meanwhile her antithesis—the masculine subject—emerges as the emblem of the other kind of variable capital whose value appreciates over time." The unskilled woman laborer then is the automaton whose gears and gadgets allow for the completion of a menial task for a delimited amount of time, which can then be easily replaced. To listen to the transnational powers that be, this automaton is in one respect Haiti's greatest asset. A report from the Congressional Research Service[15] in June 2010 says this of the possibilities of the Haitian apparel industry:

> Haiti is a prime candidate for redeveloping the apparel exporting industry because assembly requires an abundance of low-skill labor, but relies on relatively simple technology and small capital investment. Therefore, production naturally gravitates towards locations with low labor costs. Although Haiti's labor costs are not as low as those in some Asian countries, they are the lowest in the region, allowing Haiti to niche into apparel assembly.

However, the report suggests some constraints on the possibility of Haiti becoming a major player in this industry:

> There are some key challenges to Haitian apparel competitiveness. One is producer concerns over losing a major cost advantage because of the large 2009 minimum wage increase. Apparel managers note that even though fully trained workers already earn more than the new minimum wage, raising the minimum wage can reduce the worker production incentives.

Essentially, FTZs are the byproduct of the neoliberal state's (itself a transnational entity) reconfiguring not only economic relations but also gendered relations, both of which converge materially and discursively in the factory space.

Agamben (1998:168-169) argues that the camp (the internment camp) is the 'nomos' of modernity, a space of inclusive-exclusion in which those within are fixed in the 'state of exception.' He goes on:

> In the camp, the state of exception, which was essentially a temporary suspension of the rule of law on the basis of a factual state of danger, is now given a permanent spatial arrangement, which as such nevertheless remains outside of the normal order.

A cursory reading sees apparel factories in FTZs as ideal sites for the stripping of surplus value, which is true, yet a reading that foregrounds gender as the category of analysis sees the 'original sin' here as one in which autonomy and political agency of Haitian women was stripped in the violence of the 1991 coups. This act made-ready the docile, feminized biopolitical body by producing a site of inclusive-exclusion. The 'factual state of danger' described by Agamben that allows for the establishment of the camp is indeed in the Haitian case the threat to the interests of U.S.-backed World Bank/IMF development projects. J.K. Gibson-Graham (1996:79) argue that in the "discourse of Capitalism, woman is constituted as an economic actor allocated to the subordinate functions of the capitalist system… she is a crucial constituent of capitalist social relations, though not situated at the center of accumulation, nor cast as a subject of history." In this case, Gibson-Graham were examining women's consumptive practices, yet a transnational analysis would also implore the reader to examine the subordinate role of women in capitalist production. Our reading of Haitian history suggests women are a **crucial constituent of capitalist social relations,** yet the original sin of delimiting and destroying the agency and political autonomy of Haitian women had to be committed in order for the state of exception to be a possibility, and indeed crystallize in the form of the FTZ and its factory-camp. That men also work and are exploited in these factories does not mean that they are not gendered, by virtue of being stripped politically and subject to a patriarchal structure from without, as feminine and thereby subjugated by the regime of gender produced by the intercourse of local history and politics and Capital's conquest.

Don't Fence Me In!

Polyani (1944) teaches us that the conquest of Capital in England began with the enclosure of common lands

so that they could be used for sheep pastures in order to jumpstart the textile industry. The result was a social catastrophe as displaced masses, once able to at least scratch out an existence through small-scale agricultural practice on those common lands, moved into the cities as an unskilled workforce. The misery Marx encountered at the outset of the industrial age was the reverberation of this displacement. Yet it was not the fences themselves that represent the first instance, the original sin was the decision by the profoundly wealthy and influential of day to redefine nothing less than the character of the biopolitical body. That biopolitics became possible only with the advent of Capitalism, as well as the necessary technological advancements (to say nothing of the role of social sciences), is because Capital required the kind of subject amenable to fulfilling its desires and ultimately had to be compelled to act upon whatever social forms stood in its way. It could not do in a vacuum, rather it has always built upon what is in place, and rebuilds upon that again. Agamben's contribution to Marxist epistemology is to use the camp to understand the intersection of the biopower and sovereign power, to focus again on powerful actors' taking up of historically specific iterations of gender, etc. to their own ends—this paper demonstrates just that.

That Ounaminthe required a dispossession of the same sort, the removal of small-scale farmers from what would be the FTZ site, is not surprising, but what again has to be emphasized is the first instance. That instance in which Haiti and Haitian people were gendered according to the narrowest definition, a definition that inexorably linked them to markets and which rendered anything that did not fit within that constellation of meanings indecipherable to Western eyes. The subject here, feminized and therefore subjugated (because Capital is masculine) is rendered politically voiceless first, and put to work next. The Catch-22 of the framework of global capitalism is just this: Whereas in the so-called first world, citizenship is the basis for rights and freedoms because it gives one the opportunity to participate in the political process however superficial it may be, in the third-world participation in the labor market is the only connection to citizenship, yet that labor market comes about through the removal of the possibility of freedom. Capital rids itself the yokes of civic participation in the third world—it does this by reinstating a particular gendered and racialized regime by forcibly removing an emancipatory alternative while representing the exclusion as the emancipatory act. In Haiti, the FTZ is what fills the void left by that exclusion. A space of non-citizenship that reminds the non-citizens that "work is freedom" even as the basis of that work is established through a repression that places the throat of the laborer under the boot of the white father. In the German Ideology, Marx (1983) suggests that ideology presents the world in an inverted way, similar to a "camera obscura"—here we see that in the representation of issues of political economy as it regards to FTZ, gender and race in particular are the mechanisms by which that distorted image is produced, and are integral to Capital's project. The inversion facilitates the ongoing need to consume surplus labor and the need to continually reauthorize that consumptive practice.

To the credit of workers in Haitian FTZs they continue to resist with the weight of violence (physical and epistemic) looming over them, and most importantly, they continue to strive to reclaim the FTZ factory space for themselves. Moreover, those of us outside of the factory-camp's walls must strive to assist by challenging the dominant forms of representation that reauthorize the exploitation.

Haiti has shown a remarkable tendency towards grassroots Democratic action, and often on the backs of strong and politically emancipated women. Though Haitian women have been the most common victims of political violence, it is just as important for us to see the power in their persistent resiliency, which makes the FTZ camp a site that may be reclaimed in a way that reverberate beyond its fenced and cracked walls.

Authors Note

This paper seems to indicate, at least to me, the need to continue to explore and elaborate upon Althusser's notion of the Ideological State Apparatus, particularly as it regards to forms of media, whether they be new or old. The outpouring of support for Haiti in the U.S. post-earthquake is interesting as whatever attention that was paid seemed to preclude a substantive public discussion on Haitian politics and history, or the role of U.S. interventions in the past and present. It was more of a purely emotional response, which is not necessarily remarkable unless juxtaposed against the lack of critical analysis. However, when we do choose to explore that, we see that Lauren Berlant's (2005) argument that politics has been reduced to a "mass-mediated visceral engagement," in which hegemony is maintained in the form of a pre-established "zone of collective intimacy" not only along the fault lines of issues of political economy, but of gender, race, and so on.

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Politics, An Illusion We Have Forgotten Is Such

Bradley Kaye

(Dis)Ability and Capitalist Production

Emerging work on disability is only beginning to examine the relation between the mode of production and the oppressed disabled body. For instance, the work of Marta Russell and Ravi Malhotra[1] has brilliantly articulated disability as being external or marginal in relation to capitalism's mode of production. In my opinion, we can include mad subjects in this analysis who are placed similarly in oppression as a disposable population outside of production. Russell and Malhotra claim the social model of disability necessitates a rethinking of prevalent definitions. Leaving aside biological or physical-anthropological definitions of disability which make it appear that impaired persons are 'naturally' and therefore justifiably, excluded from the 'labour force', even mainstream definitions have serious shortcomings. Reconceptualizing disability as an outcome of the political economy, however, also requires acknowledging the limitations of the 'minority' model of disability, which views it as the product of a disabling social and architectural environment.

In this view the fundamental source of the problems encountered by disabled persons is prejudicial or discriminatory attitudes, implying that by erasing mistaken attitudes society will accept 'difference' and equality will flourish. This approach diverts attention from the mode of production and the concrete social relations that produce the disabling barriers, exclusion and inequalities facing disabled persons. In contrast, Russell and Malhotra take the view that disability is a socially-created category derived from labour relations, a product of the exploitative economic structure of capitalist society: one which creates (and then oppresses) the so-called 'disabled' body as one of the conditions that allow the capitalist class to accumulate wealth. Seen in this light, disability is an aspect of the central contradiction of capitalism, and disability politics that do not accept this are, at best, fundamentally flawed strategies of reform or, worse, forms of bourgeois ideology that prevent this oppression from being seen.

First, let me examine an ableist existential philosopher – Martin Heidegger. His work on Dasein (his term for subjectivity) may illuminate the distinction between ableism and the work of Jean Baudrillard, who can be evoked to illuminate a position of liberation for the mad. Martin Heidegger is famous for claiming that Dasein is facticity. This means that it has consciousness of itself as destined to become-X. Dasein always has space presented as already discovered though not thematically. For Heidegger, Being-in-the-world is the goal of Dasein, to feel one with nature and the world. Time is always a correlate to being and one cannot be in the world without also being within time.

However, as Baudrillard points out time and time again in his oeuvre, the world is extremely dysfunctional. Time is out of joint. To take this point even further, it is not so problematic that the world is merely dysfunctional because dysfunction can be solved pragmatically. Rather, the problem that gnaws at the marrow of Jean Baudrillard's writings must be the purely nihilistic question: what if the world does not exist at all? If we take Baudrillard seriously, and I certainly do, then we can begin to see the world through the eyes of a madman. In doing this, we also grant madness subjectivity, something that Martin Heidegger neglected to do.

The question becomes complex: how do we construct a viable political ontology outside of there being a posited objective reality? This is one possible question to ask Heidegger over coffee in heaven. What if there is no world out there with which Dasein strives to be unified? In reading Baudrillard one must admit that perhaps Heidegger

was completely off base. Moreover, no such thing as 'side-by-sideness' of an entity called Dasein with another entity called 'world' exists. In fact, if we can refer to something called world and entity, these concepts are always already alien to the self. Singularity, and not ego, is mutually co-imbricating us together at all times. It is our separateness that is the illusion borne out of an objective notion of reality. Dreaming of a unity to come beyond alienation is to give madness a telos. For conservatives on the right, selfhood is the basis of politics because sovereignty enables the preservation of rights – one of which is liberty and the power to make free choices. For Baudrillard, politics does not always serve the interests of the fully flourishing self (see anything that Baudrillard wrote). In fact, these allegedly innate liberties, stifled by social institutions such as the State, are nothing more than decadent illusions masking a more nefarious set of forces lurking behind the scenes. If Baudrillard must have a label it is beyond Marxism into the realm of Anarchy; which is described by Saul Newman as being merely the philosophy of power and its unmasking (Newman 2007). In Baudrillardean terms anarchism amounts to demystifying the illusion that passes as actually existing homogenous reality as all there is, and ever could be. By extension, anarchism is politically positing beliefs that this one-reality can be constructed otherwise. Closer to the point would be to construe reality as not being a unity at all, but rather a loose conglomeration of antagonisms, differences and political striations to be pushed to the extreme through breaking prohibitions and taboos enclosing our imaginative possibilities.

Imaginative Possibility of C-M-C

One such imaginative possibility is the movement beyond M-C-M[2] productive-circulation to C-M-C, or even potlatch and gift exchange. This is why Georges Bataille was such an influence on Baudrillard and many of his contemporaries. In this work, I will later explore the overlapping discourses of potlatch as being a possible panacea to productive exclusions.

In the analysis offered by Karl Marx, M stands for Money and C stands for commodities. According to Marx, this represents the true ground for communist revolution. The total transformation of the modes of production will not be complete without the radical alteration of circulation. In capitalism one must have capital (M) to put into the creation of commodities in order to get an increased return on the capital investment, which is called profits. Capital (M) must be procured either through inheritance, or banks, in order to produce a commodity, which will be sold at a higher price than the raw materials and the labor necessary to produce the commodity (C) and profits are accumulated by the class that has access to the capital (the bourgeoisie), which are then reinvested through speculation on other capitalist projects. Capitalism is always an economy based on class conflict because the capitalists have access to investment and because the ideological superstructure (courts, the state, protectors of the ideology of private property) enforces the contracts that bind labor to capital in an exploitative way, as well as provide the economic base out of which capital can derive its labor supply, the process of circulation is unabated by meager reforms. The only way to fully transform this M-C-M to C-M-C (where the working class produces its own commodities, which it then sells for money, and exchanges with other workers for other commodities, a system without profit – communism) is through revolution that smashes the state and collectivizes the modes of production[3].

Anarchist-Socialists also posit this as being a necessary step to bring about radical change. This revolution may not only benefit disabled people, but anyone who has the fruit of their labor expropriated at the benefit of capital. Left unabated, this circulation process continues until there are no resources left and the raw materials run out, which creates the fall in the rate of profit, and a crisis emerges. Or rather, when labor keeps cutting into the profits of capital by demanding higher wages, capital must see a dip in profits to stave off total revolution, but this economy is fragile and precarious, boom and bust cycles of crisis, with a steady dose of ideology constantly keep the proletariat in line. Libidinal investments do the job as well, but also the precarious position of bodies excluded from production place them in a position of propertylessness (object free workers)[4]. This means the disabled literally have no property to sell, not even like their exploited counterparts the able-bodied workers.

According to Marx, this was the first characteristic of the revolutionary subject. Being able-bodies is not necessarily the best situation either. Dictated by social conditions workers are compelled to sell the whole of their active life, and their very capacity for labor, in return for the price of his customary means of subsistence. Marx explains the dire situation of even workers expropriating their labor: "to sell his birthright for a mess of pottage" (Marx 1977; pg. 382).

Clearly, the exploitation described by Marx in the three volumes of Capital constitutes a palpable feeling of

disgust in most readers. The descriptions of brutal working conditions, child labor and wages bordering on slavery should be enough to evoke a widespread revolt against capitalism, and Marx hoped that it would. However, the one thing Marx could not predict in the 19th century was the way in which bourgeois illusions would seep into the proletariat deluding us/them into believing that revolution was hopeless. Louis Althusser's analysis of the ideological superstructures provides cogent analysis of how capitalism keeps everyone in their place. Mainly, two theses emerge from Althusser: Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence; and ideology has a material existence. Once capital gets hold of the subjugated subject from within then it can beckon, or call the subject through interpellation as an individual.[5]

Being disabled puts you even beneath the position of the worker totally dependent upon state assistance merely to survive and more often than not unable to find adequate wages to maintain life beyond mere subsistence. Money taken out of circulation is wealth and this can only be accumulated by capital because labor must always remain within circulation as a result of their wages only being paid out in miniscule increments barely enough to stay alive. Workers rarely have savings because wages are only enough to reproduce themselves materially. Disabled bodies do not even have the potential to do even this basic reproduction, and according to Marta Russell and Ravi Mahlotra, this places the disabled in a position to accept even more extreme forms of exploitation out of sheer desperation to survive.

One of many really smart things Jean Baudrillard said went like this: the demystification of value will show reality, and by extension politics, for the illusions that they always already are. Baudrillard explains: 'the human species comes to consciousness through the imaginary, and always already enmeshed in illusions. Production, labor, value, everything objective is imaginary.' It is not illusion that conceals reality, but reality that conceals there is none. In my opinion, this constitutes a statement in favor of the politics of pathos. It constitutes an illusion manifesting a cogent critique of the end of history from within. To think that capitalism is the only way humans can exist and that no other social order will ever emerge is to live in the matrix. To think that there can only be production and nothing otherwise to make the same mistake Marx made in mirroring production. In other words, the conditions of capitalism exist unchanged precisely by remaining tied to the vestiges of production, and not turning to other social organizations such as gift-exchange, potlatch or something else.

Bataille, Baudrillard, Eco-Illusions

By turning to Baudrillard there can be political possibilities that do not mirror production and do not reproduce a capitalist metaphysics of value. Certain excluded populations, such as the mad, the disabled and the lumpenproletariat already exist outside production. Stepping outside of the metaphysics of value involves evoking particular tactics such as the refusal of work, which other theorists such as Giorgio Agamben, Antonio Negri, and Slavoj Zizek all discuss in various places, along with Julian Pefanis' Heterology and the Postmodern: Bataille, Baudrillard, and Lyotard, and his The Mirror of Production.

Baudrillard is an end of history critic whose work can be understood in the contemporary world conjuncture as an agent of pathos within the austere institutional dimensions of real subsumption. By turning to Baudrillard we can draw a salient critique of these homogenizing tendencies (which appear as reality, but are quite illusory). We need to imagine other possible worlds that do not hinge on oppression, violence and the decadent materialist syllogisms of 'productive-consumption'. Like a map that covers the entire globe, the hyperreal brings humans to consciousness in the imaginary but forces us to believe in something called reality 'out there', stable for anyone to know objectively. My reading of Baudrillard concludes that various political a-priori transcendental truths are a trick of the bourgeoisie (the one truly a-historical class).

The social importance of this work is to hopefully give a voice to a population that has historically been silenced, precisely because they/we have been codified as pathological: the mad (with all of our heterogeneous modes of expression as beings-in-the-world). If pathos has been historically situated as a silence, then we must begin to grapple with the very real possibility that psychology will never be able to accommodate within its space that which constitutes the absence of the signatory, to say nothing of the absence of a referent.

This writing may become a historical outlier, externality or clothing with which to construct a new methodological dressage towards the silence that has been construed as 'pathos/madness.' Baudrillard speaks on behalf of the disenfranchised, the mad and the pathological justifiably alienated from an otherwise dysfunctional capitalist regime

of exploitation, greed, and nihilistic pleasure seeking. Baudrillard is the penultimate theorist who thinks through a politics of pathos in an empowering way, as an always already unthinkable silence that is all around at all times.

For Baudrillard, I would argue, freedom as it is paradigmatically misunderstood in Neo-Liberalism, constitutes a state of ignorance regarding the market forces. These forces are at play homogenizing collective behaviors through various machinations of production. True freedom constitutes a break with production. It is precisely the determination of force, or rather the determining factors of forceful coercion elided by our notions of freedom, choice and privacy. One of the most provocative treatments of this problem has to be Jean Baudrillard's oft-neglected tract, The Mirror of Production. In this text, Baudrillard infuses a bleak set of principles into his work on political economy, and indeed coupling this with his work during the 1980's, notably Simulacra and Simulation, what we are left with is a new critical theory speaking precisely to this being-as-situation.

It blends elements of Marxism, Deconstruction, Nihilism, Carnivalesque Spectacle, as well as Science Fiction, and this fusion in my opinion is best described as Critical Madness Theory. It may allow for new discursive approaches to madness. The overarching theme Baudrillard deals with throughout his entire life, was to discredit any notion of a stable reality – in fact, the mask deluding us into believing there are no illusions, is the premise of objective reality. The illusion has become real, and to borrow from Nietzsche, "Truth is an illusion we have forgotten is such" (Nietzsche 1977). Yet, what would happen if we could remember that all is an illusion? Well, it would be madness.

However, that is precisely when political liberation would be likely to occur and the creativity of aesthesis could flourish. If all is an illusion, then all is politics. According to Baudrillard's good friend Michel Foucault, politics is war by other means, not the other way around. The entire terrain of the hyperreal, the map that covers the illusion and appears as if it were real, is in fact, the place of guerilla warfare. Even the ignorant who feign bliss are in the trenches jockeying for position vicariously through ballot boxes and often literally through material conditions. As Louis Althusser claimed, ideology is not revealed in what a person says, but in how a person acts. Politics always amounts to examining the preferred methods of reproduction.

At its very core, the heart of the battle over ascension to political hegemony must be a battle over modes of production. Not merely material production, but also ontological and metaphysical production, that means the productions of self and the productions of what passes for reality. A mode is like a Spinozian mode – what exists now is merely one mode out of the infinity of possible expressions that can possibly be produced. Each mode exists on a continuum connected through various loci, or centers, that push out, extending through other territories, like power flowing upon an electrical grid, through networks, relays, passages and currents. Pointedly, currency is the biggest mode of power as expressed in capitalism, but currency is always a hyperreal illusion (perhaps even delusion) the hegemonic class, grasping the levers of the state apparatuses pull over on its citizens. Because the value imposed upon money is social, and never intrinsic, just like power exerted by the state itself. Once the social construction of value, or what may be best called 'the-money-delusion', becomes accepted as if it were real then the sheep stay in line. As Baudrillard rightly tells us, there is no such thing as an intrinsic metaphysics of value. Liberation involves picking away at the delusion that value is intrinsic, when in fact it is a socio-political contingency. If value is a contingency, then it can change, if it can change, then all bets are off, because what is liberated is aesthesis and human creativity.

Political truth is the biggest illusion because it does not exist, yet many people act under the pretense that it does. As Baudrillard said:

> I am a nihilist. I observe, I accept, I assume the immense process of the destruction of appearances (and of the seduction of appearances) in the service of meaning (representation, history, criticism, etc.)

Continuing he says:

> I observe, I accept, I assume, I analyze the second revolution that of the twentieth century, that of postmodernity, which is the immense process of the destruction of meaning, equal to the earlier destruction of appearances. He who strikes with meaning is killed by meaning. (Baudrillard 1981; pg. 160-61)

Postmodernity – (is that even a philosophy?) – is reaching a point of saturation in a most disturbing state of inertia. The flow of postmodernity, or as I see it, the decadent cocoon of spectacle that makes us all egotistical Cartesians (in the sense that the only thing we can prove beyond a reasonable doubt actually exists is ourselves – literally solipsistic delusions of total isolation – the matrix indeed!). That this bourgeois dream-wish of perfect isolation in privacy, to ward off the barbarians yapping at the gates in perfect isolation behind our walls, to be completely detached from the Other, is to be in the postmodern end of history. However dialectical life may be, in

the sense that nobody can exist like this forever, the simulacrum created by bourgeois ideology can only last until the money runs out. It is to feign to have what one doesn't have.

Nobody really knows how the end of the world will happen. It may happen by the hands of righteous politicians, or it may happen because this God we failed to kill has had enough of our bullshit. It is time to realize, the clock is ticking and the biggest illusion is the saturation of all aspects of life with pointless spectacles and meager relationships with associates we barely know. This is the hyperreal that passes itself off as reality itself, and it has lead to the total destruction of the environment, the breakdown of any semblance of meaningful community and the rise of reactionary forces that attempt to counteract these decadent forces with spiritual weapons. If Baudrillard was correct then he knew his Nietzsche well: Decadence always begins with the willing of nothingness. Any civilization in a state of decline would rather actively will nothingness, than to will nothing at all. Productivity abounds, even in during the twilight of the idols, but it cannot stop the final cresting in which the dominant paradigms and cultural meanings that glued its people together, no longer make sense. The falcon cannot hear the falconer; mere anarchy is loosed upon the world (W.B. Yeats; The Second Coming 1956).

The Politics of Pathos

This is the madness that Baudrillard discusses, and it can liberate Mad-beings from the sarcophagus of objective reality. It illuminates the uncertainty that abounds in postmodernism, while also escaping from the ennui of working in an office-coffin or a textual dreamlike trance. Politics is all textual, inter-textual relational play, and by extension does not exist objectively. There are no truths out there in the world to be known with absolute certainty, and yet faith gets us nowhere closer to the real either. Madness is the only standby to trust in a pinch, it keeps us longing for more and more bizarre methods of procuring and producing pleasure, to ward off the doldrums of another nihilistic endurance test in our factory lives. Even our death is not our own. It is prepackaged with religious overtones; judgments and sacrifice. It is the mad call of pathos.

In contemporary society, perhaps a different kind of enlightenment is happening without recourse to reason. From Plato's allegory of the cave, and the mysteries of representation that the slaves must liberate themselves from to be free, history may be linked necessarily to madness, characterized by Michel Foucault as the "absence of work"[6] (because work is the condition of citizenry). At the heart of culture is a "we" formed on a split between those in possession of reason and those without it. Jean Baudrillard often shows that the great split between reason and unreason is an illusion, because more often than not, what passes for reason is the immanence of unreason.

What Baudrillard does that is provocative, is his usage of the pathological as legitimating political subjectivity. It is the mode of production that marginalizes the pathological as if they/we are not fully functional human beings. So, by extension, madness is a disability constructed within the framework of productivity of capitalism. In fact, Baudrillard is not necessarily saying exactly the same thing as Marta Russell and Ravi Malhotra, but their work on disability bears an affinity with the way Baudrillard at times depicts madness.

By turning to Baudrillard, the politics of madness, described as liberating the disabled (or perhaps to be politically correct, differently abled) mind can only be liberated by shattering the mirror of production. Georges Bataille's Accursed Share volume one is an integral text for Baudrillard scholarship. He claims, "The world of the subject is the night: that changeable, infinitely suspect night which, in the sleep of reason, produces monsters."[7] Positing madness itself gives a rarified idea of the free "subject," unsubordinated to the "real" order and occupied merely with the present and forgetful of the future. As Georges Bataille explains in a general economy consumption and madness go hand in hand:

> The subject leaves its own domain and subordinates itself to the objects of the real order as soon as it becomes concerned for the future. For the subject is consumption insofar as it is not tied down to work. If I am no longer concerned about "what will be" but about "what is," what reason do I have to keep anything in reserve? I can at once, in disorder, make an instantaneous consumption of all that I possess.[8]

Being outside of the production-work nexus is the depiction Bataille, and by extension his influence stretches also to Baudrillard, Lyotard, Foucault, Deleuze and others. What is at stake is the jouissance, the pleasure drawn from actively pursuing an inevitable demise. To take pleasure in being at work next to a machine decades at a time only to wind up deaf, because after all it is always either suffer in exploitation or die, the illusory choice of Neo-

Liberalism – the only delusion to be disavowed is the rather incredible situation we are in whereby the vast majority of proletarians actually accept rather than resist this sadistic lot in life. To walk softly into the jaws of hell and not take the easy way out – death, is the unspeakable horror that shows the immense power of ideology – the famous line by Karl Marx "they do not know it, yet they are doing it" is precisely the point. Not merely do they not know it, but may indeed find sexual gratification from the debasement of exploitation. To learn to submit the bulk of one's day to labor, rather than live in idleness is the greatest trick the bourgeoisie play on the working classes and it constitutes a widely accepted political illusion that a situation where workers have nothing to sell but their bodies is somehow the best situation for the majority. Ideology is symptomatic of the social milieu within which it is constructed. To address the ideological symptoms is to ignore the base, or root of the problem, which is the exploitation released by the mode of production.

Symptoms and Ideology

A symptomatic ideological simulation knows no bounds. For instance, take the attempts to integrate a deterritorialized subject back into a general economy rampant with transgressions. It often results in lines of flight, a symptom of recidivist schizophrenic anti-production. Remember what Marx and Engels famously said about capitalist morality: "All that is solid melts into air" amidst the constant pseudo-revolutionizing of production where changes appear to be occurring all the time even though the bourgeoisie maintain hegemony over the ownership of production. To be truly schizophrenic, if we take Deleuze and Guattari seriously, is to posit a viable resistance to the ideology of production. It may be a simulated illness with real symptoms, much like capitalist ideological symptoms wherein the illusion has posited as 'real' in the sense that it clothes itself in the garb of the 'natural'. Ideological symptoms in capitalism pass-as-if it were human nature (whatever that is), because of the Neo-Liberal notion that we are all free to construct our lives however we choose, the illusion is that we choose to be exactly how we are in capitalism. The end of history rears its ugly head yet again.

Whoever fakes an illness can sit in bed and make everyone believe he is ill, but to simulate an illness involves showing symptoms. Literally producing the illness in the subject through sheer will constitutes the basis of anti-production and self-negation. Pretending still leaves the principle of reality in tact, it simply masks reality, whereas simulation blinds us to the distinction between real and unreal, truth and illusion, real and imaginary. Is a simulator sick or not considering that he produces allegedly real symptoms?

Baudrillard has the following statements regarding the phenomenon of psychosomatic illnesses:

> Objectively one cannot treat him as being either ill or not ill. Psychology and medicine stop at this point, forestalled by the illness's henceforth undiscoverable truth. For if any symptom can be "produced," and can no longer be taken as a fact of nature, then every illness can be considered as simulatable and simulated, and medicine loses its meaning since it only knows how to treat "real" illnesses according to their objective causes. (Baudrillard 1981; pg. 3).

Liberalism needs utopia. Utopia is the logic of any meta-narrative that attempts to give history a productive telos. However, this production will expand until it reaches its material limit. Liberalism cannot exceed the limit of its resources, and the hyperreal will last only as long as the money flows. The new capital is human capital, the exploitation of bodies, the usage of the entrepreneurial self, or what Michel Foucault called, "Homo Economicus", a relatively new social phenomenon. What passes as responsible political economy, is actually a chaotic orgy. Jean Baudrillard's politics is reminiscent of Georges Bataille's famous essay, "The Sorcerer's Apprentice", which is a line drawn from Capital, but shows a line of demarcation where postmodernism resists all Modernisms (ala dialectics). As Bataille nihilistically claims: "Contemporary men can master only a heap that represents the debris of existence." (Bataille 1985; pg. 233). Perhaps it is possible that the totality of our existence is nothing more than a simple dream – a hyperreal delusion of which we are doomed to never wake up, perhaps until a revolutionary subject emerges from the rubble. As all great anarchist-socialists would agree, the greatest harm that strikes modern man is perhaps the reduction of their existence to the state of a servile organ. Serving multiple masters is impossible. One cannot pray to the god of money and the god in heaven, but strip away all that was once holy, rob us of the fetters of deism and all that we are left with is the cold-calculus of pure profit-seeking. In this breakdown of the sacred, if God is indeed dead, then we are all little more than whores. To put it another way, God is dead and we are his gravediggers, capital will create the conditions of its own gravediggers in radicalizing the proletarian subjects through exploitation, and

if God is dead, then what will replace it as the Transcendental Signifier? The holy trinity of Greed: Capital, Money, and Commodity Fetishism.

Yet, without a moral base to cling to in the hope of positing an ethical utopia, we are teetering on horizon lines of flight becoming an immanent component of production. Not to fetishize production or factories, but I am posing a rupture to the base that breaks through with new anti-productive agents. The mad, the disabled, the deviants, the marginal among others hold a place where revolutionary subjectivity could emerge out of this omni-crisis at any time. It is the biggest trick of all that this delusional game continues on and actually works to maintain some semblance of hegemonic order where the subjects remain predominantly in place. Mythos of greed is all it takes to devalue our existence to the point of mere subjection. Georges Bataille clearly influenced Baudrillard on this point quite eloquently: "Myth is perhaps fable, but this fable is placed in opposition to fiction if one looks at the people who dance it, who act it, for whom it is living truth" (Bataille 1985; pg. 232).

It is the myth that holds the community together in solidarity with total existence, of which it is a tangible expression. To have a community, to feel togetherness, one must also identify those who are outside of the group. Any national identity, any community, must have a constitutive outside; an enemy-Other. More over, politics in its most barbaric form has been the playing out of the crudest manifestation of this baseline ideology "Us" versus "Them". Transcendence of this horrific distinction is more or less impossible, probably because it is instinctually borne out of the lower regions of our territorial reptilian brain, a stratified vestige of the Paleolithic Era. Capital does little to assuage this lower functioning violence of our primal drives. The illusion is that the violence is merely hidden in privacy, and out on the margins away from the hegemonic upper classes. In fact, establishing moral high ground on prohibitions and taboos merely makes the thrill of transgression much more intense.

This is why Bataille and Baudrillard often claimed they were searching for the terror of evil. Evil is love. More often than not, this is true, but not in the sense of a naturalism. Yet, if ideology is used as the rationality of capitalism then this quote represents a pseudo-anti-naturalism, rather than naturalization. Denaturalizing nature, a preeminent trait of resistance moving towards libidinal escalation, rupture, and transgression. Moreover, Transgression cannot be a commodity, it is irreducible to fetishism primarily because commodities are forms, and transgressions are the antithesis of all form. Transgression is the rupture of form. Transgression is the purity of formlessness. Transgression is reminiscent of the lumpenproletariat propertylessness of a body external to production. If this analysis of transgression and form makes sense, then Antonio Negri was alluding to a Bataillean-Baudrillardean point in Marx Beyond Marx: "Proletarian violence is symptomatic of communism." (Negri 1979; pg.174). To suppress violence created out of class composition is to deliver the proletariat tied hand and foot over to capital.

The holy trinity I spoke of earlier: Capital, Money, Commodity are emptied forms, but not yet constitutive of political formlessness. These movements constitute the epitome of sacred decadence. Form without content. What a nihilist would do is breakdown all the dimensions of form. This involves stepping beyond the claim issued by Walter Benjamin at the end of his Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction that history has reaches the apogee of alienation where humans can experience their own destruction as an aesthetic pleasure of the highest form. "This situation of politics which Fascism is rendering aesthetic. Communism responds by politicizing art." (Benjamin; 2007; pg. 241). It is not necessarily in line with what Friedrich Nietzsche called the plight of those within the confines of slave-morality who are doomed to merely, 'stylize their freedoms' (Nietzsche 1977). There is hope, but the hope will not take the form of peaceful protest, but rather violent resistance breaking down prohibitions. Replacing this "No" of prohibitive asceticism with the "Yes" of hedonistic transgression. Politics, in this sense, is an illusion we have forgotten is such.

Endnotes

1. Russell, Marta, and Malhotra, Ravi. "Capitalism and Disability". Socialist Register, volume 38.

2. Marx, Karl. Grundrisse. Penguin Classic Edition 1973. Pg. 201-203

3. See also – Lyotard, Jean-Francois. Libidinal Economy, pg.95-155 & 201-243. Lyotard's analysis of the pre-depression era of speculative capital in America during the 1920's is eerily reminiscent of the lead up to the Global Financial Crisis in 2008. Politics

gives us the illusion of change, when the real factors that lead to change are the relations of capital, money, and circulation. Sovereignty is nothing more than the meek inheritors of market forces often beyond the control of a lone head of state.

4. Marx, Karl. Grundrisse. Penguin Classic Edition 1973. Pg. 507 & 513.

5. Althusser, Louis. Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses.

6. Foucault, Michel. "Folie et deraison: histoire de la folie a l'age classique". "absence of work" is the translation of "une absence d'oeuvre", pg. 15.

7. Bataille, Georges. The Accursed Share volume one. Zone Books. New York, 1991. Pg. 58.

8. Ibid.

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Media and Massacre: A Comparative Analysis of the Reporting of the 2007 Virginia Tech Shootings

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Introduction

On April 16, 2007, Seung-Hui Cho launched what would eventually result in the largest mass casualty school shooting to date.[1] He first murdered two students in the West Ambler Johnston dormitory on Virginia Tech's campus. After a two-hour break, during which time he sent a detailed manifesto to NBC chronicling his hatred for society and prepared for what he viewed as a battle, Cho entered Norris Hall and opened fire. In his wake, he left an additional 30 students and faculty members dead. Over the course of the day, millions of people turned to media outlets as their sources of information. Fox News reported 1.8 million viewers tuned in to watch the breaking story unfold, while CNN reported 1.4 million viewers (Garofoli 2007). MSNBC.com also reported 108.8 million page views on their website (Garofoli 2007).

Though school shootings have appeared in historical references since as early as 1913, it was not until the late 1990s that these events became viewed as epidemic across the United States (Muschert 2007a). Shootings at schools in Jonesboro, AR (Westside Middle School), Pearl, MS (Pearl High School), Springfield, OR (Thurston High School), and perhaps most infamously, Littleton, CO (Columbine High School) were thrust into the nation's consciousness through the media. As few people will ever experience a school shooting first hand (Muschert 2007a), their collective understanding about the phenomenon is derived mainly from the media (Birkland and Lawrence 2009; Chermak 1995; Muschert 2007a). Information is disseminated across a variety of reporting styles, which in turn is received and processed differently among news consumers. This effect, often referred to as **mediatization**, refers to society's dependency on the media in constructing their understanding of "reality" (Hjarvard 2008). The increased attention on media events leads to them taking on a life of their own, and essentially what is presented in the media becomes "more 'real' than the real-life events" (G. Muschert personal communication, June 15, 2011).

The framing of a school shooting in the media also contributes to mediatization. The present study examines the 2007 Virginia Tech Massacre for a one-month period following the event in two nationally recognized newspapers – The New York Times and The New York Post. The Times is considered to be more "hard news," while The Post is stylistically more "infotainment". It would be expected that these different reporting styles would yield different mediatization outcomes for the shooting. This study seeks to examine differences in news content between these two papers, and then discusses how these different approaches may have contributed to the mediatization of the Virginia Tech Massacre and school shootings as a phenomenon.

Review of Literature

School shootings typically have been a difficult phenomenon to define. One commonly accepted definition

is that school shootings are those that "take place on a school-related public stage before an audience; involve multiple victims, some of whom are shot simply for their symbolic significance or at random; and involve one or more shooters who are students or former students of the school" (Newman, Fox, Harding, Mehta, and Roth 2004: 50). Though such incidents as Columbine and Virginia Tech suggest that school shootings are a cause for national concern, it is actually the media coverage of these rare events that concentrates attention on them, which are not indicative of actual levels of school violence (Muschert 2007a).

Newsmaking and Violence in the Media

Crime news plays a prevalent role in today's society (Cerulo 1998; Schildkraut and Donley 2012), and in some instances, the mass media can serve the function as the primary source of information for up to 95% of the general population (Graber 1980; Surette 1992). This drastic dependence on the mass media emerges through the lens of **fast capitalism**, a term coined by Ben Agger (1989) to describe the transition to an economic model that exists "by objectifying and commodifying all human experience" (p. 6). In an era filled with up to the minute news and reality television, one need to do little more than press a button to capture the human experience from the comfort of their own living room. This represents a shift to a more "infotainment society" (Kellner 2003: 11), a shift that has also impacted the way in which social audiences view violence (Cerulo 1998).

Crime news is essentially a product that news producers want to sell to their audience (Buckler and Travis 2005; Chermak 1995; Johnstone, Michener, and Hawkins 1994; Pritchard and Hughes 1997) and more viewers equals more money. As a result, the media tends to disproportionately report on violent crimes (Schildkraut and Donley 2012, Surette 1992), and as Surette (1992: 246) notes, "presents a world of crime and justice not found in reality." Violence in the media can be divided into three types – deviant violence (acts that are heinous and unacceptable), normal violence (acts which may be considered justifiable or acceptable), and ambiguous violence (which cannot be classified) – and which category a story falls in will impact its formatting and its prevalence (Cerulo 1998: 6).

While the process of mediated communication may seem somewhat of a simple and direct process – the media gets the story, the media airs the story, and viewers consume the story – the reality is that the process of mediatization is far more fluid. For instance, with such an abundance of crime news to choose from and never enough time to air it all, media conglomerates must rely on public interest to determine what gets aired and what gets left on the cutting room floor (Chermak 1995; Gans 1979; Maguire, Sandage, & Weatherby 1999; Surette 1992). Once the decision of what to air is made and the story hits the airwaves, the focus becomes ensuring that the audience's attention is both captured and kept (Cerulo 1998). If audiences latch on to a story and the media has what is considered "ratings gold" (as with the cases of both Columbine and Virginia Tech), they will communicate this approval back to the media who will in turn continue to turn out stories in an effort to keep their viewers hooked. If the audience conveys a dissatisfaction or disinterest in the story, the networks will either rework or replace with a different story. This process involves a continual "dialogue" or ongoing communication between the senders and receivers of mediated messages (Cerulo 1998; Chiricos, Padgett, and Gertz 2000; Luke 1989).

Though a fluid (or as Cerulo (1998) notes, dynamic) process, the mediatization of a news story still relies on three important and distinct components – the production of the content, the content itself, and the consumption of the content. The production phase involves journalists and editors deciding what stories are presented and which are not (Chermak 1995; Gans 1979; Liska & Baccaglini 1990; Lundman 2003; Meyers 1997). Newsworthiness, which Surette (1992: 60) defines as "the criteria by which news producers choose which of all known events are to be presented to the public as news events," is based on a number of factors including (but not limited to) the target audience and journalistic style of the news producer (Schildkraut and Donley 2012) as well as how news makers perceive their consumers' opinions and values (Cerulo 1998; Gans 1979). Additional factors contributing to newsworthiness include the characteristics of both the victim(s) and offender(s), the nature of the act, and the context in which the act occurs (Cerulo 1998). Ultimately, the need to produce news efficiently and with a quick turnaround affects the manner in which such newsworthiness is assigned (Chermak 1995; Gans 1979).

Research on media consumption is as vast as the disciplines through which it extends. In examining the relationship between crime news and media consumption, however, the focus is more defined. After all, the majority of the public's perceptions and understanding about crime, criminals, and the criminal justice system are derived from the media (Dowler 2003; Pollak and Kubrin 2007; Surette 1992). One important consideration that has been the focus of much research (see for example Chiricos et al. 2000; Dowler 2003; Heath 1984; Liska and Baccaglini 1990) is whether fear among news consumers is an outcome for violent, sensationalized news stories. Chiricos et al.

(2000), Heath (1984), and Liska and Baccaglini (1990) for instance all found that an abundance of non-local crime news can make residents of a particular locale feel safer, yet even so, homicide stories are the strongest predictors of fear among consumers. Gerbner and colleagues (1980) found the patterns of consumption also impact consumers' fear of crime – the greater the amount of television consumption, the higher the level of fear.

The content itself is essentially a by-product of the production and consumption of news and how the news is consumed is also important, as the manner in which the content is reported can have varying effects on consumers' perceptions of crime. For instance, Hjarvard (2008) posits many of people's social interactions take place via the media. The continual reinvention of social media, with the introduction of such sites as Facebook and Twitter, also helps to fuel media consumption (Schildkraut forthcoming). For instance, when news of a school shooting breaks, these websites become a lifeline of sorts for victims reaching out to assure others they are okay, as well as family members searching for loved ones. Couldry (2008) also posits that the use of such sites has become a vehicle for "digital storytelling" that helps to immortalize the events (p. 381). Other forms of social media, including weblogs, personal and memorial websites with photos and message boards, and even personal videos captured by cell phone and posted on YouTube also can serve as archives (Couldry 2008). The content of the story that is ultimately presented to news consumers is further influenced by the manner in which the story is framed, which is the discussion that follows in the next section.

Media Framing

The mediatization of school shootings is largely influenced by the way news stories are framed. Similar to mediatization, much of the literature on media framing revolves around the political agendas that are presented to society. Though the concept of framing, first introduced by Goffman (1974), was introduced to explain how members of society make sense of the world around them, it also has been refined as an explanation for the impact of the media. In a broader sense, media framing has become a way for presenting complex social issues to make them accessible and relatable to the intended audiences (Gans 1979; Scheufele and Tewksbury 2007).

A media frame has been defined in the literature as "a central organizing idea for news content that supplies context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration" (Tankard 2001: 100-101). Reese (2007) suggests that media frames may surface as certain aspects of a particular news story and its "reality" are emphasized. Entman (1993) also proposes that "to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation" (p. 52). From this idea has stemmed the notion of content bias, which has been described as patterns in framing that result from the influence of social institutions, media routines, or media hegemony (Reese 2007; Shoemaker and Reese 1996).

Scheufele (1999) posits that framing is not restricted to either a macro-level or micro-level construct but rather can address issues across both. This movement between levels allows the media to change the presentation of information over a continuum. Muschert and Carr (2006) also explain that the media can influence perceived public reality by changing the frames of the news coverage during an event. The change in frames helps to highlight different features of a particular news story that the media select as important (Altheide 2009; Chyi and McCombs 2004; Muschert 2007b). This enables the media outlet to keep the audience hooked by providing fresh content (Altheide 2009).

Cerulo (1998) builds on Luke's (1989) discussion of media fluidity in examining the framing process. She suggests that violence in the media is presented through one of four distinct sequences of narration – the victim sequence, the performer sequence, the contextual sequence and the doublecasting sequence (p. 5). Both the victim and performer sequences highlight the perspectives of the respective social actors. In particular, Cerulo (1998) notes that newsworthiness can be influenced by framing stories around out-group or minority perpetrators who do not fit the common social profile, or those victims who are perceived as "unlucky bystanders caught in the wrong place at the wrong time" (p. 26). She also notes that framing particular acts based on their nature (especially those using excessive force) and the context of the act can impact how the audience receives and perceives the act (Cerulo 1998).

Columbine High School in the Media Framework

To date, there has been very little systematic (rather than conceptual) research on the Virginia Tech Massacre.

However, there is a considerable amount of research on the Columbine High School shooting, as this is typically the benchmark case to which all other school shootings are compared (Altheide 2009; Muschert and Larkin 2007). On April 20, 1999, students Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold launched an attack on their high school, leaving 12 students and one teacher dead (United States Federal Bureau of Investigation 2003)[2]. The changes in framing of Columbine over the hours and days as the story unfolded yielded many different contexts in which to try to understand why this event happened and what had taken place.

Initially, as the story broke, news of the events was confined to the community (Chyi & McCombs 2004). By the end of the day, however, the news had spread across the country and the world (Chyi and McCombs 2004; Muschert, 2009). The initial focus of the reporting was on community and police reactions (Muschert 2009). As the reporting progressed, reactions came from those who were not directly involved with the school, the shooting or the Littleton community (Muschert 2009). Discussion went from safety in Littleton to safety in all suburban area high schools and new agendas including the gun control debate took center stage (Altheide 2009).

In addition to speculation about all students' safety, the way in which the media framed Columbine opened discussion about Harris and Klebold, as well as their victims. Most importantly, everyone sought to answer the all-elusive question of **why**. The media tried to fit this event into many different frames (Altheide 2009; Frymer 2009; Muschert, 2007a,b; Muschert and Ragnedda 2010). In several instances, they framed the shooting as an instance of domestic terrorism and compared it to the Oklahoma City bombing (Altheide 2009). In later years, the media would again try to link Columbine with terrorism by suggesting similarities between Columbine and 9/11, as well as between Klebold and Harris and Al-Qaeda (Altheide 2009). The killers would be portrayed as "alienated youth gone horribly wrong" (Frymer 2009: 1387). Victims, including Isaiah Shoels, Cassie Bernall and Rachel Scott, would be framed as both martyrs and specific targets of the killers – Shoels because of his race and Bernall and Scott for their religious beliefs (Muschert 2007b). In sum, Columbine became a problem-defining event that is still recognized as such years later (Muschert 2007a).

The Present Study

There has been considerable speculation about the social impact of the Virginia Tech shooting. The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press (2007) found Virginia Tech to be the leading news story of the week of occurrence, accounting for more than half of the news coverage presented. Other stories that were followed that week included the war in Iraq, a critical ruling on abortion legislation and the 2008 presidential campaign (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 2007). Network news stations devoted over 60% of coverage to the shooting, while the cable news networks allocated 76% of their coverage to the shooting (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 2007). However, in relation to Columbine, Virginia Tech was the fifth most closely followed school shooting behind Columbine, Jonesboro, Springfield, and the Amish Schoolhouse massacre with public interest around 45% of polled Americans (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 2007).

Though examining the full process of media decisions is important, examining each component (the production, the consumption and the content itself) independently can also be beneficial in gaining insight into the process as a whole. The present study takes the first step by examining the content of media relating to the Virginia Tech Massacre. By utilizing mediatization effects and the framing by the media, the victims, the perpetrator and the events as a whole are examined to gain insight into how the media create our impressions of school shootings through reporting styles. To date, while research has been conducted with relation to media framing and television news, virtually no study has examined the construction of the shooting incident and the people involved (perpetrator, victims and community) within the print medium (newspapers and magazines). This study seeks to fill this gap within the literature by examining the evolution of the story of the Virginia Tech Massacre within the newspaper medium over a one-month period following the initial date of the shooting. I also discuss how these results may influence both the production and consumption phases.

Methodology

Data

All articles pertaining to the Virginia Tech shooting were collected from two newspapers, The New York Times

and The New York Post. The Times was selected for its "hard news" approach and because it is often viewed as a national standard for printed news coverage (Altheide 2009; Muschert 2002). In many instances, The Times acts as a source of news for other publications that may reprint their articles (Muschert 2002). Conversely, The Post was selected for its tendency to report stories in a more "infotainment" style. Though "infotainment" news will report crime in a factual manner, there is the tendency to sensationalize the facts in order to capture a broader reader audience (Altheide 2009; Surette 1992). Beyond their stylistic differences that support the main research question in this study, The Times and The Post were selected because they are both nationally distributed newspapers from the same region. Additionally, both papers have readership totals in excess of 500,000[3], as well as an equally strong online presence[4].

A search was conducted through each newspaper's online archive using the searchable term "Virginia Tech." In total, 181 articles were found in The Times and 76 articles were found in The Post. From there, articles pertaining to sporting events or opinion and editorial articles were discarded from the dataset. Opinion and editorial articles were excluded as the focus of the present study is on stories that are considered actual news accounts. This left a final dataset of 63 articles from The Times and 50 articles from The Post.

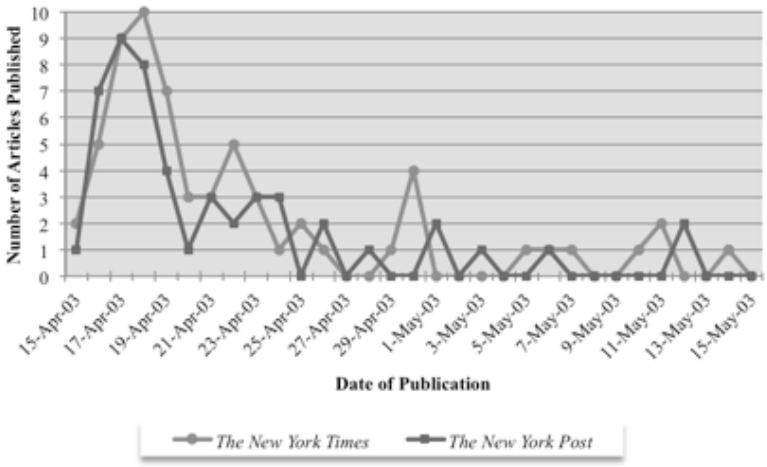

Figure 1. Distribution of Articles By Paper and Publication Date

The present study covers the period between April 16, 2007 (the day of the shooting) and May 16, 2007. Researchers have previously utilized the one-month period in examining other events, such as The Columbine High School Massacre (e.g., Chyi and McCombs 2004 or Muschert 2007b). McCombs and Zhu (1995) have previously noted that coverage on public issues typically lasts an average of 18.5 months. However, Chyi and McCombs (2004) found the life span of the Columbine Massacre to be only about month (p. 23). The limited span of coverage for school shootings could be due to Downs' (1972) notion of the "issue-attention cycle," whereby interest in intense issues gradually fades and these focal points are replaced by the media and the public by another intense issue.

Coding

A qualitative mixed analytic approach with open coding, graduating upwards to axial coding, is utilized to find underlying themes within the articles. Strauss and Corbin (1998) define open coding as "the analytic process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in data" (p. 101). This process allows for identification of specific words in each statement that are made within the context of each article. Altheide (1996) also notes that the repetition of certain words or phrases can add emphasis to the symbolic meaning of the story, regardless of whether the article is factual. These words are used to begin conceptualizing categories that eventually lead to themes in the articles. For this particular study, key words and phrases, such as the names of the shooter and the victims, descriptors or adjectives identifying either, and descriptors of the shooting as an event, were coded during this phase. The following is a sample of the open coding technique utilized, as illustrated with an

article published in the New York Post (Sheehy 2007):

> A baby-faced madman in a "Boy Scout-type outfit" yesterday strolled onto the bucolic campus of Virginia Tech University and turned it into hell on Earth - killing 30 students and two teachers before blowing his brains out in the worst shooting massacre in U.S. history.
>
> As terrified victims screamed, "Oh, my God!" flipping over their desks to dodge flying bullets and smashing windows to leap from second-floor classrooms, the gunman methodically walked through the halls of a building at the prestigious engineering school and coldly fired into classrooms.

CODING LEGEND	
Shooter's Sense of Innocence / Youth	Shooter As The Feared
Shooter Behavior: Anger / Enraged	Shooter Behavior: Calculated / Planned
Shooting As An Infamous Event	Victim Behaviors and Reactions

After analyzing each article line by line using open coding, axial coding is used to delve deeper into the investigation with a higher level of abstract conceptualization. Axial coding, while a complex method, could be summed up simply as assembling concepts into categories, which developed out of the data itself. Strauss and Corbin (1998) note, "The purpose of axial coding is to begin the process of reassembling data that were fractured during open coding. In axial coding, categories are related to subcategories for more precise and complete explanations about phenomena" (p. 124, italics in original). The phenomena are references for the issue or controversy being researched, and the categories provide a link relating the ideas or concepts found in open coding through comparable characteristics. It is important to note that in this study, the coding and categorizing of terms was discrete, meaning that the key words or phrases could only belong to a single category (Muschert 2002). The articles are then further analyzed for the frequency of terms or concepts within the articles, and then summarized to suggest themes or ideas that were more prevalent or heavily saturated within the datasets.

Analysis and Findings

Reports about school shootings are composed of many elements, including the perpetrator, the victims and the event itself (Chermak 1995). The way a story is framed may be based upon all of these elements together, individually, or in some alternate combination (Chermak 1995). As such, in order to determine the full impact of the Virginia Tech shooting, this analysis examines each of the three elements' individual constructs in respect to the way the news stories were framed. The concluding section discusses the convergence of these elements and how they impact the overall mediatization of the event. Noteworthy words within each passage are emphasized in italics (Spencer 2005).

Virginia Tech: The Event

The expressions used to describe the tragic event itself are as varied as those describing the killer and the victims. The Virginia Tech shooting surpassed the 1991 Luby's Cafeteria massacre[5] in death toll and remains the largest mass shooting (by casualties) to date in U.S. history.

Table 1. Classification of the Event As Extracted From the Articles

Terminology Used To Define the Shooting	**The New York Post**		**The New York Times**	
	References	*Percentage*	*References*	*Percentage*
Worst Mass Shooting in U.S. History	5	6.49	22	25.29
Bloodbath / Bloodshed	7	9.09	1	1.15
Rampage	25	32.47	41	47.13

Killing Spree	7	9.09	2	2.29
Massacre	33	42.86	21	24.14
TOTALS	**77**	**100.00**	**87**	**100.00**

The high death toll and enormous tragedy of the event is a theme that is echoed article after article in each of the newspapers. In particular, it is characteristically the headlines where this theme is most visible, as this is typically the author's first chance to hook readers. A typical headline, particularly on the day following the event, was:

> Massacre in Virginia; 32 Shot Dead in Virginia; Worst U.S. Gun Rampage (Broder 2007)

> College fiend guns down 32: Nightmare at Virginia Tech is worst shooting slaughter in U.S. history (Sheehy 2007)

Table 2. Article References to Other Mass Shooting Events

Terminology Used To Define the Shooting	**The New York Post**		**The New York Times**	
	References	*Percentage*	*References*	*Percentage*
Columbine High School Massacre	5	83.00	16	64.00
University of Texas Shooting	0	0.00	5	20.00
Amish Schoolhouse Shooting	1	17.00	4	16.00
Luby's Cafeteria Massacre	0	0.00	2	8.00
Dunblane School Shooting	0	0.00	3	12.00
TOTALS	**6**	**100.00**	**25**	**100.00**

Writers at both The Post and The Times also utilized previous mass shooting incidents, predominantly Columbine, as a point of comparison for their readers. A number of the articles referenced these events in their discussions of gun control. After the 1999 Columbine High School shooting, gun control legislation had become a primary topic of debate, particularly with regards to stricter controls on the ability to purchase the weapons (Bishop 2007). The ease by which Cho could purchase his weapons, despite a clearly documented history of mental illness, reignited this debate. Further contributing to the referencing of other events came from Cho himself, who in his manifesto sent to NBC News, branded Columbine killers Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold as martyrs (Kleinfield 2007).

Reporting of the Shooter

It could be argued that there is no more iconic figure from the Virginia Tech Massacre than the shooter, Seung-Hui Cho. The April 18, 2007 release of his multimedia manifesto by NBC News caused public interest to soar, calling for the media to turn out more stories on the shooting. In examining newspaper coverage following the event, a number of themes emerged within the context of coverage of the shooter. Each emerging theme provided a new frame in which to understand this tragedy.

Table 3. Conceptual Themes About the Shooter Extracted From the Articles

Themes	**The New York Post**		**The New York Times**	
	References	*Percentage*	*References*	*Percentage*
Shooter As The Feared	77	32.63	73	41.24

Youth / Innocence	27	11.44	15	8.48
Anger / Enraged	28	11.86	36	20.34
Calculated / Planned / Cold	32	13.56	20	11.30
Mental Health / Illness References	72	30.51	33	18.64
TOTALS	**236**	**100.00**	**177**	**100.00**

Arguably, the most prevalent theme to appear in the news coverage is that of the shooter as someone to be feared. In many instances, this was accomplished simply by labeling Cho as a "gunman," "murderer," or "killer." However, other articles, particularly in The Post, took this theme to a more glorified level, such as in this account:

> Thirty-two students and teachers were killed in Virginia a week ago by a maniacal classmate. (Celona, Sheehy, and Sullivan 2007)

Following the idea of the shooter as someone to be feared, the next most prevalent theme pertained to Cho's mental illness, which would become a front-stage topic as coverage progressed. Investigation into the shooting would uncover that Cho had a history of psychological problems, even so far as being declared an imminent danger to himself and others and ordered to receive treatment (Virginia Tech Review Panel [VTRP], 2007). Cho's mental health was the second and third most referenced category in The Post and The Times, respectively, in such excerpts as these:

> One English professor was so freaked out by the shocking, murderous themes of Cho's "plays" that she called the campus police - and anyone who'd listen - to report that he could be a homicidal maniac. (Peyser, de Kretser, and Li 2007)

> The chilling images and rantings of the insane gunman silenced crowds near the stricken campus as they played on television. (Winter, Li, and Gittens 2007)

> It's obviously much easier to realize that someone is dangerously deranged after he has killed 32 people than when dealing with uncertain knowledge in an environment where any wrong (or even correct) move means a lawsuit. (Lowry 2007)

> Campus authorities were aware 17 months ago of the troubled mental state of the student who shot and killed 32 people at Virginia Tech on Monday, an imbalance graphically on display in vengeful videos and a manifesto he mailed to NBC News in the time between the two sets of shootings. (Dewan and Santora 2007)

Perhaps the most interesting frame in which Cho appears double casts him as a "victim and a victimizer" (Spencer 2005: 55; see also Cerulo 1998). A frame such as this also identifies the shooter as a member of either the in-group or out-group (Cerulo 1998). These characteristics, coupled with the shooter's psychological sketch, can also help to guide the audience's interpretation of the shooter's actions. Further, this frame plays seemingly on the juxtaposition of hardened criminal and youthful innocence, such as in these accounts:

> A baby-faced madman in a "Boy Scout-type outfit" yesterday strolled onto the bucolic campus of Virginia Tech University and turned it into hell on Earth - killing 30 students and two teachers before blowing his brains out in the worst shooting massacre in U.S. history. (Sheehy 2007)

> In two photos, he looks like a typical smiling college student. In 11, he aims one or two handguns at the camera, posing as if in an action movie. (Dewan and Santora 2007)

> Any attempt to romanticize madness has an incontrovertible answer in Cho Seung-Hui. This is what madness truly is: lonely, painful, shattering and, potentially, murderous. After seeing the sick trail of misery left by such transgression, can we expend some of the same intellectual energy honoring wholesome normality? (Lowry 2007)

In total, over 400 individual references were made about Cho across 113 articles through several overarching themes. These varying themes about the shooter only helped to fuel people's interest in the event. By portraying Cho through the different lenses, readers were given a killer that could be feared even in death, a notion fueled by the release of Cho's personal manifesto. Though discourse on his mental health status could provide some context for the massacre, it also served to heighten potential social panic about the shooting.

Reporting of the Victims

Previous research (e.g., Chermak 1995 or Muschert 2007b) also has focused on the manner in which victims are framed in media accounts. Chermak (1995), for instance, posits that victims and their stories are often the most dramatic facet of news accounts and garner a significant amount of the media focus. Muschert (2007b) tested this notion in his examination of the media coverage of the Columbine High School victims. He found varying amounts of coverage for each of the victims as well as several narrative themes that were applied to the victims' coverage (Muschert 2007b).

Unlike the shooting at Columbine where all of the victims were killed in a single incident, the Virginia Tech victims were killed in two separate incidents, though the shooting is largely classified as one event. The first shooting occurred in the West Ambler Johnston Hall dormitory early in the morning, where Cho shot and killed freshmen Emily Hilscher and senior Ryan Clark (VTRP 2007). Hilscher and Clark were the two most prominently featured victims of the Virginia Tech massacre. Hilscher, the most published victim, was suspected at one point to be directly linked to Cho, though this was later dispelled.

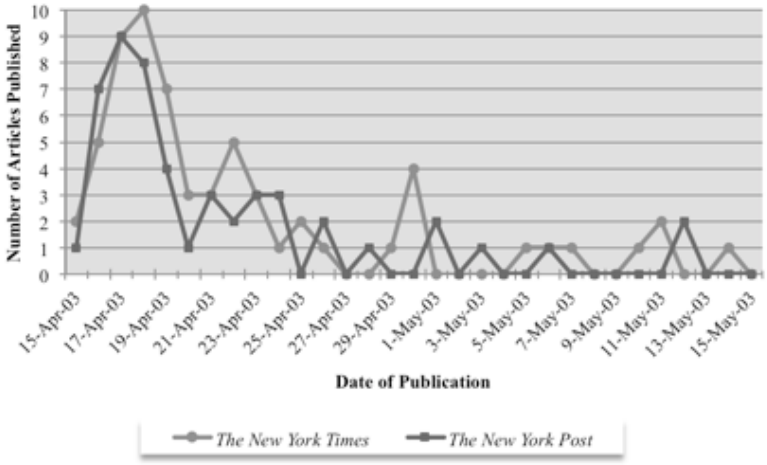

Figure 2. Number of References By Victim

The remaining 30 victims were shot and killed nearly two-and-a-half hours later in Norris Hall on the other side of the campus (VTRP 2007). Of these, professor Liviu Librescu was the most covered victim from this site in both The Post and The Times. Librescu, a Holocaust survivor, died as he blocked the classroom door with his body, sparing his students' lives as they escaped through the window (Belluck 2007). The remaining four professors – Kevin Granata, Jocelyn Couture-Nowak, Jamie Bishop, and G.V. Loganathan – all received similar amounts of coverage (two to four mentions) in The Times, but only Bishop, a German professor, received any coverage in The Post. While all of the students killed in the massacre received at least one mention in The Times, 18 of the 25 students received no coverage in The Post. Of the remaining seven students, six received mention in one article, and one student – Julia Pryde – received mention in two. In The Times, freshman Rhima Samaha was the most covered victim with five mentions. Samaha had an interest in dancing, but had also attended the same high school as Seung-Hui Cho (Urbina and Lee 2007).

Table 4. Themes About the Victims Extracted From the Articles

Themes	**The New York Post**		**The New York Times**	
	References	*Percentage*	*References*	*Percentage*
Heroism	5	20.83	4	7.55
Drive / Determination	5	20.83	5	9.43
Energy / Skill / Zest for Life	2	8.34	9	16.98

Academic / Job Accomplishment	6	25.00	9	16.98
Personality / Moral Character	6	25.00	26	49.06
TOTALS	**24**	**100.00**	**53**	**100.00**

The majority of the discourse on the victims focused on celebrating their lives and their accomplishments. References to their personality traits were the most prevalent theme discussed. Both papers touched upon the victims' amiable natures, willingness to help and personal spirit. Academic or job accomplishments also were discussed. Of the students that were killed during the massacre, Jarrett Lane was valedictorian of his high school (Urbina and Fernandez 2007), and Henry Lee was salutatorian of his high school (Belluck, 2007). Professor Kevin Granata was considered a leader in his field (Belluck 2007), and all professors were each highly accomplished in their own right. While there were many heroes on the day of the shooting, one emerged in nearly all references – Liviu Librescu. Accounts within the articles trumpeted Librescu's final act:

> About 300 people showed up at the Shomrei Hachomos, an Orthodox chapel. They arrived to recognize a remarkable, resilient life and an act of courage that ended that life. (Moynihan 2007)

> Mrs. Librescu, 72, called his act of heroism "very typical . . . He was always, always helping, how[ever] he could. But he was not able to help himself." (Bulliet 2007)

In sum, The New York Post referenced only 11 of the victims in their 50 articles, whereas The New York Times referenced each victim at least once. Nevertheless, The Times had over three times the number of references to victims with 78 references, compared to just 23 in The Post. This is a contrast to the reporting of the shooter, which The Post focused on more heavily in their reporting of the event. The Post also ran more single-victim referenced articles than The Times, which chose to publish more victims in a single article as a grouping of biographical sketches. Notably, three of the victims who were referenced in articles had ties to the tri-state area – Matthew LaPorte was from New Jersey, Caitlin Hammaren from upstate New York, and Julia Pryde also from New Jersey.

Discussion

It is not entirely surprising that, given their sensational nature, cases like Virginia Tech receive so much media coverage. Murder typically receives the most attention of any type of crime news story (Chermak 1994, 1995; Maguire et al. 1999; Surette 1992), and some researchers have even found that stories of homicide can account for up to 40% of news coverage (Chermak 1995; Graber 1980; Pollak and Kubrin 2007). In order to capture and keep the audience's attention – the main goal Cerulo (1998) sees for news producers – the media may focus on cases that are high-amplitude (Johnstone et al. 1994) or those that specifically "deviate from what is statistically normal" (Chermak 1994: 580). As such, the abundance of news about crime, and more particularly homicide, can enable society to view violence as "normal" (Cerulo 1998).

The contributors to the production phase – editors, reporters and writers – must take a number of factors into consideration when deciding what to report on and how the material should be presented. If the goal is to hook an audience and keep them there (in hopes of increasing ratings and revenues), then the framing of news stories must play to audiences' interests (Cerulo 1998). However in doing this, newsmakers run the risk of disproportionately reporting an issue, which can have any number of effects on the news consumers. For instance, the amount of coverage for both the Columbine and Virginia Tech shootings provides viewers with an incorrect understanding of just how frequent these events are occurring. While on average school shootings occur less than 10 times per year (both preceding and postdating Columbine), the heightened media attention and sensationalization of selected cases makes the problem appear much more epidemic (Muschert 2007a; Muschert and Ragnedda 2010; Newman 2006; Sorensen, Manz, and Berk 1998).

The sequence through which the stories are reported can also impact the relationship between news producers and their consumers. Victim sequences, which appear to be the focus of The New York Times, may be more relatable

to the reader (Cerulo 1998). By stressing the victims of the crime, newsmakers are at the same time emphasizing the wrongness of the crime (Bleyer 1932; Cerulo 1998). But is this enough to keep audiences hooked? Ratings would suggest otherwise. In fact, as an "infotainment society" (Kellner 2003: 11) built upon the notion of fast capitalism (Agger 1989), news consumers tend to gravitate more towards the performer sequences (Cerulo 1998). Audiences typically favor stories that are more graphic and violent (Chermak 1995; Gans 1979), and those committed by members of the out-group are often more heavily emphasized (Cerulo 1998), as was evident in the reportings in The New York Post.

There are a further number of implications both as a result of the shootings and the way in which the shootings are reported. Discourse after Virginia Tech called for a number of issues to be addressed. Among these were making schools safer, better emergency response procedures and stricter gun control legislation. In reality, school violence has been on the decline for quite some time (Best, 2006; Burns & Crawford, 1999), yet a few "bad apples" overshadow such statistics. Virginia Tech police, like the SWAT teams responding to Columbine, were criticized for their response efforts. Many believe, and subsequently propagated through the media, that the Norris Hall shootings could have been prevented with a little better police work and more notification (King 2007/2008). As a response, college campuses nationwide immediately turned proactive in introducing new or refining existing emergency response plans that included multimodal communications to campus community members and more intense security measures (Luke 2007/2008). Gun control advocates and politicians battled back and forth about whether to repeal nationwide bans prohibiting firearms on campuses (Agger 2007/2008; King 2007/2008). Additionally, discourse spread like wildfire through the media about the legal loophole in Virginia's mental health laws that let Cho slip through the cracks – and legally purchase his weapons.

Cerulo (1998) posits that certain methods for storytelling can potentially reduce an audience's tolerance for violence. This can occur when news producers shift to performer sequence (Cerulo 1998), as that which occurred with the release of Cho's multimedia manifesto. Many news consumers actually objected to the airing of the video, citing that it gave Cho the platform he wanted to propagate his messages of death and destruction (Agger 2007/2008). The media can also use these stories to sway public opinion (Chermak 1994; Surette 1992), as occurred with Fox News' broadcasting Cho's narratives and subsequently introducing media-hired psychologists (who had never seen Cho's mental health records) to declare to millions of viewers that he was in fact insane (Agger 2007/2008). However, the over-reporting and desensitizing nature of prior stories like Columbine, even while increasing a level of fear of such heinous crimes, showed (in the ratings) that audiences just weren't buying.

A final contemplation for the framing of events, particularly from the sequence of the performer, is what message it sends to others who may be contemplating the same act. Columbine became an archetypal case of school violence because of its nature, and ultimately "pulling a Columbine" became a mantra of revenge for disgruntled and alienated youth (although as Ben Agger (2007/2008) so astutely notes, not all kids who are angry go out and "pump three bullets per victim"). However, Columbine also represents a break (or rather the introduction of an outside force) in the media cycle in respects to material control. While the media essentially had a field day once Cho's manifesto was received and aired by NBC, the counterpart documents for Columbine, The Basement Tapes, have never been released (Schildkraut, forthcoming). In this particular instance, it was the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office who made the call about what material was aired and what was not, rather than the decision being left up to news executives (Schildkraut, forthcoming). Is it then possible that the appeal of Columbine was such because of the unknown? Though the question is purely speculative, one also doesn't hear (at least not with the frequency and longevity of Columbine) that disgruntled students want to go out and "pull a Virginia Tech".

Though the news making process is a dynamic process with many moving parts, examining the components of production, content and consumption separately (as this study has done with the content) is important to provide a stronger foundation with which to understand media logic. In essence, it requires understanding the function of each part of a machine before you can understand how they all work together to make the machine function. Examining these components separately has also provided the opportunity to consider broader implications for the process as a whole. In understanding the content itself, it provides a better opportunity to create an open dialogue with the newsmakers of the production phase to understand their selection decisions and with consumers to understand why they do or do not consume certain stories.

Future research would benefit from comparing two national papers or two metropolitan papers for a more equitable comparison. Additionally, future research would benefit from comparing the findings in this study with reporting of other school shootings or mass disasters to determine if these news organizations use a similar

methodology for presenting unique crime stories or if the Virginia Tech case is atypical. As a mediatized society, the news will continue to be a prime source of information for consumers, and understanding the reporting styles and decisions of producers, as well as the role of content, will be crucial in reducing any potential social panics that can result from tragic events such as the Virginia Tech Massacre.

Endnotes

1. The 1927 attack on a school in Bath, Michigan was in fact a deadlier event, claimed the lives of 45 people; however, the main weapon used was explosives and thus is not considered a "school shooting."

2. The total body count for the Columbine shooting is 15, including the perpetrators who both committed suicide in the school's library.

3. For Monday through Friday paper circulations, The New York Times has a six-month circulation average of 1,150,589 and The New York Post has an average of 512,067 (Audit Bureau of Circulations, 2011).

4. According to Nielsen Online rankings, for the calendar year 2008, The New York Times had an average of 19,503,667 unique site visitors and The New York Post had an average of 4,335,583 unique site visitors (Seward, 2009).

5. In the Luby's Cafeteria event, George Jo Hennard drove his pick-up truck through the front window of the Killeen, TX eatery (Hayes 1991). As patrons rushed to his aid, Hennard opened fire, killing 22 patrons and wounding 20 others before turning the gun on himself.

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In Video Games We Trust: High-Speed Sociality in the 21st Century

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Introduction

Online games continue their rapid emergence as mediators of networked societies. The expansive growth of the console[1] gaming industry and the ability to play games on multiple mediums, from computers to mobile phones to social networking sites[2], is creating a sustained presence of play in our every day lives. The proliferation of play is accompanied by a burgeoning field of discourse, which either assails or champions the impact of ubiquitous gaming (Bjork et al. 2002). However, both popular and academic discussions alike have often overlooked the ways in which broader social changes, including the acceleration of social and productive life, intersect with, as well as reflect the unique material and social conditions found within digital environments. If our interest lies in understanding the social impacts of deterritorialization and time-space compression we should direct our attention towards the paradigmatic, hyper-accelerated spaces of these effects. Networked games are one of these spaces. This paper thus poses a simple question: what are the characteristics of **trust** in the high-speed and contingent environments of online games? To answer this question I begin by broadly characterizing the diverse literature on trust and exploring what this literature can tell us about social relationships arising online. Following this review, I bring Seth Giddings 'microethnography' (Giddings 2006) to bear on a case study, the popular online game Counter-Strike (CS). Emerging from this ethnographic material, I show how human and non-human agents collide to shape the social consequences of trusting online. Finally, I argue that my findings demonstrate how exploring both the technological and social conditions of game events is crucial to inform our understanding of both the large scale organization of social networks and the daily interpersonal negotiation of trust online.

Trust and Its Changing Contexts

Notoriously difficult to define, trust nonetheless remains a crucial concept for understanding a wide spectrum of human interactions. One of the more commonly agreed upon functions of trust is its fundamental role in maintaining social order (Shapin 1994). Trust is instrumental in social relations because we fundamentally lack the ability to determine others' possible actions with certainty. Trust can also be partially defined by contrasting it to confidence (Luhmann 2000). Luhmann considers confidence as a form of general expectation which is not flanked by competing possibilities. Trust however, is about the ability to consider alternatives, and in the face of possible disappointment, put your trust in one option over another. Trust then is dependent on you having previous experience upon which to base your decision, but acknowledging the risks involved in making that choice. Trust is thus a way of managing and predicting contingency through investing in others. At times trust is a carefully thought-out tool, or the outcome of a series of interactions, at other times a leap of faith. Whether trust is rational or irrational, cognitive or noncognitive (Becker 1996) however, social interaction is predicated on trusting individuals sharing a basic world view (Goffman 1959).

There is a wide range of sites where we see trust residing. For Sztompka (1999) trust is seen as most strongly located among our friends, family, and then outwards to co-workers and business partners. As we move into wider spheres, our trust also extends to members of shared communities, political parties and even more broadly, to those of the same ethnic group or religious affiliation. Offe (1999) similarly argues that the strongest situations of trust are those of personal familiarity which has accrued along a continuous or interpreted time axis of past experiences. When we deal with individuals with whom we have no previous experiences or engagements, trust is in its riskiest form. A hesitancy to engage in the risks of trusting is particularly salient in modern societies where there is daily contact with individuals outside of our comfortable spheres of intimacy and this contact is rarely significant in duration. The nature of this contact is such that Offe (1999:11) argues that we "could speak of the structural scarcity of opportunities to build trust." Giddens (1990) suggests that lack of community based trust is in contrast to pre-modern societies where, he argues, life was filled with intimate trust building opportunities. Strong kinship systems and localized relations which promoted strong interpersonal trust were not yet transformed by time-space distanciation, the idea that social structures and the interpersonal interactions they frame are increasingly manifest across great physical space within ever contracting periods of time (Giddens 1991: 20. One result of this compression is that social experiences are increasingly disembedded from locality (Giddens 1990: 100-109). Giddens is also careful to point out however, that trust has not simply disappeared into intimate relationships, but is in fact has been increasingly transposed into expert systems of knowledge and the institutions of modernity which facilitate these interactions.

What happens to trust when it goes 'online' speaks directly to questions about the nature of trust outside of face-to-face, local interactions and the willingness of people to place trust in expert systems. Helen Nissenbaum's early, influential (2001) exploration of these topics examines a number of challenges to trusting online: missing identities (anonymity), missing personal characteristics, inscrutable contexts (113-114) and the responding security measures which have emerged to attempt reduction of complexity and risks. Nissenbaum cautioned that we would need to have the right balance of security and freedom and openness, with their inherent risks, if we were to have vibrant online economic, social and scientific worlds online. In just over a decade since her early writings however, the rapid growth of the Internet and the immense popularity of social networking and online commerce has shifted academic analyses of trust online in the opposite direction, away from looking at how to promote a positive environment for trust, to looking at how to educate users on the dangers of trusting too much in the process disclose sensitive and personal information online (danah 2004; Dwyer 2007; Fogel and Nehmad 2009).

The proliferation of trust online has also become increasingly documented by scholars of online games. A focus on trust in video games is in contrast to much of the popular discourse concerning games. Video games, argue Dimitri Williams (2003), have been typically characterized similar to how other mass media technologies including television and films, once were. Like these other media forms, video games have been held up as vehicles of both positive and negative social change, linked to school shootings on one hand, and civic involvement (Lenhart et al. 2008) and powerful pedagogical tools (Gee 2005) on the other. As networked games become a component of nearly all newly released titles however, the social ramifications of 'gaming' are coming to the fore of discussions of what has become a dominant form of 21st century leisure[3]. T.L Taylor (2006) has eloquently described the powerful and broad networks of trust that move across online-offline boundaries in the game Everquest. Thomas Malaby discusses how games by their very nature as contingent environments provide the structural conditions conducive to trust building and its maintenance in online games (2009). Duchenault et al. (2007) and Steinkuehler and Williams (2006) evoke the image of online games a 'third place' for developing social relations. These studies make it apparent that online environments are increasingly home to a range of social interactions we associate with trusting relationships.

These studies have steadfastly emphasized the rich networks of trust online and have tempered the older, myopic image of the socially isolated gamer. However, Seth Giddings (2006) has argued that these approaches follow a familiar pattern in cultural studies which emphasizes the role of human agency in reproducing and contesting a range of social interactions which are also found in offline environments. Giddings argues that by following this humanist formula, games research has eschewed the very material and coded structures upon which the experience of play depends. In response to these epistemological concerns, this paper argues that if we see trust as being the foundation of a variety of social interactions across interpersonal, community and larger scale groups, that studying trust online is fundamental in contemporary society, and that studying trust online demands we conduct a more detailed analysis of how the unique social and material (coded and tactile) experiences of play (cf. Taylor

2009) influence the formation of trust. In order to draw out these layered, human-machinic interactions I utilize Giddings 'microethnography' which pays explicit attention to the "overlapping circuits of agencies between human players, media technologies, software, and actual space, objects and bodies" (Giddings 2006: 117). Importantly, microethnography looks at game play as events as opposed to stable cultural texts, foregrounding the temporally situated nature of players, machines and code coming together in cause, effect and feedback (ibid 14). Studying game play as events narrows our gaze to the intersecting material, human and broad factors that come into play during a given gaming session and acknowledges the ambiguous status of games as "at once cultural practices (even rituals), media / aesthetic objects, toys, and social (or solitary) events" (ibid 15). I conduct my microethnographic study on the game Counter-Strike in order to help explore two key questions about trusting online in the context of play: Firstly, what role does the materiality of networks in the context of play have in shaping the 'macro' level of social groupings, that is, the social-topographies that determine which individuals can become practice trusting together? Secondly, how does the time-axis of trust building (Offe) interact with the moment to moment negotiation of social coordination in high-speed gaming environments? I argue that although this analysis describes only one such game of CS, the key elements of material-human interaction in play that are elucidated: speed at the macro and micro level of play as mediated by human and material agents, holds true for all CS games and more so, help inductively demonstrate elements of material-human interaction present in all online environments.

Twenty-first Century Leisure

One of the most popular networked games of the early 21st century is Counter-Strike (CS), a first person shooter (FPS) game developed by Min Leh and Jesse Cliffe in June 1999 which sold 10.7 million copies between 1999 and 2008 (Gamasutra 2008), and continues to sell today. In many ways the history of CS is describable in the emblematic terms associated with new social media. CS was first developed as a mod(ification), a heavily tweaked game built from the source code of another wildly popular and commercial game, Half-Life. The first version was released, free of charge, to the public via digital distribution – production of physical copies only began when it was later purchased by the Valve Corporation. The original developers encouraged community involvement and beta versions of game were tested, criticized and complemented by an active online community. Since its inception, CS has been hacked, cheats developed and anti-cheat programs designed in defense. CS also has global reach – it has been used as a high-tech training tool for police in China (People's Daily 2007), as was blamed by pundits as having influenced or even 'programmed' the Virginia Tech killer Seung-Hui Cho (Benedetti 2007; FiringSquad 2007). There are diverse utilities and activities applicable to this seemingly simplistic round-based first-person shooter game, where people play to win as a member of either a five-man Terrorist or Counter-Terrorist team before time runs out.

The game event that in the analysis that follows is based on audio and video recordings of a group of individuals playing a game of CS in late October 2008.

The Social Topographies of Trust in Online Games

It is evening in early October, and a group of young men[4] gather on a Ventrilo (VoIP)[5] server in preparation for a CS scrimmage (scrim). Yale, a software dealer in his early twenties and I, a graduate student, are the first to arrive. Yale and I have known each other through CS for about four years but have yet to meet in person. I have a special fondness for Yale. Two years ago he generously spent two full days designing a poster for my partner to present at an international medical conference. I ask him how he is and he tells me he is "doing great" and that he "really wants to play some CS." I use an instant messaging program built into the game interface to ask our mutual friends Matt and Mike to come into the server. We are all coming from different cities along the east coast of North America. However, we are stuck on finding a 'fifth', a final player for our five player team. Soon enough, Matt tells us he has found someone, a guy named Joe, who has played with some of his other CS friends but never with Matt. None of us have played with him before either. Matt's vetting of Joe is good enough for us. Joe logs onto Ventrilo - "yo", he says simply, adding nothing more.

During the next five minutes we advertise online for another five-player team to play against. The advertisement reads: 5 v 5 EAST de_any cal-im. "5 v 5" is asking for a 5 player versus 5 player match (a normal team size) and "EAST" asks for only teams located in eastern North America. "De_any" makes it clear that we are willing to play

any 'de' map, those that are based on the bomb planting/defusing scenario. Finally, the term 'cal-im' refers to the caliber of skill we want, 'cal' being the 'Cyber Athlete League', a North American based CS league which had a number of divisions ranking from beginners to the best players on the continent. When we eventually find a team that appears to match all of these criteria, we ask them to join our CS server[6] which we rent monthly from a New York based company. The selection of a high-quality gaming server had been an ongoing issue of concern for our team in the previous two months. A high-quality server would provide all of us the best 'ping.' A ping is created by the fundamental properties of distance, speed and material artefacts – which intersect to dictate limitations on the speed of data transmission circuits. We researched half a dozen server companies with names like Electrify, Quantum and Velocity in order to find the fastest server. This particular New York server gave us an average ping delay of 30-50 milliseconds (less than one twentieth of a second) between our individual computers, the game server and its return trip. Being able to play in near 'real time' was a fixation that, over the years, had driven many of us to purchase better hardware, upgrade to faster broadband connections and compete in 'real-life' tournaments where the 'computer-network-game server-computer' data transmission loop is short enough to allow for pings that are 10 milliseconds or below. In a game like CS, getting kills and successfully executing coordinated plays requires near perfect timing. Having milliseconds advantage over your opponent by having low ping was something we always looked for. Among the group of us there was no one who had a ping over the mid 70s.

How we had learned about what ping was 'suitable' was the result of the complex feedback we experienced over time. This feedback was manifest in the way the game software mediated and translates multiple infrastructural, technological and algorithmic layers into physical, tactile experiencesthat players react and adapt to. Players of both first person shooters and other genres of games feel and describe the effect of bad ping (lag) as a visual and physical sensation. A long time CS player, Steve described 'lag' as feeling: "like you are in a straightjacket, that is exactly how it feels, like you're in a straightjacket trying to catch a baseball." His words vividly describe the strong physical and emotional reaction gamers have to interruptions with or the slowing down of data flow between humans, networks and machines. Another gamer describes the feeling of playing, and lagging, as "like trying to speak while someone's strangling you" (World of Warcraft Forums 2009). It is this visceral, emotional and physical reaction that explains the often seething anger displayed by many users who are unable to experience the game as intended. These deep emotional reactions must be understood in the context of material technologies and the cultural expectations developed in game play and the disjunctures that occur within the game when lagging. When users react emotionally to interrupted playing experiences (lag), they are literally feeling the bricolage of infrastructures, hardware and code as translated into their very hands– a tactile, human-machinic intersection manifesting complex machinic-network-geographic assemblages.

Online games are often imagined to be deterritorialized spaces: digital environments that allow sociality to flourish across great geographic spaces in near real time. In reality, however, the social topography of all online games are circumscribed, to lesser and greater extents, by the material properties of networks, servers and computer hardware in interaction with human beings trying to simply 'play'. In the case study of CS described here, all members of our team lived along what could be broadly called the eastern seaboard of the United States and Canada. While we had sometimes played with, and against, players who lived on other parts of the continent, their experiences of 'lagging', that is, slow connection speeds, had pushed them to play on servers that were literally 'closer to home'. This fundamental starting point, where individuals play in relation to an actual server location that hosts the digital environment, has been overlooked in the what I call the 'search for the social' in online games. The context of play in CS is that of a fast-paced shooting game where milliseconds make the difference between life and death. The literal need for speed in CS and similar games has pushed the development of high-end servers, graphics processors and even computer mice designed specifically for gaming, continually accelerating processing and data response times. This is a logic of acceleration, a desire for real-time play and the elimination of the effects of material-geographic space which the game software seeks to overcome. When the still unknown Joe, entered our server for the first time a host of material conditions had been met before he could even shoot his virtual gun for the first time. On the most basic level Joe's computer met the material requirements to play CS, but more importantly, on the level of Internet infrastructures, it was readily apparent that Joe lived in an area with broadband internet and within a limited distance that allowed his ping to be low enough such that he could play comfortably on our server. And while Joe could choose to play on a server with a high ping, the experience of play would more often than not be so frustrating that it would be unlikely. The need for speed imposes material requirements that are negotiated through the human experience of play to greatly influence who plays where and with who else. This material-human agency can be contrasted to the social framework which had brought Joe to our attention. Joe was recommended

and thus vetted through a community of gaming acquaintances. However, while his vetting was important, we would also often play with individuals who had simply responded to an advertising looking for a 'cal-im' (intermediate) level player who was also 'EAST'. Our only requirement that could be mutually and verifiably satisfied before the game would begin was that the player had an 'EAST' ping, that is, under about 70ms. Their abilities and their willingness to cooperate with the team were unknowns until the actual game began. Players who were 'CENTRAL' (imagine a region consisting of the width of the Candian provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan and tracing downwards until you reach the Mexican border) or WEST would rarely play with us or even against us.

At these 'macro' levels, the desire to play at speed and the material conditions that impose delays in the human-machine feedback loop results in the enforcement of a limited geographic scope of trusting networks in online games. Before social-capital can be built with unknown others, before friendships and romance can grow, network infrastructures shift millions of players around the world into the online equivalent of provincialized networks. The scope of these networks is dependent on how individuals and computer networks come together and how the software of particular games creates the conditions of play. In the case of CS, the high speed environment where milliseconds matter, a social topography is created which can transcend national borders but has a relatively circumscribed geographical scope. For gaming environments that are 'slower', such as multiplayer role playing games, the geographic scope expands greatly, crossing up to half the globe, with suitable pings sometimes reaching over 500ms (half of a second) delay before it becomes intolerable for many players. It is only after players in negotiation with servers, networks and their own computers have managed to sort out the pre-conditions for play, do geographically circumscribed social groups finally get to the business of social coordination in the timeframe of seconds and milliseconds in actual game play. This sort of complex coordination remains a difficult business with familiar friends, let alone those you have just met. Returning now to our scrim, we begin to look at the impact of speed at the level of second to second interpersonal play.

Trust Building and The Axis of Time

Back again in 2008, members of opposing team arrive and affirm that their pings are indeed good enough to play on our server. Often when the opposing team connects to a server and finds that their pings are 'bad' or too slow, they will disconnect immediately. In this case the other team is satisfied and has agreed to play on a map called de_nuke, a sprawling three story warehouse-like facility located in a desert, with two large nuclear missiles hanging from the ceiling in the basement. Once in the server, we take this opportunity to orient ourselves and figure out which part of the map each of us will be responsible for covering during the game. As it is our server we have chosen to start on the Counter-Terrorist team, this means each round we must prevent the Terrorists from planting the bomb at one of two bombsites or killing all of us before time runs out. After we play 15 rounds we will switch teams and play as Terrorists. The first team to win 16 rounds will have won the scrim. I offer to cover "ramp", an area that leads down to the nuclear missiles and Yale calls out over the microphone that he will do the same. Matt says that he will watch the outside of the facility. Mike and Joe announce they will watch the inside of the facility for any terrorists trying to plant the bomb in 'upper'.

Figure 2. An image of the map de_nuke with two Counter-Terrorists (dark blue) defending the 'upper' bombsite from two attacking Terrorists (green). Source: gotfrag.com

After both teams are sufficiently prepared, we agree to 'go live' and begin the first 105 second round. The first round is crucial in CS; it is called the 'pistol round'. Both teams start with only pistols which are comparatively weak weapons in the game. Winning the crucial first round means taking one round of sixteen that is necessary to win but also earning the ability to upgrade weapons (to rifles and armours), while the opponent team are left to use pistols for a further two.

The first round begins and we run off to cover our various positions. The Terrorists immediately begin to attack the upper bomb site. Mike yells "pre-nade hut" trying to get his teammate, the new player Joe, to throw grenades into the entrance of a hut shaped structure. In the process of trying to avoid getting shot by the incoming Terrorists, Mike accidently gets in Joe's way who yells over the microphone, "or you could block me, that's a cute idea, and then flash me, wow, wow!" Joe has been blinded by one of the flash grenades thrown by Mike. A frantic series of events begins to unravel. Matt gets killed by a Terrorist outside, I kill one of the Terrorists who subsequently drops the bomb before being planted. The Terrorists shift positions and begin to circle the main building killing Mike and Joe, but also sacrificing two Terrorists. I get killed in the ramp room leaving only Yale and two of the Terrorists. Yale slips down the vents into the basement missile room and hops out of the vent. After an exchange of gunshots Yale manages to kill both of the Terrorists and defuse the bomb before it explodes, barely winning the round.

As the second round starts Mike is still responding to Joe's accusations from the first round. Mike answers, "nah bro, I never shot you" in response to Joe's claim that Mike had not only blinded him in the previous round but also shot him, lowering his health significantly and allowing the Terrorists to kill him more easily. Mike tells Joe to calm down, it's "not the end of the world," he says. The second round is now under way and the Terrorists rush ramp with only their pistols, catching Yale and I off guard. We both die quickly, losing our guns to our opponents. Joe begins to call-out the positions of the Terrorists, telling his remaining teammates to "watch one coming around the ladder!" In the next ten seconds our remaining team members are surrounded and killed with the weapons that Yale and I had dropped - all of us dying in a round we should have easily won. Mike screams out angrily "who was watching outside?" "I was" Matt replies, adding that he has just died. Joe gets on his microphone and yells, "this is fucking stupid! I'm gonna leave if you guys keep pulling this shit."

In the third round we make progress. Despite losing all of our guns and money in the previous round we manage to execute a well-timed grenade rush, damaging our opponents heavily with our high explosives before unloading a barrage of pistol fire. In the next round we stifle the Terrorists' planned strategy of planting the bomb downstairs. By the fourth round Joe casually mentions that he was just, "being a dick on purpose," and not to take his previous comments seriously. Round after round go by in rapid succession, each filled with a wide range of decisions to be made by each of us, each one filled with risk and carried out in a fast-paced and contingent set of game conditions. After playing another six rounds, it is clear that we have the game on 'lock-down'. From what could have been a very rough game for us after the humiliating second round loss, we go on to win ten straight rounds in a row. Near the end of the match we are winning so handily that we are laughing as we run around shooting. Joe and Mike are carrying the team and at the end of the first half, the game becomes so absurdly one sided in our favour that we decide to 'kick' out the other team from the server to find another more challenging team. The first game has lasted a total of 15 minutes from start to finish.

In the downtime that follows the win, Yale and Matt announce that they are no longer up for another game and are logging off, leaving Joe, Mike and I in the server. Mike and Joe continue to talk even after all of the opponents have left the server and my character sits motionless in the game as I relax at my computer. Mike is asking Joe "how do you get on that box," referring to a high wooden structure that most players are unable to get on. They hop on and off of the box for a while and jokingly shooting each other even though they are on the same team. Mike laughs as they miss their shots. After a few minutes I decide that I am also done for the day. In the last seconds before I log out of the server, I hear Mike asking Joe over the headset: "hey, where do you live?"

Over the course of approximately 15 minutes of game play, a complex and fast moving series of events, which together comprise the larger event of a single 'game' of CS has occurred. Poor coordination between players nearly cost us the first round only to be saved by the clutch performance of Yale, we pulled off an upset by winning the third round with only pistols, our new player Joe nearly leaves the server at one point before casually joking by the end of the game and we end by winning 10 rounds in a row before booting the other team from the server. From the perspective of an outsider, the environment of games like CS can appear as one violent shootout after another. More so, because of the speed of game play, CS game play can seem like chaos at times. Indeed, the dromological condition of play means that accidents are always potentiated (Virilio 2007 [1991]) and in fact, are always occurring in play in the forms of a misplaced grenade, the failure to shift positions fast enough, or a momentary lapse in

concentration that ends with your teammate dead. For those who play however, the emotional reaction to these accidents are micro-sociological dramas that epitomizes the deep rooted capacity for humans to absorb themselves fully in what, from the outside, might look like a free for all form of leisure. Often threats are uttered to quit and as so frequently happens in online-games, the promise is muttered that someone is "done with the game," forever. Life at the edge of speed, however, is not a life without memory or pattern. The accelerated contexts of game play do not impose a world of the permanent present, a social context without a past or future. The rapid, complex and emotional acts of coordination demand instant and perfect reaction, or promise disaster: your own death, the loss of a match or an international tournament. These hyper-accelerated near run-ins with disaster occur with regularity and in their social context, are the very building blocks of shared experiences as well as means to determine others' possible future intentions. These patterned and shared experiences, whether gained through low-risk casual gaming or otherwise – play out endlessly, round after round, map after map, game after game. It is within these repetitions that personalities arise, patterns and expectations form and, frequently, trust emerges. Offe (1999), in arguing that the strongest situations of trust arise out of personal familiarity which accrues over a time axis of past experiences was careful to emphasize that this time axis could be actually continuous or just interpretedto be. It is my argument that in high speed online gaming, the speed at which individuals demonstrate their ability to perform a range of important bases for trust: defending others, cooperation, self-sacrifice and so on, are done in a hyper repetitive environment that can create a perceived sense of trustworthiness in the matter of minutes. The moment that Joe began to play with the group of four of us, he entered into that ceaseless dyad between enjoyable and frustrable experiences of play, individuals continually "renegotiate the contradiction between trust and self-protection" (Li et al. 2008: 86) which creates the context whereby he can be integrated into relationships of trust. CS can be seen then, as a socially contingent and materially mediated environment that allows for the rapid-fire practice of trust, trust that can feed on the speed of game play to integrate or reject players within a single gaming 15 minute gaming session.

Conclusion

I have argued that online game play at the intersection of human and material networks shapes both the broad social topographies of trusting relations as well as the day-to-day interactions between individual players producing the pithy, personal trust necessary to sustain these topographies. Using a microethnographic analysis of a single game of CS lasting less than 30 minutes from organization to completion, I have teased out both macro and micro characteristics of trust in play. On the 'macro' level, the requirements of high speed servers, broadband connectivity and the necessary computer hardware, manifests in a social topography that both demonstrates and challenges the deterritorialization of social relations online. Ping in particular arises as a key mediator of social topographies. Ping is comprised of multiple layers of network infrastructure and hardware and manifests in an extremely small but sensibly interpretable delay in the moment to moment actions that comprise game play. The opportunities to build trusting relations with far-flung others thus emerges as always possible in play, however this possibility stretches only as far as the delays imposed by network structures in interaction with what players deem to be reasonable. On the level of micro-events, when ping-suitable servers and individuals have been put into close contact, the moment to moment social coordination of game play occurs at tremendous speeds. It is in a situation like this that Joe, a ringer, entered into a complex dance of strategy, skill and communication with a group of unknown others and through a rapid succession of accidents, demonstrations of skill and communication, managed to emerge out of virtual obscurity into a person with trustworthy characteristics. 'Joe' the 'ringer' became a demonstrably reliable player, someone who could be integrated into a web of trust that demonstrates the social capital and rich trusting relationships apparent to scholars of online games. Indeed, each player in the group, Yale, Mike, Matt and myself had come into this web the same way Joe began to in the fall of 2008.

To understand the social consequences arising out of an accelerating world then, I have argued that we must follow the traces of these temporal changes through unique digital assemblages. At the paradigmatic ends of a culture of acceleration lies one of the major components of our contemporary leisure life – video games. The experiences of play in accelerated social contexts remind us that while games like CS can simply allow for individuals to engage in brief, mindless and anonymous killing, they simultaneously provide the structural scaffolding for the practice of rapid and repeating acts of social coordination. Online games, I have argued, are thus sites at the edges of social coordination at speed, and in these practices demonstrate the expansive power of games to bring far flung

others into trusting relationships while simultaneously reinforcing that the trusting relationships formed will always be rich, territorially mediated social tapestries negotiated in day-to-day play events.

Endnotes

1. 'Consoles' refers to game playing systems which are most commonly connected to televisions. With the most recent generation of console systems (Xbox 360, Playstation 3, Nintendo Wii), individuals are able to play an increasing number of games online.

2. Charles Huang (2011) has suggested that online games are one of the prime traffic drivers for social networking sites such as Facebook and Renren and are effective means of keeping users engaged with the sites for extended periods of time. Facebook currently boasts 600 million active monthly users (Carlson 2011). The Chinese social networking website RenRen has 160 million users as of early 2011 (Hille 2011).

3. I categorize online games here as a 'leisure' activity in regards to the specific ethnographic case I utilize in this article. There is a growing body of studies on the variety of important social, political and economic stakes present in online games (Castranova 2005; Lastowka and Hunter 2003; Burke 2002; Taylor 2006, 2009; Silverman and Simon 2009).

4. There is no hard data on the sex distribution among Counter-Strike players, but mirroring other first-person shooter games I would estimate that over 95% of CS players are male. In Massively Multiplayer Online Games approximately 14.6% of players are female. (Yee 2008)

5. The transmission technologies and software that allow for voice communications over the Internet.

6. Game Server (abbr. server): A game server is a piece of hardware (usually a computer) that controls communication between clients at a remote location. Clients (other gamers) connect to the game server in order to play the game with one another.

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A Player's Web of Significance: A Narrative of a Finnish Online Poker Semi-Professional

Jukka Jouhki

Small Money, Large Issue

A Poker Man's Tale

One night in western Finland in November 2006, Mark (pseudonym), a civil servant and a family man in his mid 30s, was drifting aimlessly through cyberspace when he remembered a conversation he had had with a fellow chess-player earlier that fall. He paused for a minute and then typed a search phrase in Google: "poker room." He clicked on one of the top results and got into a site. He would soon play his first online poker game.

Mark would first bet with play-money and after a few days switch to playing with a few real euros[1]. After learning the game he would invest more and win more – and lose some. His game would improve and his self-control strengthen. Finally, after three and a half years he would count his net winnings for the last year and see that he had won an amount equal to half his salary (ca. € 20 000 or $ 27 000).

Mark would look back and see how, depending on the day, the game had been a thrilling intellectual challenge, a battle, an irritation or an abomination. He would have visions of going pro and being his own master – or quitting the stupid game once and for all. He would see how the game had brought significant new elements into his life: excitement, money, a new hobby, but also questions of ethics, addiction, time-use, family and reputation. He would deny it, but he had become a poker man.

At this point it should be noted that this is not a typical academic horror story about gambling and addiction. This is different. This is what often happens. To put it in the language of anthropology, this text presents a narrative of an agent in a web of significance or, in other words, a person in a culture. As Clifford Geertz continues the idea of Max Weber, humans are suspended in "webs of significance" they themselves have spun. Culture is those webs and to analyze culture is not, as Geertz says, "an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning." (Geertz 1993, 5.) In this article, the culture in question is online poker and the person spinning a web is my key informant, a semi-professional poker player from western Finland whom I have observed playing and whose interviews have revealed valuable details about the cultural context of the game (See also Jouhki 2010).

I will attempt to reconstruct the way an online poker player negotiates his actions in the online and offline worlds and how he places himself in the hegemonic discourses about poker culture. In other words, this is a story about a poker player as he and I see it. Together we will construct an example of how poker manifests itself in a person's life. In addition to the narrative of the main informant, I will also draw on interviews with members of the informant's family, which, I believe, is an approach too rarely taken in gambling studies. The research question of this article could be formulated concisely as:

What is The Web of Significance of an Online Poker Player?

To address my question I have combined interviews and observation in a sociocultural environment limited to one household. Thus my research could be called small-scale ethnography, life history or perhaps more accurately

microethnographical, in that it concentrates on a few people's experiences of a culture. (See e.g. Nakane 2007, 101; Streeck & Mehus 2005, 381-382; Ilcan 2002, 40). However, an ethnography (micro or macro) can never be truly confined to the local surroundings, or as Strathern and Steward (2004, 161) say, microethnography intrinsically relates to macroprocesses which are again mediated locally. This means that although my observations are about one household, they do reflect a culture – a web of significance – that spans the globe. The culture is not purely global, nor it is uniquely local, but glocal, as Roudometof (2005, 113) has it.

> Glocal is responsible for the transformation of people's everyday lives irrespective of whether they are transnational or not. Glocalization leads to two different versions of cosmopolitanism: first, a thick or rooted or situational cosmopolitanism and, second, a thin cosmopolitanism, whereby detachment allows for transcending the boundaries of one's culture or locale.

For the idea of poker being about small money and large issues, as the title of my introductory chapter suggests, I am indebted to Thomas Hylland Eriksen's idea about anthropology being about small places and large issues (Eriksen 2010). At least this is the case in the story depicted here. In Finland, many money-oriented activities such as investing, stock trading or gambling are often considered morally somewhat dubious, if not outright sinful. Gambling in particular, excluding the nationally approved state-run lottery, is commonly seen as a morally questionable activity no matter if you play it big or small. It seems no player can avoid the large issue it has always been. This is also evident in Mark's refusal to use his own name in my research. To avoid moral judgment, he has told only a few of his friends and none of his colleagues about his gaming. Perhaps this is the first significant finding in this study.

Reflections about Method

Mark is a childhood friend of mine, and I meet him half a dozen times a year. One of the reasons I started a research project on online poker in the first place was because I knew Mark had played online poker with moderate success and was eager to share his knowledge, successes, losses and his everyday experience with me, perhaps partly because he did not have many people to share them with. I also thought an anthropological "thick description" (Holloway 1997, 160-161; Geertz 1993) in this case might produce an interesting view of a poker player, so often analyzed purely statistically. Thus, for a year or so I jotted down thoughts, quotes, ideas and observations whenever I met with Mark. I bombarded him with questions face-to-face or by SMS and email. I often observed him play. Whenever it seemed proper, I talked about the game with members of his family.

Then in May 2010 I traveled to Mark's hometown for a week and made our first digitally recorded in-depth interview, a two-hour discussion followed by observations and further discussions. I also persuaded Mark's wife, mother and father to be interviewed and I thus expanded the focus to include Mark's immediate family, something perhaps too rarely done in gambling studies. This text is based on the interviews and all the more casual exchanges with Mark and his family.

Evidently, to have a close friend as an informant in a study has important pros and cons. It is not unusual for anthropologists to become close friends with their informants (Sluka 2007, 123; Wagley 2007, 135-136.) or have their friends become their main informants (Powdermaker 1966, 420 in Sluka 2007, 121). For example the famous ethnographer James Spradley is quite careful not to mix and confuse the roles of friend and informant (Spradley 1979, 25-28). Anthropologist Matt Sanderson's questions about having friends as informants reflect the ones that I contemplated before starting my research.

> Would I be able to view my friends objectively, as a detached observer? Would I be able to ask tough questions? Would I be free to write what I really felt and observed, or would I self-impose censorship because I didn't want to hurt any feelings? And finally, would my friends (informants) take this project seriously? (Sanderson 2010, 57.)

I, like Sanderson, have contemplated whether I have censored anything too revealing about my informant, but I have come to the fortunate conclusion that I have nothing grave to censor. Moreover, I firmly believe that having a friend-informant has helped me to establish rapport and go outside of the comfort zone with my informant. We discussed many negative aspects of Mark's playing because he trusted me and I assured him that his anonymity would be guaranteed. Also, having a friend doing research about him, I think something similar happened to my informant as happened with Sanderson's research.

> I witnessed a transformation in the project. It went from being 'MY' project to 'OUR' project. [...] [R]esearch with friends or previously known associates is possible, and often times the results of such research can be incredibly illuminating [...].

> Being among friends brought added pressure not just to write favourably about them, but more importantly, to be objective and accurate. (Sanderson 2010, 60-61)

The disciplines of cultural research approve of sole-informant studies (see e.g. Spradley & McCurdy 1988, 46; Bauman 1986) but sometimes reject them (see e.g. Aunger 1999). Within fields like life history research they are part-and-parcel of the day's work (see e.g. Cole & Knowles (eds.) 2001; Amos & Wisniewski (eds.) 1995). I realize the pitfalls of having only one main informant. He might not be a "normal" representative of his "tribe" – a problem anthropologists so often worry about. However, in this case I am not particularly interested in generalizing but in what in anthropology is called controlled, holistic impressionism (see e.g. Barfield 1997, 19; Rapport & Overing 2000, 140; Znamenski 2004, xliv). In my work I interpret this to mean a sample saturated in significance. This is a case that reflects the global web of culture, albeit constructing local cultural and personal peculiarities of the particular microethnographical field. In other words, although I do not claim that my case represents a whole, I do assert that the whole is visible in it. Thus my main informant, Mark, is and at the same time is not a perfect representative of his culture. In the end, this text is about constructing a "dialogical self" (Buitelaar 2006, 261), or what I would like to call a rendering of a personal phenomenology.

Finally, a reader of this text will quickly notice the relatively low investment in theoretical references and discourses. I plead with him or her to allow me to concentrate on the voices of Mark and his family, which I consider to be more important in providing a holistic view of poker playing. Poker allows, invites and even seduces one to enter into some high-flown theoretical discussion (see e.g. Jouhki 2010a & 2011), but this time I have specifically wanted to emphasize the agent, the informant, the subject or the representative of the culture and let him tell us about it himself. The themes of this text have arisen from dialogue with Mark and are a result of the fusion of my academic interest with topics that Mark felt it was important to talk about.

Online Poker: A Game and a Culture

To put it very simply, online poker is a game where people play a form of poker (e.g. Texas Hold'em) against each other at an online card table for money. They try to win the bets laid by other players. One wins according to the way one uses his or her cards to play against others. Thus, in the long run, more skillful players win more than less skillful ones. (Svartsjö et al 2008.). As in this article I am less interested in the game itself than in its significance, I will not describe the rules further. More detailed rules are easily available by Purdy (2005, 1-6), Arnold (2003, 114-127) or at Internet sites such as Poker Rules or Texas Hold'em Poker Rules.

Globally, online poker is one of the games played for money that has grown most rapidly in recent years. Americans might think that it is only played in America. Surely it is at least "a pure expression of the American Dream" (Clee & Clee 1998, 73) and poker has the quintessentially and hegemonically American aura around it (although it does have its root in ancient Persia). However, nowadays it is played all over the world. In Finland until January 2011, poker was allowed only in the designated state-run casinos but not online, which meant that poker-playing Finns had to go to foreign pokersites to play. Now the national gambling law has been revised and the state-run gambling monopoly has launched the first online poker room in Finland.

In 2007, according to a survey by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health of Finland, over 100 000 Finns (2 % of the population) played online poker regularly (MOSAAH 2009) and there is reason to believe that today the actual figure is significantly higher, perhaps even 200,000 due to the increasing popularity of online poker[2]. Still, the number is relatively low, which is to some extent due to the "ascetic agrarian ethos of consumption" intertwined with the traditional puritanical and religious values of Finnish society, where money is the root of all evil and one should not make the pursuit of money the goal of one's activities, at least explicitly. In agrarian Finland, one had to use one's money with prudence; the best thing was not to spend it at all, but to save it. (Autio & Autio 2009, 228-229; Autio, Huttunen & Puhakka 2010, 95).

According to a Finnish gambling researcher, Olli Alho (1981; see also Matilainen 2009), the Finnish (Protestant) work ethic demands that wealth should be based on "proper work" and suitable economic activity. The winnings of gambling are "strange money" and at odds with an ethos in which progress in life is based on "honest" work and diligence. Alho refers to Manfred Zollinger, who compares Catholic and Protestant fears about gambling: while Catholics fear what happens if they lose, Protestants fear what happens if they win. In addition, in Finland as in many other countries, people have thought that money games are associated with drinking and prostitutes. Perhaps one more example will clarify the traditional Finnish attitude towards gambling. In the 1960s a Finnish folklore scholar, Juha Pentikäinen, studied 45 samples of folklore about how people broke the Sabbath or disrupted a holy

day in the province of Northern Savo in central Finland. He found that out of the 45 stories he examined, 44 were about gambling. The one remaining story was about dancing on a Sunday. (Piispanen 2009, 183-184.) However, as Matilainen (2009) says, recent developments in gambling have in a way started to domesticate gambling, to make it socially more acceptable.

As a sociocultural phenomenon online poker can be approached in a plethora of ways. It is a game, a form of gambling and a manifestation of the wider cultural phenomenon of online gaming, economics and even globalization. Despite the different possible views, general attitudes towards poker manifest in an entrenched battle between one side that calls it a creative or at least harmless hobby and the other that calls it a harmful addiction. Academia has been more interested in the latter. (See e.g. Svartsjö et al 2008, 13; Schwartz 2007, 447-494.)

The common image of poker culture is of big players moving big money to live in luxury or small players getting a little excitement to escape the everyday. The new and old poker media reproduce a fascinating folklore with hero stories, foxes and hens, sex appeal and battle. Abolitionists attempt to control the recklessness of cyberspace. To them poker-players are ruining their lives by not obeying the traditional dichotomy of work and play. (Jouhki 2010.) Evidently, poker as a cultural phenomenon attracts strong views and emotions. This is also soon shown in the narratives of Mark and his family.

No doubt poker culture – or its mythology – emphasizes huge, fast wins and tries to lure those hesitating on the edge to take the plunge and join the culture, but at the same time it perpetuates the ideology of professional poker being about plodding. Poker heroes might be incredibly rich but it's not about luck. It's hard work, comparable to Christian piety – with a hint of blessing. (Jouhki 2010.) This is the imagery of the poker media. It's the hyperreality (Baudrillard 1994, 12; Perry 1998, 1) of poker. However, my goal here is to describe the "lesser reality", the reality which is everyday in poker, by focusing on a representative of the culture, for whom the occasional can of beer replaces the case of champagne in celebrations and a DVD-player is what one purchases with one's big pot rather than a sports car. No families are broken up and no jobs are lost in this story, so it might seem pointless to the majority of scholars who are interested in problem-based research into gambling. Personally, I feel that the down-to-earth attitude brought out in Mark's narrative is a refreshing contribution to gambling studies.

Player Defining Game, Game Defining Player

The Beginning

For Mark, chess was the king of games and although he had sometimes played poker with his friends he did not think it was a challenging enough game for him. But when a friend of his spoke about the excitement of studying different aspects of poker – a feeling comparable to learning chess – Mark got interested. The problem was that, as a family man, Mark did not have much time for a new hobby. He was also a bit worried about the fast road from playing a small-time game to investing large sums of money. The friend assured him that he played only with bets that could be counted in cents, not euros. Mark had also heard about other chess players winning a lot of money at poker and he had even seen one arriving at a chess tournament in a fancy sports car. He had heard of some young chess players suspending their studies to play poker online. Mark knew that a chess player had qualities that were useful when playing poker.

When he first tried poker out with play-money it felt pretty exciting. Even his wife Helen (pseudonym) wanted to see him play and tried the game herself. Then Mark popped the question to Helen: "How about if I try this with real money?" "Sure," Helen said "as long as it's a small sum." Mark agreed. He only wanted to see if he could win real money, even if just a tiny sum. Mark transferred thirty euros to a gaming account in an international poker website and started to play in the smallest possible tables. He did not play no limit but only fixed limit with a definite maximum raise. On the day he played his first game of poker online, he purchased his first poker manual to minimize the significance of luck in his game.

At first Mark had no visions of getting rich by playing poker. He was just enthusiastic about trying the game. He remembers saying to a friend: "If I can win just the amount of money that a case of beer costs, then, when I have the beer in front of me, I can say I've got that more or less for free." When Mark started to play, he played every day. In a few days he saw his initial thirty euros grow to a hundred, which felt like a huge amount of money. He thought he should withdraw his winnings but because he did not know how to do so, he ended up continuing the game. Soon he had lost his hundred because he tried on bigger tables and playing no limit.

At that point Mark thought that he would not transfer any more money to his gaming account. To do so would have been gambling ("uhkapeli" in Finnish, literally meaning "game of threat"). However, he had noticed that many poker sites arranged so-called free roll tournaments that have real prizes up to a thousand euros but no cost to the player. He took part in one and won some gaming money. He noticed too that playing on a small cash account was difficult and insecure because of the oscillation of wins and losses.

A few months later Mark came across a site offering 50 dollars to all who registered as new players. He was excited: "It can't be true – a fifty for everyone! How can this be!" Now he had what he thought was a lot of money to play with, and he played it aggressively. Mark remembers telling his wife: "Look how easy this is when it's not your own money! Just raise huge amounts and they will fold!" Mark managed to increase his cash to a few hundred in a few days.

When his account rose to about three hundred, for the first time Mark experienced a phenomenon that has since occurred to him at least fifty times. He went into "a tilt". After suffering numerous highly unlikely losses in a row with big pots he lost control and thought, according to his own words,

> Hey, wait a minute. How is this possible! Soon I'll have lost all my winnings. I must get into a bigger table. I'm sure I can do it if I play carefully. I'll just put more money on the table. I want my winnings back.

And, as usually happens, even though one plays very carefully someone will have a better hand. "I lost everything. I got depressed." Mark said. Mark made a "rookie mistake" and instead of going into smaller tables he went to play in bigger ones to try to make up his losses. However, by the end of 2007, after playing for a year, experimenting, playing free rolls and breaking his resolution not to transfer money to play more, he was left with winnings of 500 euros. For that he had had to read, practice and play "really a lot". At that time he did not think of poker as a significant source of income. It was just something he did for fun and a little money.

Mark's second year of poker saw a steady increase in skill and winnings but it was in his third year that his winnings could be calculated in thousands. Finally, the net profit of his last year stood at around 11,000 euros, not including his gaming account, which usually hovers at something above a thousand. The game has become a significant source of income, Mark says. For example, the family could not plan a holiday abroad prior to playing, but now it is possible.

Emotional Money

Poker society might often downplay the role of money and portray the game as an exciting venture into strategy. However, to Mark poker is first about money, then about the game. "If there weren't any money in the game, my playing would stop immediately." When I wondered whether this is a common attitude to poker, Mark replied

> People can test their motivation by asking themselves whether they would play anymore if money were taken out of it. If one says yes, then they are interested in the game per se. If one says no, then it's about the money.

Then again, one can ask the same question about an interesting job and end up deducing it is more about money, Mark thought. However, poker is a hobby, not a job, he added. One rarely has hobbies where money is such an essential element. "One doesn't go riding or jogging or play chess for money." Mark added that he had actually played chess for money during his college years "but I've never thought chess is a boring game without money."

Although money is the reason Mark plays, he does find many interesting elements in the game. For example, Mark has not played Rush Poker anymore although it is a speeded-up version of online poker and a quicker way to make money. The reason is that he likes to use his skills in analyzing his opponents' tactics, and this is only possible in slower cash games. It makes the game more interesting. Also, in Rush Poker one cannot take advantage of an opponent "going into a tilt" – another element Mark is interested in.

When I asked Mark about how his attitude to the game has changed over the years, he said the range of emotions between times of winning and losing has widened.

> The differences are pretty astounding. I'm a bit troubled about how the game can affect my emotional state so much. Sometimes, when I've won a lot and feel happy about it, I may get anxious when I start thinking, like, is this the only reason I'm happy. [...] Is this what it takes, that I win big time, to be in a good mood? Then, when you lose a thousand in an hour, you become apathetic and depressed. You don't want to talk but just stare at the TV apathetically and think how stupid you are. It's a huge difference in emotional states.

After hearing Mark say this, I wondered what Mark meant by feeling stupid when he lost. Stupid about having

played so poorly?

> Maybe, when I say 'damn I'm so stupid' it means 'damn I'm so stupid to play the game'. I feel it is totally stupid to even play the game, there's no sense in it. Then I think I'll stop playing altogether, concentrate on the family and kids and do all kinds of fun things. At that moment the game feels like a waste of time, like my life is going to waste. These kinds of thoughts... [laughs]. But then, when everything's going upward... Then you think maybe I should quit my day job and go pro. You know, 'This is so much fun!' You could plan all the schedules and wouldn't care about the clock. That's how wide the emotional scale is.

When I asked Mark whether he thought he could really "go pro", he said that he often feels he could. The biggest problem is his excessive trust in his skills. One should learn to restrain and control one's game more.

> I've had these terrible situations because of going into tilt. Then you forget everything you've learned and put a thousand dollars on a table filled with rock-hard professionals, go all-in and think 'I'm going to win now!' When this happens dozens of times, it becomes stressful. You feel stupid because of not quitting with a thousand dollars when it was still possible. Also, the same thousand dollars have a totally different history and significance depending on whether one has earned it by fighting one's way up from zero or when one has dropped quickly down to a thousand. Coming down feels like nothing but earning a thousand you can feel like you're on top of the world.

Mark says online poker is an uhkapeli if one invests so much that losing it would make one's life difficult. All in all Mark is not worried about playing the game. Sure, the scale of emotions is very wide but he has not yet felt that things are really getting out of hand. He predicts that he will continue to be successful in the future if he continues to exercise self-restraint and self-control. The biggest obstacle to success is a lack of self-discipline in a tight situation.

> Everybody can win but what you do when you lose a lot.... in that particular moment when you have lost a lot and think about your next move. Do you have the sense to turn off the machine and go to bed or do you stop being sensible and go all-in?

Perhaps this moment is one of the most crucial ones, a frontier that determines whether one is addicted or not. For Mark, the frontier is very rarely, if ever, crossed, although he has crossed it many times in the past. Nowadays, the amount of his time affected by poker is strictly limited. For example, despite the intensity of the gaming environment and the emotions it produces, Mark says he rarely thinks about poker when he is out of the house or working. However, he might occasionally remember a tournament and plan to play in the evening, or when he is buying something he might think that it's possible because of winning at poker. As far as addiction is concerned, this appears to be rather a mild case.

Mark preferred tournaments over cash games because in tournaments everybody starts off on equal terms. Sometimes a tournament just goes sour on him right from the start but often the beginning is so sweet that he feels he knows everything will go just great. In general, he has noticed that it is worse to play on weekends than weekdays because then he usually has a few glasses of wine or a few beers. Sometimes one or two drinks too many can have an effect on the tournament. One gets too self-confident, Mark explained.

I observed Mark play one of those tournaments. We had had a few beers beforehand, which made him bolder and eager to bluff. He dropped out of the tournament after forty-five minutes. Fortunately he lost only 26 dollars, the ticket price for the tournament. Moreover, a small loss like that is often followed by a bigger win. A few days after the tournament I met with Mark and he told me he had played heads-up the following day. He played a guy for twenty minutes and won three hundred. "The guy tilted a bit. It would have been easy to keep milking him but recently I've started to think less is enough, so I stopped."

Mark told me that recently he has reduced his playing time. If he plays a lot it feels like nothing is enough. "The playing feeds itself and then you want to play even more. Then you can play for even five or six hours a night." Nowadays Mark estimates that he plays about twenty to twenty-five hours a week, which is considerably less than it used to be at its height. Mark admits that he rarely takes a day off from poker, although he thinks he should: it would benefit him mentally and financially. He thinks that daily sessions should not be too long, either, but "in the heat of the game one doesn't want to remember that." When one has played for five hours and won nothing one feels that one has wasted one's time completely and so wants to play more.

Whether this can be called addictive behavior is difficult to say and a matter of choosing a narrative. It seems that poker or computer games in general are activities that attract addiction discourse. In many other contexts being relentless in reaching a goal does not mean addiction but persistence. To Mark, it seems, his behavior is situated

on the borderline between "addiction" and "healthy gaming" but in the end he seems to feel he is on the sunnier side most of the time. Despite sometimes having to fight off the urge to play more, he usually manages to keep his gaming in check and to feel happy about it.

Although advertisements for poker depict poker as a battle, Mark does not feel he is really battling against anyone except himself. For example, when he is playing a tournament and has lost almost all his chips, he might consider betting all-in and quitting, but then he gets into battle mode and decides to restrain himself, play sharp and tenaciously, and fight his way to the top. However, playing heads-up (man-to-man) poker is "real swordplay": one has to be innovative and aggressive. In heads-up one has to "bet and bet and show signs of aggressiveness even though one has nothing in one's hand."

Moral Web

Mark sometimes thinks he is a part of a system that produces a lot of problems for a lot of people. The new tires for his family car are bought with money that has been taken away from someone else. However, usually he ends up rationalizing that no one is forced to play the game. And when he is playing the game, he does not try to imagine what kind of people he is playing against. Whether they are filthy rich capitalists, desperately poor working people or "regular people" like him, is all the same at the table. He just tries to profile them as players, whether they play boldly or carefully, and he adjusts his game accordingly.

If Mark thought poker was morally wrong he would want to quit, but he knows the poker world and thinks players are not involved in anything immoral. If people knew more about the game, the moral image of the game would improve. Mark understands very well, though, that the whole money-gaming phenomenon per se might be morally dubious to many people, and all the sad stories might make them condemn the whole game.

Mark's decision to keep quiet about his poker playing is due not only to poker having a morally ambiguous image in Finland but also somehow to its being to do with winning money. Once, a neighbor asked him whether he had bought his new car with poker money. Surprisingly, Mark felt ashamed about his money. Just as he does not want to make public any information about his income in general, so he does not want people to know about his winnings. It is embarrassing. For this reason poker rarely leaves the house. Mark has even gotten some promotional T-shirts from poker sites but he is too embarrassed to wear them outside the house.

I asked Mark if he has read a lot of stories about people who have lost everything in poker. Yes, Mark answered, but these stories are about "ordinary people," not professionals, as they do not make that kind of mistake. The big losers are the kind of people who start playing poker and want to go straight to the top, "where the luxury is" according to the ads. According to Mark they are lured by false hopes of winning big money.

I knew that Mark was not a particularly religious person but that he was spiritual to say the least, so I asked him if he had any kind of numinous view of his luck or success. He thought about it for a while and said the first thing that came to mind was that if he were to go see a priest and make confession, the first thing he would confess would be his poker-playing. Also, sometimes when he drops out of a tournament or is on a losing streak in a cash game, he has thought it might be some kind of Karmic force telling him he should stop for the day because he has an early morning the next day. Or if he is losing and his children interrupt him, he might think that is "meant to be", and he should spend some time with them. However, he wonders if that is just his way of easing his guilt about losing money. But when Mark wins, he never thinks it is his fate or that he has somehow Karmically earned his wins. Interestingly, his earlier thoughts make it clear that he is even a bit ashamed, not proud, when he wins.

Finally I asked the most common question in gambling research, about addiction. "Sure, addiction develops" Mark said. "Sometimes you just feel like playing." At that point Mark's wife Helen joined in and remarked: "Sometimes he comes and sits on the sofa for ten minutes, feeling all antsy, and then returns to the computer." Mark admits that the urge to play is annoying at times. When their Internet was down for a week, "it was a good week." "It was exciting to think what other things there are to do instead of playing." Mark thinks that if he has an addiction, it might be called a positive one. Although it is evident that

> [t]he more you play, the more you want to play. Short sessions won't hook you that much. [...] If poker were a full-time job, it would impoverish my life too much. It is a good addition to work, although sometimes I wonder if I could make a living from this. Then sometimes I feel repulsed by how disgusting the game is.

Poker Man in a Poker Culture?

Mark does not feel that the poker community is important to him, nor does he feel that poker is any part of his

identity. This is mostly because he wants to keep quiet about his involvement in the game. When he plays alone, he does not feel that he is part of a community. However, some discussion forums have perhaps become familiar places for him to visit and he is interested in champion-level games and how successful Finns are globally. He also often reads poker news and some poker magazines. The significance of a few poker-playing friends is high.

He has one particular friend with whom he spends time playing. They might get together and play on separate laptops, passing time together in that way. This friend learned poker through Mark, and he is glad to have been of help to him. Often they chat while playing online and might for example discuss different hands. Mark is keen to emphasize that he never cooperates with his friends if they play at the same table - it would be against the rules and wrong.

When I asked Mark about gender issues in poker, for example how advertizing tries to construct an image of poker being a highly aggressive, masculine game, he said he is not really interested in that kind of imagery. Online it does not really matter what gender you are. "The ads leave me cold, anyway; I'm only interested in their numbers." The ads are aimed at impressing rookies or people hesitating about trying the game.

Mark also does not care about the celebrity endorsement of poker. "They haven't impressed me with their skills." He is simply a player who wants to win a little and provide for his family. Anything else is unimportant, apart from keeping up with any major news. He also does not want to endorse poker as a hobby, "perhaps because after all I think poker is a slightly dubious game morally." This, perhaps, is a significant cultural difference between Finnish and, for example, American values. In Finland people often feel guilty about their wealth, at least publicly.

On the other hand, when I insisted on talking about the advertisements in poker magazines, Mark said that they do say something about the luxury that lies at the heart of poker culture. Good players live in luxury. The aggressiveness presented in the ads does not appeal to him, but he admits it is a part of the game. But if the ad has no relevant information, or "even if the ad shows a scantily dressed woman I turn the page." When there is relevant information and it is lucrative enough, he might switch to another poker site and take advantage of their offer. A good rake back and other bonuses usually add up to several hundred euros to add to his monthly income, so it is important to take up any bargains.

Mark does not see himself as a typical representative of poker culture. Perhaps he is a positive example of how a family man with a day job can fit poker into his life. That said, Mark comments that he is lucky to have started a family and gotten a job before starting to play poker. If he were single, he would surely play a lot more. I asked if the world of poker would be a better place if everyone was like him. "Yes," was his brief reply, after a moment's thought.

Las Vegas, according to poker folklore, is the Mecca of gambling, but Mark is not interested in the city. "Actually, I'd rather avoid the place." He is not a live poker player but when I ask Mark if he would like to try live poker, to my surprise he mentions several times how much he respects live poker players. They have to

> have an eye for the tells and when you have to physically put your chips in the middle [makes a hauling gesture]... it's harder than online poker. Also they talk a lot and shoot the breeze. It just feels more difficult.

After some thought Mark admitted he would like to try live poker some time, for example in a casino in Helsinki. At that point Helen joined the conversation and suggested he went to the casino when they next went to Helsinki. In the end, Mark concluded, he still preferred online to offline poker. "It's easier for a family man to be present, at least physically [laughs]." To this Helen replied jokingly: "I do shake him awake if needed." Mark used to play online chess for the same reason, because he had kids and a family. Actually, he recalls, he used to play online chess a lot more than he plays poker." But [rating points] and success in chess are not so useful for the family. You can't buy tires for the car with them."

Gambling with(in) the Family

Enjoying his Wife's Support, Saving Time for his Kids

Mark usually plays in the bedroom, because that is the quietest place. However, he also plays in the living room quite often despite – or actually because of – his children and wife being there. That way he is with them "even if only physically". It is a bit tricky to be sociable when playing. He remarks that his son often comes to ask him something just when he is deeply involved in something and calculating whether or not to bet a few hundred euros.

Mark's wife Helen also remembers an occasion when she asked him a question and for a moment Mark was dead silent, but then he abruptly broke into a loud cheer. Helen was startled but she immediately realized that Mark had won a large sum of money.

Sometimes Mark plays even in the bathroom or takes his laptop to the dinner table. This happens when a tournament is going on and he cannot leave the poker table for even a moment. Sometimes Helen helps him and folds for him when he has to leave the table for a while.

Mark tries to play when he is alone in the house or when the rest of the family has something to do that does not require him to be around. Mark often plays too late and is tired in the morning, and even if he has not actually played late he might not be able to fall asleep quickly because he is "still turned on and thinking about the game."

Mark is fortunate to have a wife who feels moderately positive about his game. They have agreed on some points concerning the use of money and time and Helen respects the work Mark puts in to provide for the family. When I told Mark that I would assume that many wives would think differently, Mark told me about a dream Helen had had about him. In it Mark had lost five thousand euros in a poker game. He had gone to tell Helen about it, totally depressed, but Helen had been very calm about it and had said: "Oh well, what can you do." To Mark the dream was reassuring.

Sometimes their (elementary school age) children, especially their son might come to Mark and demand attention and ask why dad is playing so much. Once Mark told him he was in the middle of a competition and he might win enough money to buy his son two mopeds. To get a moped was the son's big dream, so he urged Mark to continue. This was one of the rare occasions when Mark told his children about money being involved in the game. Mark thinks they probably know it anyway but are too tactful to talk about it. Mark said that despite playing poker, he still spends a lot of time with his children. He does not deny that they often want more attention, but in the same way that kids might question why dad is reading the newspaper or doing this or that, they question him playing poker. "When they want you to spend time with them they don't care what you're doing."

Mark says that his parents know about his gaming and have some sense of the amount of income the game generates for Mark. He does not discuss the game much with them, but if he does so at all it is more with his father than with his mother, because he and his father have a shared history of playing chess and his father is more interested in games in general. Mark guesses that in the beginning his mother was more worried that he might lose too much money in the game. Now he has been able to convince his parents that the amounts he invests are not bigger than he is prepared to lose. He has even shown them all his poker books and explained that poker is not merely a game of luck.

Helen also rarely asks Mark about the game, but when I talked to her she told me she can tell whenever Mark's gaming session has not gone very well. "Mark won't talk much at those times." However, Mark is often eager to explain to her some interesting situations, "eyes ablaze". When I asked Helen about Mark spending time away from the family, she replied "I'm the one sitting in front of the TV and doing nothing productive. I should do something else." All in all, Helen is quick to admit that Mark's gaming has benefited the family. Perhaps it helps that she has never been taught to feel negative about gambling, unlike most other Finns. She has a lot of memories from her childhood of men gambling, tossing coins and so on, and it seemed like a normal thing to do. "Nothing sinful about it."

If people knew more about poker, Helen said, they would be a lot more tolerant of the game. The only thing Helen is worried about is the remote chance that the tax office will want to take a cut of Mark's winnings. In Finland, poker winnings that come from outside the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) area are taxable income, but Mark neither knows nor cares how much of his winnings come from inside or outside of EFTA.

Parental Advisory

I managed to persuade Mark's parents, Benny and Maria (pseudonyms), both pensioners, to be interviewed about Mark's gaming. Although they talked openly about the game and their son, it was often difficult for me to make out whether they were talking about Mark as a poker player or, in general, about poker as a game. First of all his parents got into a long discussion about the definition of gambling, the "game of threat". Benny started:

> I think all games like lottery, pajatso [a traditional Finnish coin game] and so on are uhkapeli in that if your bet rises to be too much for your financial situation to bear, then it's uhkapeli. The word uhka [threat] in the word uhkapeli means that it threatens your life. You lose food and everything.

Maria wanted to stress the element of addiction but Benny questioned how adequate it was to define gambling

simply as an addiction. Maria explained: "When you're addicted you don't think about what you put into the game, the excitement is too great." The parents also liked to think of poker as a profession.

> [Maria:] A poker professional... He does nothing but play poker..? What do you think Benny?
> [Benny:] A tough question.... A profession means work. A game is never work. It's a game... On the other hand there are professional hockey-players. And they work, a lot even. But a hockey player never puts his own money into the game. Poker is poker. It's a game because you pay the fee.
> [Maria:] A hockey player makes a contract. Maybe a poker player is like a private entrepreneur?
> [JJ:] So if a person does nothing else for a living but plays poker, it can't be called work?
> [Benny & Maria:] No.
> [Benny:] No. It's a game. If not [a game of threat] then... a game of poker.

Then the discussion seemed to turn from defining poker to assessing the value of poker as a profession. Maria did not want to call poker a profession although she had heard about Finnish poker professionals in the USA.

> [Maria:] I don't think it could be thought of as... I don't think one should get a profession like that... Sure, it becomes a profession! But the profession might last just as long as the coins in your pocket. It might end real short. [...] Mark plays on a reasonable level. He is not a risk-taker but plays as much as he can afford to lose... [...] Mark has a clear budget and a limit to stick to, so we don't have to worry.
> [Benny:] ...only the addiction side is...
> [Maria continues:] ...it surely develops... In online poker it's a great danger.
> [Benny:] ....It's so easy to play online. You don't have to go out; the wife doesn't have to know about you playing the cards.
> [Maria interrupts]: Why would you have to hide it from your wife if you have no problem?

Finally Benny concluded their definition of gambling:

> [Benny:] All money games are gambling if they exceed my economic resources. Then I'm threatening my own life and financial position by taking a risk. Then it turns into gambling. That's how easy it is to define!
> [Maria almost whispering:] ...Maybe it's not that easy...

When I wanted to talk more about the parents' worries about Mark, Maria said she had none, really.

> [Benny:] ...but are you worried about the addiction, about him playing every day? Is it a benefit or a burden to the family even if you win a thousand a month?
> [Maria:] ...maybe it's a benefit... I don't think Mark... I wonder if it's about thousands... more like hundreds... He wouldn't risk that much... The small sums he makes are just extra income. Sure it might develop into an addiction but if it doesn't bother their family life. If it's together... his wife approves and the family approves of dad always playing joker [sic], then it's not a... to get a little pocket money... then it's no big deal.

Benny recalled how his own mother saw a pack of cards per se as sinful and advised Benny against playing cards. Maria added that nowadays people "have progressed from that. […] It's not a sin, it's lawful." It is a legitimate hobby and "it's not classified in a way that would dishonor it."

Benny's memories got the parents remembering stories about people playing cards when they were drunk and losing fortunes. Maria said: "There's the danger! Playing at home is easy. And if you're drunk you go all daredevil. That's when you might suffer losses. It's too easy to play at home." Benny added that no game should be played while drunk. Maria continued: "…and money games are more attractive and so run the risk of addiction...." "...And losing a fortune," Benny concluded.

At one point Maria remarked that in fact she did not know enough about poker to understand it and that perhaps that was why she thought of it as "a game of threat". Both of them had seen poker only on TV and at least to Maria it looked "pretty suspicious" with "all these hats and sunglasses on..." All in all, Mark's parents seemed to think poker in general could be a slippery slope or at least a narrow path that only a wise person could tread without problems. In the particular case of their son, even if Benny and Maria were a little bit worried about Mark – which was evident only between the lines – they trusted his judgment. Moreover, because they trusted their son to be a good father and husband and a hard-working civil servant as well as a careful poker player, they seemed to be slightly worried that his everyday life would be tiresome. But their worries, just as parents' worries usually are, were not based on observation; it was only this possibility that made them unable to rest easy about the game.

Epilogue: It's Not Just a Game

According to the leading scholar in gambling studies, Per Binde, Johan Huizinga, the father of Homo Ludens (1939) and a grand theorist of gaming, was against gambling. To Huizinga, gambling games were unproductive, developed nothing cultural and gave nothing to life and the mind. To Huizinga, gambling was "false play". (Binde 2009, 44.) According to my experience, Huizinga's analysis was a product of his taste rather than his scholarly observation. Per Binde's review of social science research on the subject quickly shows how immense the sociocultural value of gambling is. He talks about the religious and existential aspects of gambling (ibid., 47) as well as the social rewards that a gambling community produces for its members. It is a different "world" where, according to Binde, other identities are assumed and specific and complex cultural codes are followed (ibid., 18). The amount of ethnographic studies (ibid., 51) on gambling has already produced enough information on the subject to enable us to conclude that it is a significant element in any society.

However, to me it seems that often scholars' enthusiasm comes close to creating a hyperreality of the object of study. No doubt social identity can indeed be seen as a significant factor in gambling (ibid., 19), and social frustration and escapism do drive people to put their money into the great promise of a poker table (ibid., 8-24). Also, one can easily form a theory about poker being a model example of postmodern creativity and consumption (Jouhki 2011; Kingma 1996, 219 in Binde, 2009, 469). I certainly believe that these configurations make a lot of sense and are important in creating a varied, analytical picture of gambling. However, by presenting Mark's story, I hope I have managed to introduce a more mundane and mainstream aspect of gambling. One does not have to be a home-wrecking gambling junkie to play poker, even if one plays it regularly. Nor does one necessarily ride a wave of fragmented, neo-nomadic hyperreal smorgasbord-identity when clicking the mouse to play. Mark, like, I suppose, a majority of poker players, plays not because he is postmodernist or a gaming junky but just because he wants to earn a bit more money.

However, it seems that there is no escape from the "large issue" of poker, the potential stigmatization that derives from its ambivalent morality, at least in the Protestant, Nordic part of the world. This is evident in the case of Mark, who does not feel comfortable about his double role as a civil servant in a respectable position and a poker player earning money in the symbolic shadows of the online poker world. How burdensome such moral conflict is I have not yet gone deep enough with Mark to find out, but I can get a hint of his worries through some introspection of my own. I too have had doubts about poker, not about the game itself but as a respectable object of research. It is interesting how the morality of the game spreads even to the level of analysis, where scholars might feel that they are gambling with their careers and are perhaps too scared to go "all in" in investing this field of research.

If a researcher into poker feels this shy about poker, no wonder a player might feel the same. It often seems like the academic view of gambling has only two alternatives: either it is an addiction or "false play" and has to be tamed or eradicated, or then it is a new way of blurring the boundaries between work and play and of creating new identities. Again, I agree that both views are immensely important and interesting, but I wish less attractive and less dramatic views could get more academic space. A poker player can be a family man quietly winning (or earning) some money to buy things for his family. That online poker has been researched so much as a problem has influenced the way the media, the public and the players in Finland view the game. However, the majority of those over 100,000 Finnish men (97%) and women (99%) who play online poker report that they have no gambling problem at all (Järvinen-Tassopoulos 2009: 19). Moreover, it hardly implies a pandemic addiction problem that Peluuri, the Finnish problem gambling helpline, received only 86 calls concerning online poker in 2008 (ibid.: 53).

In this light, it seems addiction is perceived to be a significant problem in online poker because the hegemonic discourse demands it. The Finnish state, for example, wants to protect its gambling monopoly in the EU and to do this it needs to emphasize gambling-related problems (Tammi 2008). But there is an increasing body of literature and articles in the media that valorize the more mainstream practice of poker.

Gambling has many diverse forms and can be viewed through various ethical stands "ranging from the harshest denunciation to great appreciation" (Binde 2005, 446). To some, gambling is theft (ibid. 2005, 451) and for many it is consumption of leisure (ibid. 2009, 56.). The global – and Finnish – trend is to become more liberal. The mainstream gambler, such as Mark, is someone who, by his own choice, has entered a game that has explicit rules and thus creates a space for social interaction, leisure, suspense and potential additional income or an agreeable loss of it (Ibid. 2005, 450). The rules are easy: win or lose, but it is the social and cultural baggage that provides the gambler with the final verdict: guilty or not guilty.

Endnotes

1. During the past six years the value of one euro has varied between roughly 1,2 and 1,6 American dollars.

2. For example in the US in 2005 16 percent of men and 10 percent of women played poker (online or offline). The statistics were produced by Ladbrokes and presented in Judy Xanthopoulos's report (p. 6) for the Poker Players Alliance.

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Time-Space Compression and the Role of Television in DeLillo's White Noise and Wallace's "Little Expressionless Animals"

Andrew H. Banecker

> "The dominant of postmodernist fiction is ontological. That is, postmodernist fiction deploys strategies which engage and foreground questions like[...]: 'Which world is this? What is to be done in it? Which of my selves is to do it?'"
> — Brian McHale, Postmodernist Fiction

> "A strong case can be made that the history of capitalism has been characterized by speed-up in the pace of life, while so overcoming spatial barriers that the world sometimes seems to collapse inwards upon us [...] As space appears to shrink to a 'global village' of telecommunications [...] and as time horizons shorten to the point where the present is all there is (the world of the schizophrenic), so we have to learn how to cope with an overwhelming sense of compression of our spatial and temporal worlds."
> — David Harvey, The Condition of Postmodernity

> "For most people, there are only two places in the world. Where they live and their TV set."
> — Don DeLillo, White Noise

In his reading of Don DeLillo's White Noise—a novel many have deemed the quintessential postmodern novel—Mitchum Huehls argues:

> Formal innovation and experimentation can effectively create the experience of a meaningful temporality for readers [...] White Noise is an ideal text for this venture because its content concerns one man's attempt to gain knowledge of his future while its form exemplifies a uniquely American version of the postmodern novel closely tied to television, commercialism, and the ideological mystifications of global capital.[1]

Similarly, the "formal innovation and experimentation" of David Foster Wallace's 1989 collection of short stories, Girl With Curious Hair, situates itself in the temporal, spatial, televisual, post-Fordist, postmodern situation so well, it is as if the specific impetus behind the collection was to examine the effects of the postmodern condition on characters situated within such an untenable, diaphanous, and angst-riddled situation. In other words, Wallace and DeLillo produced texts representative of an ethos of time-space compression and its effects on the postmodern world – particularly through the medium of television.

If we are to characterize the contemporary situation and/or literary movement DeLillo and Wallace are so often grouped into as postmodern – and such a statement has evoked a substantive debate amongst both cultural and literary theorists – the economic and cultural aspects of the contemporary situation as well as the representative literary devices must be studied. Postmodern fiction is often meta-fictional and self-reflexive, meaning it reflects on the medium in which the narrative inhabits. Further, a distinct subset of fiction termed postmodern (in addition to the works studied in this essay, see Curtis White's Memories of My Father Watching TV, Thomas King's Green Grass, Running Water, and Tim Gautreaux's short story "Welding With Children," amongst others) reflects upon the medium of the television, often using the device to frame the narrative, situate the text, as a plot device, and sometimes the television is employed to such an extent as to grant the medium agency (often as a disembodied

character inserting its voice within the dialogue of the narrative). If meta-fiction is self-reflexive with respect to the medium of fiction, these narratives dealing with television indicate a culture that frames its experiences through a myriad of mediums, hence, to borrow a term from Bolter and Grusin (1999), experiences are remediated, and further, postmodern individuals are "remediated sel[ves]."[2]

As Harvey reminds us:

> Realist narrative structures assumed, after all, that a story could be told as if it was unfolding coherently, event after event, in time. Such structures were inconsistent with a reality in which two events in quite different spaces occurring at the same time could so intersect as to change how the world worked.[3]

David Foster Wallace and Don DeLillo realized this, and in their fiction, compress dual narratives, flashbacks, and events in disparate places in the same time within what often reads like a linearly structured narrative. Certainly, neither Wallace, nor DeLillo's literary work can be categorized simply as a product of the American realists (nor even American realists with postmodern updates). However, all authors mentioned have been influenced by, shaped by, and often infuriated by our society's onward progress of technological achievements, particularly the progression of telecommunications devices and mediums.

In Kern's The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918, he grants that "the telephone, wireless telegraph, X-ray, cinema, bicycle, automobile and airplane established the material foundation for new modes of thinking about and experiencing time and space."[4] The modernist reaction to this change in telecommunications technologies, and the accompanying temporal and spatial paradigm shifts—according to the examples of Joyce and Proust—was to present their narratives in a plurality of spaces, or by building a plurality of individual experiences through time. According to Harvey:

> James Joyce, for one, began his quest to capture the sense of simultaneity in space and time during this period, insisting upon the present as the only real location of experience. He had his action take place in a plurality of spaces [...] Proust, for his part, tried to recover past time and to create a sense of individuality and place that rested on a conception of experience across a space of time.[5]

Further, to go back to Kern's assessment of the period, "The two most innovative novelists of this period […] transformed the stage of modern literature from a series of fixed settings in homogenous space […] into a multitude of qualitatively different spaces that varied with the shifting moods and perspective of human consciousness."[6]

David Harvey grounds his study of postmodernity – including the study of postmodern literature – in the theoretical assertions of Jameson, who "attributes the postmodern shift to a crisis in our experience of space and time, a crisis in which spatial categories come to dominate those of time, while themselves undergoing such a mutation that we cannot keep pace."[7] For the postmodern writer (and David Foster Wallace in particular), the medium of television allows for this "simultaneity in space and time" through a "plurality of spaces" while remaining in the "fixed settings in homogenous space" indicative of novelistic realism. As Agger and Shelton (2007) remind us, "The blurring of boundaries and compression of space and time provoke the experience […] of being anytime/anywhere."[8] This, if you will, is representative of the increased homogeneity of experiences of postmodern time-space compression. In this way, the wild, confusing narratives and utilization of a "plurality of spaces" of the modernist novel are conflated/compressed within the structure and rootedness of realism, creating the connection-disorientation binary upon which most postmodern narratives are based. In other words, television has become the panacea of spatial plurality. To go to a different place, experience a wholly different space—and here's the key, to feel as if these experiences are authentic—one must only change the channel, and you're there within the blink of an eye.

Harvey expounds on this by asserting, "Mass television ownership coupled with satellite communication makes it possible to experience a rush of images from different spaces almost simultaneously, collapsing the world's spaces into a series of images on a television screen."[9] Of course, the confusion and disorientation inherent in such disparate experiences being compressed to an instantaneous switch is mitigated by the comfort and normalcy of the trip having taken place on the same couch, in the same room, with only the content of the screen having changed. In effect, the television brings with it a connectedness to the outside world while maintaining the homogeneity of space with respect to the living room, all the while furthering the nebulous idea of agency and control via the miraculous, insidious device known as the remote control (and all connotations of this term herewith).

As Harvey reminds us in his 1990 article "Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination," "Rapid changes in the objective qualities of social space and time are both confusing and disturbing, precisely because their revolutionary implications for the social order are so hard to anticipate."[10] Similarly, the

simultaneous connectedness and disorientation that came with the invention of, and mass sales/consumption of the television and the spatial-temporal changes associated with this particular medium, sparked a series of postmodern narratives specific to the television, largely through the author infusing the narratives with commercial advertisements seamlessly, creating the ethos of television/advertisement as narrator and/or character and all the strange personifications of technology that comes with such a literary move.

Consider Don DeLillo's eighth novel, the National Book Award winning White Noise (1985). In it, we see the satirical treatment of 1980s American society through Jack Gladney – a professor of Hitler Studies (a department Jack founded but other than for academic careerism, is perplexed as to why) who doesn't speak German, has been married five different times to four different women, and seemingly sees his children on shifts (all indicative of a stark values change in America from the protagonists of most modernist novels) – and his entirely postmodern family, a "recombinant postmodern famil[y] (as Judith Stacey [1990] calls them) that follow in the wake of divorces and recouplings."[11] Aside from the palpable irony apparent (such as the scene where Jack wakes up in a hospital bed surrounded by atheistic nuns who only don the habit to perpetuate the myth of God and, thereby, to placate society) and the obsession with the obsession with death (seen most obviously in the Airborne Toxic Event scenes and Jack and Babette's addiction to Dylar, the drug that supposedly removes the fear of death from the mind) the most obvious literary device is a product of DeLillo's ethos of media saturation creeping up everywhere in contemporary society. In effect, in White Noise,the television and the radio become disembodied voices, spouting advertising slogans ad nauseum in the midst of Gladney's every day conversations with his family, his colleagues, and his friends.

In White Noise, DeLillo seems to support Baudrillard's conception of the oversaturation of images:

> [...]within which no image any longer has any discernable effects, where the proliferating velocity and quantity of images produces a postmodern mindscreen where images fly by with such rapidity that they lose any signifying function, referring only to other images ad infinitum, and where eventually the multiplication of images produces such saturation, apathy, and indifference that the tele-spectator is lost forever in a fragmentary fun house of mirrors in the infinite play of superfluous, meaningless images.[12]

The television, radio, and other telecommunications devices are always on, and the seemingly superfluous insertion of commercial slogans at various parts of the narrative would appear to confirm Baudrillard's theory.

Consider the following scene in which Jack Gladney watched his daughter, Steffie, talk in her sleep:

> I watched her face, waited. Ten minutes passed. She uttered two clearly audible words, familiar and elusive at the same time, words that seemed to have a ritual meaning, part of a verbal spell or ecstatic chant.
> Toyota Celica.
> [...]
> A simple brand name, an ordinary car. How could these near-nonsense words, murmured in a child's restless sleep, make me sense a meaning, a presence? She was only repeating some TV voice. Toyota Corolla, Toyota Celica, Toyota Cressida. Supranational names, computer-generated, more or less universally pronounceable. Part of every child's brain noise, the substatic regions too deep to probe.[13] (155)

In this, DeLillo supports Baudrillard's notion of a fragmented or subverted semiotics, in which the normal sign > signifier > signified linguistic formula has been corrupted to one of sign > signified, neglecting or passing over the signifier entirely. These car names are meant to signify nothing; rather, the semiotic formula becomes sign (Toyota Celica) > signified (pleasant sounding word that more or less means car). Meaning, ultimately, has been replaced by simple sensory response, presuming that a pleasant sounding word will create a subliminal suggestion of calm, happiness/peacefulness, and safety – the very concepts Toyota wants its consumers to equate with their products.

Further, the concept of "images referring only to other images ad infinitum" is elucidated when Murray (a Pop Culture professor) and Jack travel to THE MOST PHOTOGRAPHED BARN IN AMERICA. Here, Murray explains the image as image meta-culture of postmodernity, as he tells Jack, "We're not here to capture an image, we're here to maintain one. Every photograph reinforces the aura. Can you feel it, Jack? An accumulation of nameless energies […] They are taking pictures of taking pictures" (12-13). DeLillo creates a tourist attraction based only on the fact that it's a tourist attraction. The barn, itself, is practically irrelevant. The tourist destination is only a tourist destination because it's become famous for being a tourist destination. This, of course, is a semiotician's nightmare. Not only does the actual barn carry no significance, but the image itself is meaningless absent of the designation that the image is the most-captured-as-image image of its kind. This is reductio ad absurdum cultural significance par excellence.

However, the role of the medium of television in White Noise is not only one of reducing postmodern media culture to a mise en abyme of meaningless images and sound bites. Consider Douglas Kellner's counter to Baudrillard:

> Thus, against the postmodern notion of culture disintegrating into pure image without referent or content or effects—becoming at its limit pure noise—[...] television and other forms of media culture play key roles in the structuring of contemporary identity and shaping thought and behavior."[14]

In other words, mediated selves are reconstructing their identities around this new reality of oversaturated telecommunications, not just adapting to the new mediums, but rethinking their lives from the new situation.

Jan-Uwe Rogge (1989) argues, "The media form a part of the family system, a part many can no longer imagine living without."[15] Further, Agger and Shelton contend, "The culture industry is a total environment that enmeshes us from morning to night. It is nearly global. It informs and influences us through multiple media reinforcing the power of its messages, which become inescapable."[16] DeLillo supports these addendums to Baudrillard's conception of the postmodern situation, as a large preponderance of events within the novel are interpreted as if they were happening on television, or rethought within the situation of media oversaturation.

In many instances, reality is interpreted as reality television, as if reality and media coverage of reality were conflated to being one and the same (particularly when faced with disaster or tragedy). Towards the beginning of the town being contaminated by the "Airborne Toxic Event," the first tragedy of any kind to fall on their small college town, Heinrich – Jack's smartest child, and perhaps it is his intelligence that makes him most affected by media saturation – has his ear glued to the radio, reporting up-to-the-minute updates in event coverage. Heinrich has an implicit trust in the noises that emanate from his telecommunications devices, so much so that he trusts their reporting more than he trusts the information relayed to his brain by his senses. For example, earlier in the novel, Heinrich engaged in a fierce debate over whether it was raining, trusting the radio weatherman's report that it would rain in the evening over the sensory fact that it was currently raining in the afternoon. With respect to the traumatic event in question, Heinrich's trust in media reporting is firmly cemented. Consider the scene where Babette describes up-to-the-moment symptoms Heinrich's sisters were experiencing:

> Babette's head appeared at the top of the stairway. She said a neighbor had told her the spill from the tank car was thirty-five thousand gallons. People were being told to stay out of the area. A feathery plume hung over the site. She also said the girls were complaining of sweaty palms.
>
> "There's been a correction," Heinrich told her. "Tell them they ought to be throwing up." (112)

Here we have actual medical symptoms unfolding in front of his eyes but again he trusts the radio implicitly over his senses, so much so that the moment the radio broadcast of symptoms of exposure to the toxin move from sweaty palms to vomiting, the sweaty palms of his sisters have been invalidated.

Heinrich's not the only character who requires media to validate an event. Earlier in the novel, while Jack is picking up yet another of his children from a previous marriage, nine-year-old Bee, a horrific plane crash is narrowly averted. One passenger recounts, in vivid detail, his harrowing experience – the plane dropped nearly 3000 feet, the pilots announced they would crash (adding –landing to crash soon afterward to allay the passengers' concern), and miraculously, the engine restarted at the last possible moment, and they landed safely. Bee, just as Heinrich presumably would say in her circumstance, says to her parents:

> "Where's the media," she said.
> "There's no media in Iron City."
> "Then they went through all that for nothing?" (92)

Though this exchange could be reduced to an "if a tree falls in the forest" hypothetical taken to its illogical extreme, this mindset is the norm throughout the novel. Consider Jack's crisis after the crisis of the Airborne Toxic Event had finally ended:

> This is the most terrifying time of our lives. Everything we love and have worked for is under serious threat. But we look around and see no response from the official organs of media. The airborne toxic event is a horrifying thing. Our fear is enormous. Even if there hasn't been great loss of life, don't we deserve some attention for our suffering, our human worry, our terror? Isn't fear news? (162)

In other words, DeLillo posited, "If a disaster happens, and no media is there to cover it, did it matter?" According

to Bolter and Grusin, "[…] television programs need to win the moment-by-moment approval of their large, popular audiences, to evoke a set of rapid and predictable emotional responses: television must produce immediacy as authentic emotion" (187). The mediated selves within the novel, forced to look at actual tragic occurrences, can only comprehend them in terms of media coverage of tragedies, or the lack thereof; hence they require the validation of immediacy for their authentic emotion to be processed mentally. Without the "As Seen On TV" stamp of validation, the characters suffer yet another traumatic reaction – that of invalidated traumatic experience. In contrast to Jack's confusion over the images of images culture that surrounded THE MOST PHOTOGRAPHED BARN IN AMERICA, the postmodern individual needs the media coverage (taking pictures) of the event-seen-as-if-it's-on-TV (of the event unfurling as if in pictures) for the event to be validated as an event.

Harvey diagnoses postmodernity as having the attributes of volatility and ephemerality. Hence, "the first major consequence has been to accentuate volatility and ephemerality of fashions, products, production techniques, labour processes, ideas and ideologies, values and established practices."[17] With respect to White Noise, these categories apply quite nicely in certain ways. For example, that the "ideas and ideologies, values and established practices" are woefully ephemeral and volatile is brutally obvious in the Gladney family dynamic. Consumerism is represented often as a sea change, completely changing from one year to the next, from moment to moment – as indicated by the opening scene in which the students of Gladney's college are dropped off by a wave of station wagons, each one indistinguishable from the next. Further, even academia is seen as ephemeral and a scholar's value and job security is presented as being highly volatile – of which Harvey has written, "The turnover time of ideas in academia has also accelerated. Not so long ago, to publish more than two books in a lifetime was thought to be over-ambitious. Nowadays, it seems, leading academics have to publish a book every two years if they are to prove they are still alive"[18] – as Jack Gladney is a chair of a department he founded, Hitler Studies, and even though he's the chair, his grasp on the field is tenuous at best, as he often makes up lectures on the fly and is in a state of perpetual stress over being found out for not knowing the German language. Harvey claims further:

> Themes of creative destruction, of increased fragmentation, of ephemerality (in community life, of skills, of lifestyles) have become much more noticeable in literary and philosophic discourse in an era when restructuring of everything from industrial production techniques to inner cities has become a major topic of concern.[19]

However, the one thing that's neither ephemeral nor volatile – rather, it could be considered the only static, permanent thing in Gladney's universe – is the television.

The success of the novel lies largely in DeLillo's ability to produce a connection-disorientation binary that blurs the lines of such rigid categorization. The television is part comforting, and part horrifying, as its pervasiveness throughout the novel smacks of a society raised on, informed by, and completely reliant on the televisual medium. As Harvey hinted, such a rapid change is found quite disturbing by the postmodern author. However, DeLillo's work reminds us that this particular disturbing change has so permeated our society so as to become familiar, pervasive, and an undeniable temporal-spatial aspect of contemporary existence.

Similarly, through the short story, "Little Expressionless Animals" (which first appeared in the Paris Review, then subsequently in his 1989 story collection, Girl with Curious Hair), David Foster Wallace advances the thesis that television, as a medium, is both responsible for and indicative of a vast cultural change—particularly in the zeitgeist of contemporary Americans. As Claus-Dieter Rath (1989) argues, "Viewers experience themselves as being 'socialized,' as belonging to a kind of electronically constituted society whenever and as long as they watch television."[20] Robert McLaughlin claims, "Wallace sees television as both the biggest challenge to serious fiction's relevance in today's society and the cause of contemporary Americans' isolation and loneliness."[21] As for television's pervasive role in society, Wallace himself argues, "For younger writers, TV's as much a part of reality as Toyotas and gridlock. We literally cannot imagine life without it."[22]

In "Little Expressionless Animals," Wallace intentionally situates his fiction within the medium of television. Wallace pens the tale of Julie Smith, the twenty-year-old girl who, for approximately three years, was undefeated – and so dominant so as to have rarely even allowed her opponents to answer one question correctly – on the television game show Jeopardy! In it, Wallace presents not just the behind-the-scenes politics-as-absurdity of the television industry, but the on-screen aspects as well, all the while presenting these situations and characters in such a way that the narrative serves as a perfect example of the time-space compression concept of speed-up and turnover in "a 'throwaway' society."[23]

Before delving into the specifics of the story, the term "throwaway society" must be made clear:

> In the realm of commodity production, the primary effect has been to emphasize the values and virtues of instantaneity [...] and of disposability [...] The dynamics of a 'throwaway' society [...] meant more than just throwing away produced goods (creating a monumental waste disposal problem), but also being able to throw away values, life-styles, stable relationships, and attachments to things, buildings, places, people, and received ways of doing and being.[24]

In other words, the "disposable" or "throwaway" aspects of most consumer products – think fast food wrappers, disposable diapers, Styrofoam cups, etc. – that had been designed for the purpose of increased convenience for consumers, had become such a way of life, that this newfound concept of instantaneous consumer goods which could be used once, and then thrown away, had infested the worldview of Americans like a cancer, and the concepts of convenience and instant gratification crossed over into the realm of values.

Consider the role played by Julie Smith in "Little Expressionless Animals." As a contestant on Jeopardy!, Smith found herself on the other side of the television screen, embedded in a game that repeats five times weekly, ad infinitum. As a game show, Jeopardy! is bound by ratings, sponsors, and other vestiges of contemporary capitalistic entertainment. Hence, turnover is the de facto state of the situation. For the game show to succeed, presumably, the contestants must change daily, and if not daily, weekly, so as the sense of novelty doesn't wear thin on the viewing public – novelty with respect to the simple desire to see a different face, but more so with respect to the distilled, sound-bite life stories told by each contestant to Alex Trebek so as to provide the human element to the otherwise bland, fact-and-information show. The questions themselves are trivial – new ones written constantly by the staff of researchers in the employ of the production company – and thus disposable bits of knowledge that can be replaced with equally random and virtually unimportant facts, figures, and events within the viewer's mind. Just as Bolter and Grusin argue that television needs immediacy as emotion, emotion must be produced in easy to digest sound bites.

The contestants too, are largely trivial, with very few – save the encyclopedic brain that was Ken Jennings and his $2.5 million, seventy-four day winning streak – able to remain in the public eye, and fewer still able to capture the sustained interest of the viewing public. The contestants, too, are disposable.

David Foster Wallace plays around with these certainties of volatility, ephemerality, and disposability, complicating them at every point. In the story, Julie Smith resided in a world where disposability – particularly her own disposability – was a crass certainty. Further, Julie was in an instant gratification relationship with one of the show's researchers, Faye Goddard, and if found out, would have been brought under charges of tampering and kicked off the show. Finally – and here's where David Foster Wallace shows his brilliance – Julie is a child of disposability; as an eight-year-old, she and her five-year-old autistic brother were abandoned by the side of the road, the scene progressing as follows:

> The children's hands, which are small, are placed on the wooden post. The woman tells the children to touch the post until the car returns. She gets in the car and leaves. There is a cow in the field near the fence. The children touch the post. The wind blows. Lots of cars go by. They stay that way all day.[25] (3)

This is a raw, emotional scene, though it's presented simply as the progression of visual cues and minor events. Presented perhaps as an inevitability, as nothing but a series of sensory images, as a matter-of-fact certainty of postmodern life, no different than any set of images flickering on a screen – set with the ultimate instant-gratification medium, television, as a backdrop.

Toward the beginning of the short story, the producers are lining up the very people that could potentially make Julie Smith a disposed-of contestant:

> Dee squints at her clipboard. "So how many is that all together, then?"
> "Nine," Faye says softly. She feels at the sides of her hair.
> We got nine," says the director; "enough for at least the full four slots with a turnaround of two per slot" The rain on the aluminum roof of the Merv Griffin Enterprises building makes a sound in this room, like the frying of distant meat. (6)

This is presented simply; presented as presentation, which is much like Alain Badiou's idea of mathematics-as-ontology.[26] Further, the auditory/visual imagery of rain-as-frying-meat is not just a disturbing simile but serves to commodify the rain in a way that places it in the realm of the disposable, the volatile, as well.

At this point, I feel I must digress for the purposes of an explication of terms. Ontology – a loaded term – is defined, in the most bare-bones sense of the word, as the study of being. Though this seems simple enough, libraries could be filled with different conceptions of Ontology, from Heidegger's being and dwelling, to the religious connotations associated with the difference between "being" and "Being" to being as existing, to being as determined

by identity (and all the debates associated with identity and identity politics herein), and so on and so forth, all rejected by Alain Badiou's 1988 assertion that mathematics is ontology (stripped of all identifiable characteristics within particular multiples, mathematics is simply the presentation of presentation and hence says what can be said about pure being, or being qua being). Though it is not entirely certain which particular rigid definition of ontology is being discussed – and it must be held as a possibility that all such definitions of Ontology are fair game – the general notion that postmodern fiction is concerned with the questions posed by the study of being is an easily defensible thesis. Here, I must once again remind the reader of Brian McHale's claim, in Postmodernist Fiction (1987), that the dominant in postmodern fiction is ontology. Further, critics such as Frederic Jameson appear to agree with this assertion and, in effect, the critical consensus reveals, "The process of representation, not the object represented, would be the subject matter of postmodernism."[27]

Hence, it is not Julie Smith the individual – and all the particularities that make up the identity of this individual – striving toward a particular goal, Julie Smith the human entity whose aspirations will propel the plot forward, or Julie Smith the mind which sees the world in a peculiar, yet interesting way which is being plumbed here. Rather, Julie Smith the multiple (or, if it helps you follow the analogy better, the "item thus presented"), Julie Smith the commodity, and Julie Smith the particular item which falls in the set of "Jeopardy! contestants" that is being examined and further, the process by which this particular multiple is represented. This Julie Smith is subject to the volatile winds of change associated with the capitalistic situation in which she resides. This Julie Smith is an ephemeral particulate of the larger situation. This Julie Smith is disposable.

When the ratings begin to drop – an occurrence any successful television show will experience – Merv Griffin, the instrument of capitalism himself, attempts to dispose of her (in the sense that the novelty of her has worn off, and the commodity of the contestant must be replaced with another) while maintaining the particularities that made her as a commodity bring the show's ratings to an all time high. In other words, he's looking for a cosmetic replacement – a simulacrum – and believes the perfect simulacrum of Julie Smith would be her autistic brother:

> "The potential point," Merv murmurs, "is can the brother do with datum what she can do with datum." He switches the paper clip to his left hand. "Does the fact that he has, as Faye here put it, trouble being in the world, together with what have to be impressive genetics, by association" he smiles, "add up to mystery status? Game-show incarnation?" He works a cuticle. "Can he do what she can do?" (27)

However, it's important to remember that even though Julie Smith is eventually disposed of – at the hand of her brother, no less – Julie Smith is not instantly disposed of. Rather, she proves to be a paradigm-shifting commodity for the network, and goes on a three year undefeated streak. In other words, Julie is able to buck the trend of the "throwaway culture," for the time being, as the higher-than-ever ratings force Merv Griffin to view her as a valuable commodity, and the hard-and-fast idea of the five-day-at-most champion is subject to turnover. Consider this scene:

> Griffin murmurs to his right-hand man. His man has a shiny face and a black toupee. The man nods, rises:
> "Can't let her go. Too good. Too hot. She's become the whole show. Look at these figures." He brandishes figures.
> "Rules, though," says the director. "Five slots, retire undefeated, come back for Champion's Tourney in April. Annual Event. Tradition. Art Flemming. Fairness to whole contestant pool. An ethics type of thing."
> Griffin whispers into his shiny man's ear. Again the man rises.
> "Balls," the shiny man says to the director. "The girl's magic. Figures do not lie. The Triscuit people have offered to double the price on thirty-second spots, long as she stays." He smiles with his mouth but not his eyes, Faye sees. "Shoot, Janet, we could just call this the Julie Smith Show and still make mints." (24)

After reading this scene, it's tempting to claim that Julie Smith, through her uncanny ability to recall trivial bits of information faster and more reliably than any other competitor as-of-yet, has managed to reach past the ephemeral and volatile, toward a stability of sorts. One must refuse the urge to do this, as this vignette does not change the inherent volatility of her situation one iota. Rather, it serves to explain another condition of the postmodern, turnover time dominated, society. Harvey claims, "Learning to play the volatility right is now just as important as accelerating turnover time. This means either being highly adaptable and fast-moving in response to market shifts, or masterminding the volatility."[28] Julie does this, as her complete and utter dominance of the other contestants lined-up to dispose of her generates a considerable buzz amongst the viewing public – Americans love a slaughter – and, perhaps more importantly, Julie avoids the other act of trivialization and disposability – refusing to answer the human interest questions posed by Alex Trebek each and every night, thus avoiding disposability precisely because the viewing public does not know what commodity specifically she would be to dispose of. In other words, this

multiple stripped of its particularities, this element of being-qua-being, can't be thrown away until it's been properly digested by the people on the other side of the screen. By not offering any of herself up to the world, Julie Smith resists such digestion.

However, Julie Smith is not just an acted-upon multiple within a television-as-medium story. In other words, she's not just the object of perpetual attempts at disposal. Julie Smith is a product of the "throwaway culture" in the full sense of the term, as indicated by her coldly analytical attitude toward the relationship between her and Faye Goddard, in which she is an agent of disposability. Consider the last conversation Julie has with Faye on the day she will eventually lose her crown as queen of Jeopardy!, the day she will be replaced by her brother. Directly after revealing that a string of men dated her mother but couldn't summon the ability to love her autistic brother and further, that she and her brother were abandoned precisely because a man her mother loved had that particular deficiency – and further still, that Julie forever associated the faces of men with the unmoving faces of expressionless animals, like the cow she stared at for hours on end on the day she was abandoned – Julie says to Faye:

> "Tell them there are no holes for your fingers in the masks of men. Tell them how could you ever even hope to love what you can't grab onto [...] That's when I love you, if I love you," she whispers, running a finger down her white powdered cheek, reaching to trace an angled line of white onto Faye's own face. "Is when your face moves into expression." (41)

In no uncertain terms, Julie, in this scene is an agent of disposability, informing Faye that her love is an ephemeral thing, a fleeting construct of her own internal, psychological issues with men, formed in the kiln of traumatic childhood experience.

Despite the detailed narrative of disposability, the explication of speed-up and turnover time (including the concepts of disposability and instant gratification) is not the only purpose of the television-as-medium in this story, though. Far from it. Much like the ethos of DeLillo's White Noise,Harvey claims:

> Advertising and media images [...] have come to play a very much more integrative role in cultural practices and now assume a much greater importance in the growth dynamics of capitalism. Advertising, moreover, is no longer built around the idea of informing or promoting in the ordinary sense, but is increasingly geared to manipulating desires and tastes through images that may or may not have anything to do with the product to be sold.[29]

Anyone who has viewed a 1980s or 90s Budweiser ad in which beautiful, bikini-clad, women appear out of thin air the moment a can top is popped or a Nike ad in which the images shown have little to no connection to the production or ownership of sporting apparel – until the viewer sees the trademarked swoosh at the end or has watched Michael Jordan shoot hoops to sell underwear instantly understands Harvey's sentiments. Further, Bolter and Grusin state:

> Perhaps more than any other television genre, the commercial insists on the reality of television—not just its power as a medium, but its place in our physical and social world. When the viewer goes to a supermarket, she will see products labeled 'as seen on TV,' as if the presence of the commercial validates the product.[30]

Having already given the example of DeLillo's narrative device of television and radio ads as disembodied voices playing the role of the cultural backdrop, I'll move to the unique, yet similar way in which David Foster Wallace handles this device in "Little Expressionless Animals."

Six pages into the story, Wallace turns the camera's eye from Julie (and often her lover Faye, as well) to Faye's mother Dee Goddard, who is – as you might guess from the trajectory of this argument – watching television. Consider this scene in which Dee Goddard has a direct conversation with the commercial slogans uttered by her television:

> "Let's all be there," says the television.
> "Where else would I be?" asks Dee Goddard, in her chair, in her office, at night, in 1987.
> "We bring good things to life," says the television.
> "So did I," says Dee. "I did that. Just once." (8)

The first clichéd, oversaturated, utterance put forth by the television was NBC's official slogan from 1984-1986 – an expanded version of 1983's "Be there." Dee's reply not only indicates the individual's attentiveness and knowledge of television during the time period, but the resigned-to-its-fate attitude of a society that has no other place they could fathom being than plopped in their respective office chairs, watching network television programs

in the evening. More interesting – as a thesis on the pervasiveness of the medium of television in postmodernity – is the second slogan-and-reaction pairing: General Electric's long-running slogan, "We bring good things to life," with Dee's maternal response, "I did that. Just once." Not only does this scene provide a clever take to the issue of television's role in the postmodern cultural collective consciousness, but it's perhaps the most substantive conversation throughout the entire story. In this, the forced pairing of the image-as-commodity and the maternal response of true human emotion, we have not simply a television advertisement/slogan-as-cultural backdrop like we see in DeLillo's White Noise but a breaking-of-the-fourth-wall conversation with the product of the camera, and thus, the personification of commercial slogans as a simulacrum of real human connection – the last nail in the coffin condemning postmodern America as a "throwaway" society.

In David Harvey's dystopian view of Epcot Center – a place where the temporal and spatial are so compressed so as to generate the experience that the trip from China to Norway takes only a few steps – Harvey views Epcot as endemic of a larger problem:

> The general implication is that through the experience of everything from food, to culinary habits, music, television, entertainment, and cinema, it is now possible to experience the world's geography vicariously, as a simulacrum. The interweaving of simulacra in daily lives brings together different worlds (of commodities) in the same space and time. But it does so in such a way as to conceal almost perfectly any trace of origin, of the labour processes that produced them, or of the social relations implicated in their production.[31]

In effect, through "Little Expressionless Animals," David Foster Wallace channels Foucault, Badiou and Baudrillard's concepts of the simulacrum. Hence the television becomes a simulacrum of a confidante, a character able to interact in conversations as seamlessly as an actual person – perhaps more so, as the individual itself, replaced seamlessly by the simulacrum of the television, has become entirely disposable.

Through his ontological presentation of the medium of television, David Foster Wallace it seems, has come to the same conclusions about postmodernity as David Harvey. The effects of late 20th century American capitalism have brought about another round of unwieldy time-space compression, and the necessity of speed-up and turnover time have yielded the symptoms of disposability, the intensification of the need for instant gratification, and the need for novelty in entertainment – and by proxy, in every day existence – that's so immense it's possible that everything can be replaced by the electronic simulacrum most Americans stare at for more than four hours a day. Further, the mediated and remediated self can only understand his experiences through previously viewed media. If the individual itself has become disposable in the postmodern situation, it appears a reasonable simulacrum is well equipped to take the individual's place – television. As a citizen of the postmodern situation, I'd like to elaborate on this thesis, and postulate on what might come from such a dystopian idea, but this line of thought too, is disposable and at this point, the novelty has worn off. Time to change the channel.

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The Imperial Eye

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Others and Objects in Jaws

The figure of the shark in the film Jaws has been compared by Slavoj Žižek to the figure of the mythical Jew in anti-Semitic propaganda: both the shark and the Jew function as an empty signifier that binds together a multitude of analytic or concrete elements and transposes them to a new dimension of synthetic reality (1993: 148-49). To put it in sociological terms: the shark is a name (empty container) that transfers consciousness from the domain of profane stuff (and nominalist empirical operations) into the domain of the sacred, synthetic, sui generis facticity of reified reality. This type of blank object, for Žižek, is part of the Lacanian palette of objects that include the 'signifier of the barred other', the 'object cause of desire' or 'little object a', and the oppressive Thing or Phi object. The shark, the fantasy Jew, etc., are 'monsters' and monsters are blank screens upon which are projected fantasies, fears, etc. In other words, the monster falls under the category of the little object a.

The shark as unobtainable object of desire, the fetish object that causes desire or 'little a', has been discussed by several writers but, as far as we can tell, no one has noticed that the shark in Jaws actually functions differently for each of the main characters in the film such that, for the town sheriff, the shark represents the signifier of the 'barred Other'; for the oceanographic expert the shark functions as a completely different object, the classical Thing or "Phi object"; and, of course, for the traumatized boat captain, the shark is the 'object cause of desire' – at this point, the story parallels the whale-captain relation found in Moby Dick.

The 'signifier of the barred Other' is an object that enables a person or group to disavow that the symbolic domain (reality) is inconsistent, that the world really does not make sense, that it is incoherent in many ways and that we are all exposed, every day, to contingency and random occurrences that we do not have control over. Phi objects are obtrusive and overwhelming in their radical over-presence. They represent, in a way, the inverse of the little a in that where the 'little a' is all form and no content, the Phi is all content and no form.

In his analysis of the development of the Hitchcockian cinematic universe Žižek makes the case that each stage of capitalist development supports its own preeminent form of subjectivity: liberal capitalism and the autonomous bourgeois individualist we associate with the Protestant work ethic; imperialist state capitalism (i.e., Fordism) and "the resigned paternal figure" and "organization man"; and finally postindustrial or late capitalism (i.e., post-Fordism) and the "'pathological narcissist', the form of subjectivity that characterizes the so-called 'society of consumption'" where the more we consume the less we 'enjoy' and the more we are punished for failure by insane maternal superego injunctions (1992: 5; 1991: 102-03; see also Worrell and Dangler 2011). The captain, sheriff, and scientist (each from a different generation) fit neatly into this schematic:

Protestant Capitalism	**Fordism**	**Post-Fordism**
Bourgeois Individualist	Organization Man	Narcissist
Boat Captain	Town Sheriff	Scientist
Shark = a	Shark = barred A	Shark = Phi

One shark is, here, actually three different objects functioning in unique ways for each character.

For the captain of the Orca, the shark represents the illusive object upon which he projects his fantasies and

desires – a blank screen. After surviving the sinking of the USS Indianapolis that saw much of the crew eaten by sharks, the captain has spent the rest of his life, ostensibly, in pursuit of sharks but it is clear that he is not chasing sharks but the transcendental, imaginary shark. Of course, as Žižek makes clear, we can never (or should never) actually get what we want most and, true to this logic, we find the captain is eaten by the object cause of his desire; when he got to close he was destroyed by it.

For the town sheriff the shark is an administrative problem that threatens to burst not only the town's summer tourist livelihood but also its self-image as pristine American perfection. The presence of the shark reveals that this perfect, small town is actually filled with money-grubbing, cynical, monsters willing to sacrifice human life for money.

For the oceanographic expert the shark is an object that does not fit into the scientific symbolic system. It is a freak. Its presence threatens to burst the established sense of natural objects. Either it would have to be tamed and commodified or must be made to disappear altogether. It is interesting to note that both the scientist and the sheriff have a hand in the ultimate destruction of the animal at the dénouement.

Remaining at the level of ideal types we miss the crucial reality that an object develops from one form to another across time and space. Take for example the figure of Judas as he is transfigured from the gospel of Mark as a somewhat neutral apostle to, finally, in the gospel of John, an incarnation of pure evil – a figure completely at odds with Gnostic interpretations of Judas. Or Jesus himself as a radically different object depending upon the gaze that views him: Roman, Jewish, Christian (orthodox and Gnostic). But here we are not concerned with sharks and old gods but with the dollar.

Magical Capitalism and the Dollar as Object

Žižek claims that each new capitalist "epoch" is announced by a fresh wave of "monsters" (1992: 139). Fundamental changes in the (symbolic) structure of capitalism generate new imaginary objects that cause desire, mask inconsistencies and represent inert, oppressive remainders of the real. The current unprecedented unleashing of monstrous objects in popular culture, from vampires and werewolves to multi-form zombies (see McNally 2010), can be read as imaginary elaborations of the monstrous power of the dollar. Today, the dollar is readily visible as the ultimate object cause of desire, but what we most wish to draw attention to is the monstrous dimension of the dollar, the dollar as the ultimate, feared builder of empires and destroyer of worlds. The dollar's monstrosity, its destructive presence (where there is a dollar there is death), signals a shift from post-Fordism and the regime of flexible accumulation to something even more horrifying: magical capitalism. While speculative finance capital began to "take flight" under post-Fordism, achieving significant degrees of autonomy and levels of power, exchange-value remained tethered to the organic composition of capital. In magical capitalism, that tether is severed and exchange value is imagined to be entirely liberated from the sphere of the organic composition of capital. The illusion is that value and surplus value can be generated through speculative operations independently of commodity production – e.g., 'speculative' managerial strategies fixated on short-term fluctuations in equities prices (Krier 2005) and other, more exotic maneuvers.

The symbolic and imaginary dimensions of speculative trading in 'magical' capitalism generate an illusion of magical cause and effect in between production of values and speculative activity. What is masked is the real force behind the flight of the dollar: military prowess and the capacity to project terror and fear into world markets. In other words, the destructive dimension of the dollar is not autonomously or magically generated by internal currents in financial markets, but these destructive movements are themselves generated – in whole or in part – by the real destructive force of military weaponry, personnel and organization.

The dollar is not just any money – one of dozens of entirely fungible, entirely exchangeable denominations within the world system. The dollar's unique power derives from the "real" destructive power of the U.S. military that has the power to directly intervene to maintain the dollar's value and destructive power and to shape movements of trading values in global financial and commodity markets from without. The symbolic structure of magical capitalism lacks the signifier for this military power: there is an empty space in the signifying chain that is filled out by imaginary objects.

Three Functions of the Dollar

The dollar functions differently – is a different object – for various sectors of contemporary capitalist society.

One of the crucial features of magical capitalism is the permanence of joblessness and high levels of contingent employment in dead-end jobs.

Speculative elites imagine the dollar and its accumulation as a sign of prowess over market forces. Only a magician could command an object that exists everywhere, in multiple dimensions, in this world and also 'behind' it. Money is pure spectral reality at this point. The logic of the dollar represents the command over the spiritual cosmos. Making the correct speculative judgment means that one has successfully manipulated mysterious and unseen forces. Successful speculative accumulation signifies that one has successfully controlled the uncontrollable (comparable to the sheriff in Jaws).

Workers, by contrast, imagine the dollar as not only compensation for a loss of time and energy but as recognition of a job well done, a reward for commitment to the labor contract and their willing obedience to the dictates of capitalist exploitation. The dollar is also that classic fetish screen (little a) upon which their dreams and desires play out. That elusive thing that would bring total satisfaction to all needs and wants (comparable to the captain of the Orca in Jaws).

Deactivated workers and students, marginal types, and the rabble imagine the dollar as the overwhelming Thing that blocks out the sun. Every moment is centered on the lack of the dollar and the desire to draw close to it. Conversely, a character such as the scientist in Jaws represents the marginal type of another order: the over-presence of wealth instead of its lack. He is wealth incarnate (his high-tech exploration vessel was bought with family wealth) and he oscillates between frustrations at the sheriff's lack of sufficient rigidity while, simultaneously, drawn to an abyss just as the boat captain is. The scientist embodies the superimposition of two polar oppositions: anomie and fatalism. So, for the marginal types in society whose marginality is constituted by the lack or insufficient presence of money their world is blotted out by this very lack. On the other side, we find the marginal type embodied by the oceanographic expert whose presence is overwhelming in its very over-enrichment of wealth and who functions as a disruptive blot in both the administrative and bourgeois plane of vision.

Audi and Dystopia

The Audi automotive brand has an advertisement proclaiming: "The road is not exactly a place of intelligence." The ad features one of its vehicles operating in an urban dystopia of crumbling bridges and decayed infrastructure, incompetent and oblivious drivers and roads littered with debris and junk. The message is clear: we live in a regulative vacuum, society is falling apart, and the only solution is personal, technological and commercial. "Nobody is going to solve this mess" is the message emanating from the voice of the free market – the very thing (or one of the forces) that created the mess.

The Audi commercial is weird in many ways but one way it functions is to deliver the exact opposite of what it explicitly claims. Not only does it claim that the present order is lacking intelligence, but further, that the lack of intelligence, the lack of the transcendental (imaginary) super ego, the total lack of regulation (anomie), decay, dystopia, etc., is in fact intelligent and, in fact, paradise. This automobile was made for these conditions. It is perfection. Why would you want to pull the rug out from under this vehicle thereby depriving yourself of the opportunity to own one? The price of ownership is a depopulated, vacuum-like urban center completely falling apart. People drive around reading their newspaper or simply throwing dilapidated possessions on the side of the highway because there are no negative consequences. What police? What fines? What external gaze exists to judge me? Finally, a paradise of unpunished enjoyment! How can we ensure the actualization of this dystopia so that I may finally, really enjoy life with my new auto?

Empire and Imperialism

An empire must devitalize its infrastructure due to external, military necessities: U.S. hegemony is real only to the extent that it continues to terrorize the planet for the purpose of keeping the dollar afloat. Our greatest 'export' today is the dollar. When the dollar sinks so does America. Presently, the United States spends as much on the Department of Defense as the rest of the world does on military expenditures combined. Comprehensive estimates that include

non Department of Defense expenditures place the total annual force cost near one trillion dollars. That money has to come from somewhere and much of it comes at the expense of domestic programs: hyper-exploitation and repression of the internal population result.

Avatar: Dream Like an Empire [1]

In March 2010, Žižek reviewed Avatar for the New Statesman; his conclusion was that, at its core, the film duplicates a time-honored "reactionary myth" that perpetuates "vampiric exploitation" in the guise of "compassion for the poor." In short, Avatar is racist and brutal in its implications. The film offers up the ideological choice of being "the victim of imperialist reality" or playing the "allotted role in the white man's fantasy." Žižek was more or less correct in his evaluation of the film but he could have gone much further and drawn out many more regressive features. Avatar is important and deserves more attention as it provides, arguably, an ideal-typical expression of what we might think of as the pseudo-progressive consciousness of our time. Avatar gives us an insight into how millions of people can hold two, mutually exclusive sets of values in their minds simultaneously, enabling them to imagine that they are 'liberal' or 'progressive' and 'anti-corporate' while, at the same time, harboring and living out ideas that are reactionary, authoritarian, narcissistic and life-negating.

One of the most obvious and problematic features of Avatar is that it imagines that the solution to the pathological functions of the military industrial complex (MIC) is already found inside the MIC – like a Luther inside the Church who, alone, and driven by ethical purity, can undermine ruthless institutionalized tyranny. Nothing is more fantastic than the notion of an ethically pure trooper who could bring the operations of the MIC to a standstill on the frontier of extraction. We have to do nothing about the MIC because the seeds of its own self-destruction are already festering away, internally. We can go on consuming like mad and burying ourselves in debt because the Department of Defense (DoD) can ultimately purify itself. Indeed, the worse the MIC and we become in our malevolence, the more likely a good change will spontaneously produce itself. Bad capitalism is actually the road to freedom! The worse it is, the better off we will be.

Avatar splits (fetishizes) capital into two separates species: the classic division between productive industrial capital and rapacious, evil capital – here it subsidizes the DoD for the purpose of clearing a path for corporate globalization[2]. In the background is the promise of a return to good, old-fashioned, ethical fair days work for a fair days pay business. If only the evil excess of capital, the MIC-speculation complex could be pacified, then we could get back to the business of good business and the DoD could get back to what it does best: peace-keeping missions and making the world safe for democracy.

A key promise the film makes is that violent revolution is necessary but will happen somewhere else, literally in another world, another time and another place. The mess and destruction of a revolution can be avoided here and now because, evidently, 'here' is a great place, requiring only minor revisions. Revolution should not cost us 'our' world but should come at the expense of the other's world. And if the mass destruction and death involved in revolution is only possible someplace else then it is because it deserves to be purified. Our world is good; the revolutionary battleground, on the other hand, is defective (but naturally perfect) and in need of annihilation. Pointing to the 'speculative identity' of the film, the presence of the evil corporation prefigures the primordial defect of the aboriginals – as if evil capital is forced to appear due to the primitive stupidity of others to get with the program of free market exchange. Of course, what Avatar hides is that our almost perfect world of middle class material sumptuousness is built on top of the other's radical impoverishment and free market exchange. And revolution, while unavoidable, will be postponed for the future – somebody else in the future will have to deal with all this; for now, all we can do is just keep doing what we've been doing.

Revolution Will Occur Through the Agency of an "Other"

'Radical' or revolutionary potential is not simply embodied by the white male. The white hero is the embodiment of justice, a gift that he can bestow on others if and when he chooses. However, actual revolutionary action would require a transformation of the white male into a hybrid, alien being (literally inhuman). Revolution is not something

a decent American (read 'white male') would get involved in. The revolutionary situation is a classic case of the person becoming simultaneously more than and less than his individual form: as a 'sublimate' (his noble and heroic form) must be purchased at the price of assuming a more 'primitive' form; Avatar implies that revolution is not inherently progressive but regressive.

In order to save an environment we should be willing to destroy it in a glorious struggle. We will have to face losing 'the tree' in order to save the tree. And the loss of nature is acceptable because the apparently sui generis 'network' of nature is greater than the tree – loss of finite parts of nature is a trivial price to pay because we need only retain a fraction of the whole in order to preserve the whole itself. The destruction of a key but finite piece of the natural world is bearable because the very loss itself will spontaneously activate its automatic compensation.

One point that Avatar gets right is that sociological altruism (Durkheim) can defeat technology (a lesson that Americans continuously fail to grasp, from Korea, Vietnam, to Afghanistan). But the limits of altruism are reached when war passes over into total war. Avatar slips in petit bourgeois justice as a notion that can suspend even the trump card of total war. We can forge ahead in our purely self-destructive mode (domestically and internationally) without regard for total war and nuclear winter because we are white, right, and full of might – or at least we could be if we wanted to. We can be stopped but even in our 'defeat' we emerge victorious. As always, for Americans, every situation is a 'win-win.' This bizarre notion also reinforces the notion that science and technology are inferior to myth, belief and faith. We may have a lot of high-tech gadgets but what will save us, like the 'primitives', is our irrational faith-based society.

Justice in the Avatar world is local (particular) and universalism is inherently evil and corrupt. Forces that penetrate or appear on the boundaries with the particular are only evil and particular communities will always be forced to circle their wagons at the first signs of universalism. Freedom can only be actualized via particular mediation rather than directly and freedom will come at the price of intellectual stagnation and submerging the mind in faith and myth. It is permissible to degrade the earth so long as it was done in good faith and based on faith – in other words, consequences are always mediated by our faith-intention. Our lack of reflexivity is our alibi: of course, had we known what we were doing we would never have done otherwise but since we were misled or duped (a defect of faith) we could not know. The very experience of something like global climate change is proof enough that we were well intentioned, a faithful, good people.

Just as Avatar fetishizes capital it also fetishizes nature. We should be willing to fight to the death for natural resources because they have 'value' as if value were inherent in nature. The film hinges on a naïve realism that ordinary people share with orthodox Marxology: value per se. The film redoubles our misplacement of morality into the natural (amoral) domain. Avatar makes as much sense as evil sharks and Bolshevik ants that populate nature programming. Further, in Avatar we find that some places are sacred and worth dying for; some places are worth the cost of their lives – and, if we lose one or two, it is no big deal since our revolutionary fighter is not even human any more, not one of us.

Avatar also appeals to upper-middle class egoism in that it constructs a morally pure, incorruptible, and noble other for us to project our abstract and impersonal humanitarianism on to – our love of aliens is linked to the inhuman 'brotherly love' of the Calvinist and his de-sublimated descendant, the modern consumer. What Avatar reinforces is the fear of the organized spiritual elite. The film structures revolutionary action along two possible lines: the naturally attuned aliens who are bogged down by the collectivist (horde) mentality and, in the second group, the ethically driven individual; the available options are masses or individuals but not the elite cadre – cadres are for fanatics and terrorists. The good (and imaginary) fight just needs one 'activist' or good guy (with a little good luck thrown in along with common sense and a dash of moral indignation) to mobilize the masses. One could easily see in this fantasy not just narcissism but full-blown psychosis. And since in this arrangement everybody in the category of 'mass' would have to agree to follow the singular leader, and since that is impossible, it means that actual revolution would have to remain forever in the domain of fantasy. Either we all pull together or nothing is possible. I'm not going to risk my life unless everybody is willing to die for my adventure. The Avatar fantasy also says a lot about the uniquely American conception of self-sacrifice.

Self-sacrifice, here, is a form of degraded utilitarianism. The hero who sacrifices his self actually gains much more: regaining the full use of a (now alien) body: sacrifice is only worth it so long as I get a lot more out of it and do not actually lose my life. Revolutionaries qualify for a life upgrade upon completion of the mission. Sacrifice in Avatar follows an all-or-nothing logic: either I will save the whole world or I'll just stay at home and do nothing. Mundane, simple forms of everyday assistance are too boring and trivial to imagine. It is easier and more fun to imagine my body transformed into an alien who defeats the combined forces of evil capital and have unlimited

sexual relations with a princess than it is to just do something small but potentially helpful to concrete people with actual needs. For Avatar fans, the revolution will have to be mightily entertaining and rewarding for them to get interested. Since that will never happen, they will do nothing. Avatar is a film that negates the tensions it conjures up and paralyzes its audience – the negation of the negation is already retroactively posited in the original act of the purchase of the ticket. Futility here, as with the voting booth, is seemingly dissolved but preserved in spectacle.

James Bond Viewed Through the Imperial Eye

James Bond, the fictional British Secret Service agent created by Ian Fleming in the 1950s, has appeared in more than 23 films and has become an icon of Western Imperialism. Bond's cultural significance is on vivid display in 2012, with museum exhibitions, film retrospectives and much media commentary marking the 50th anniversary of the film franchise. Much of this attention has been focused upon the moments when new actors were cast into the role, altering the character's screen persona. We argue that major transformations in the structure of capitalism are announced not only by new monsters, but also by new actors playing James Bond.

The most recent actor to play the role, Daniel Craig (Casino Royale 2006; Quantum of Solace 2008; Skyfall 2012), portrays him as a cold, ascetic soldierly-male. While there are many continuities between Craig's Bond and those of his predecessors, the screen persona he generates marks a significant departure. Compared to Craig, earlier Bonds appear as hairy-knuckled, cheek-slapping lechers; blow-dried, leisure-suited, creaky playboys or over-pretty, politically-correct, randy poseurs -- all guns and hair-goo. Craig's Bond hardly requires a gun (and would never use hair-goo), preferring hot and sweaty kills with bare hands at extreme close range. Craig's Bond has revitalized a bewhiskered franchise, receiving accolades from film critics and record revenues from contemporary audiences.

Craig's Bond resulted from intentional "rebooting" of the Bond marquee. Bond films typically deployed title sequences with scantily clad, undulating women in silhouette. In contrast, the title sequence to 2006's Casino Royale replaced soft, curvy women with hard-edged men killing other men in an orgy of blood. The theme song for the film featured the refrain "the coldest blood runs through my veins." Craig's Bond preferred to kill men with his hands rather than touch women with them. Man-on-man fight scenes were staged and filmed like love scenes. The camera lingered upon intimate gyrations that ended in blackout or death: a "negative orgasm" in the terms of Klaus Theweleit (1989). Craig's Bond films depicted an erotics of destruction rather than an erotics of intimate, sexual love. Such erotics of destruction features in other recent imperialist-themed films. Whereas the classic film spy or warrior killed enemies of empire as a duty-bound, sublimated fulfillment of symbolic mandates (i.e. a job), more recent cinematic spies and warriors clearly "get off" on killing. Unable to find jouissance in love relationships, Craig's Bond found it in painful, punishing struggle with other men.

While earlier film Bonds were knowledgeable about large-scale politics, strategic concerns and ideology, Craig's Bond cared little for such matters. He wanted a fight and was indifferent to the identity of his opponents (he beat comrades and enemy combatants with equal intensity). The fight was an end-in-itself rather than a means to a larger end.

Craig's Bond was emotionally-detached. His closest interpersonal relationship was a particularly troubled one with the mother-surrogate, "M," head of the secret service that employed him. The dyadic relationship between Bond and "M" was characterized by ongoing fantasy-riddled struggles of separation, individuation, engulfment and abandonment (e.g. multiple violations of the other's personal boundaries: breaking in to each other's homes, using each other's passcodes to spy upon each other surreptitiously, etc.). Craig's Bond was depicted as someone who avoided, resisted or remained immune from the need for object relations. Almost all previous Bond films ended with the "production of a romantic couple," but all three of Craig's films end with Bond unattached to a love object. If love objects were not central to Craig's Bond, what structures the psychic universe of these films?

Another defining trait of Craig's Bond was his attraction to and temporary involvement with "unavailable" women (those married to other men or those who aggressively rejected his advances). Interestingly, the five women with whom he had physical contact in the three films died shortly afterwards. While earlier Bonds were noted for voracious sexual appetites and promiscuity, Craig's Bond displayed dampened sexual desire (reviews of the first two Craig Bond films have been described as "chaste"). What remained of the character was a killer who searched, even cruised, for opportunities for close, physical and deadly combat with other men like himself. Indeed, Craig's Bond faced antagonists who were "doubles" of Bond himself: enemies whose physical appearance, style of dress, and

character structure mirrored those of Bond: gym-obsessed, militarized, hardened killers.

Perhaps the trait that most strikingly departs from previous cinematic portrayals of Bond was the extreme levels of physical fitness and destructive physicality that Craig displayed on screen. Earlier film Bonds were gentlemanly "fit" rather than over-muscular or "buff." Many other mid-20th century imperialist-themed heroes (played by men like Humphrey Bogart, James Stewart or John Wayne) diverged even further from masculine physical ideals. Consider the shirtless, jiggly belly of George C. Scott as hawkish cold-warrior General Buck Turgidson in Stanley Kubrick's (1964) Dr. Strangelove. Craig's Bond, in contrast, looked as though he could kill someone (an explicit goal of his training regime), and his appearance evoked painful workouts and ascetic regulation of nutrition. The musculature of Craig was not ornamental, like steroid-inflated bulk on 1980s action stars, but hard, lean and functional. Such extreme levels of physical fitness – what Theweleit (1989) labels "body armoring – became widespread in contemporary imperialist-themed films (including Avatar, Apocalypto to name just two).

The asceticism necessary to maintain armored musculature shades off into masochism, the final trait of Craig's Bond. The tableau scene of Casino Royale (2006) was a particularly brutal torture scene in which Craig's Bond was stripped, tied to a bottomless chair and beaten repeatedly on his exposed genitals until he blacked out. Craig's Bond not only endured the beating, but also egged on his torturer, jokingly feigning (or not?) enjoyment of the beating. While many film commentators have drawn attention to the sadism of James Bond, few have noted the masochism that was always present, but brought to the fore with Craig, not only in the depiction of genital-punishment, but also with the frequent loss of reputation, social honor, and humiliation that occurs in the film at the hands of his boss and colleagues.

The capacity to stand firm and take punishment (ascetic discipline) is closely related to masochistic enjoyment of pain, humiliation and punishment. This is drawn out in one recent parody of the James Bond films, Rowan Atkinson's Johnny English, Reborn (2011). In this film, Johnny English, a lapsed secret service agent, is undergoing warrior training in Tibet in the hopes of regaining appointment to MI6. The "training" is mostly centered upon the genitalia: the warriors-to-be kick each other in the groin and drag progressively heavier stones tied to their genitals. The theme is clear: in order to be a warrior, one must deaden the genitalia. And the film's plot does indeed hinge upon the 007 prototype's capacity to cheerfully sustain repeated blows to the nether regions, to stand firm under such attack.

The toned, muscular body of recent imperialist films signifies submission to a masochistic regime of suffering. Such extreme levels of muscular development and physical fitness is impossible to obtain without hours of discomfort, muscular toil, joint pain, ascetic avoidance of calories, leisure and sedentary pleasures. To display such a body is to submit to systematic body-shaping and dietary restrictions as a central organizing principle of existence.

James Bond: The Soldierly-Male

Readers of critical theory may find the character portrait of Craig's Bond – wounded, suffering, yet armored – eerily familiar. We have seen this character-type before in Klaus Theweleit's Male Fantasies (1987; 1989) an analysis of the ideal-type "soldierly-male" of the interwar years in Germany. The men that Theweleit studied were former members of the Freikorp: volunteer proto-fascist militia who fought deadly civil-war battles with socialists, communists and workers in the very early years of the Weimar Republic. Like Craig's Bond, these men had a clear preference for male bonding in warfare rather than domestic intimacy with women: "movement toward soldiering" is "movement away from women" (Theweleit 1987: 29). Women were split into all-good mother-sister-virgin figures who were neither physically present nor sexually-available to them and all-bad "red women," who were destabilizing and violently fended off to protect against the threat of intimacy. The language used by these men did not objectify the women (making them sexual objects), but de-animated women as things devoid of life. Pleasure for these men came from destruction, killing and warfare: "vengeance" against an enemy not sexual contact with a lover (Theweleit 1987: 34). They focused their energy and interpersonal activity upon building disciplined bodies and armored selves that could be arranged into a defensive structure, a macro-machine of militarized soldier-males in tight formation.

Craig's Bond stages with clarity the incompatibility of imperial soldiering and loving object relations. Like the men Theweleit analyzes, Craig's Bond avoided romantic love, erotic desire and sexual enjoyment since these threatened to disintegrate their defenses. The armored body boundaries of such men were beaten onto them (by others and by the self) and was maintained by close contact (tight formation) with similarly armored bodies of other soldierly-males. The jouissance accorded to such men was located in pleasurable discharge in destructive violence. Imperial armies have long been composed of such men. Empires are maintained by soldiers whose primary pleasures come from soldiering. They bond with other soldiers, escape the pressures of civilian life – especially civilian love life. They release destructive energy in acts of violence against dehumanized or at least de-animated enemies. Craig's

Bond depicted the central incompatibility of soldierly-males and "normal" object relations: love relationships with a woman (Vesper Lynd in Casino Royale) require resignation from military service. Like Theweleit's soldierly-males, the jouissance of Craig's Bond is bound up with in soldiering for Her Majesty's Secret Service rather than in simple domestic pleasures. And so, the love object must die so that Bond can return to the work of killing for the empire.

Avatar, Empire and the Doubled Soldierly-Male

We now return to the analysis of Avatar, a film that went even further than Craig's Bond at staging the "armoring" of soldierly-males. Avatar, like the Batman films, the Empire Strikes Back and the Matrix trilogy – depicted soldiers putting on body armor composed of different materials. The soldier in Avatar was like a Russian doll. First, the soldier obtained musculature through the armoring processes described by Theweleit: drilling, exercising, painful punishment of the body, etc. Then the soldier put on light protective clothing and finally, climbed inside of an exoskeleton, an external metallic body armor that enhanced the soldier's capabilities to withstand attack and to unleash destructive violence. The device, referred to in the film as an AMP (amplified mobility platform) allowed the soldierly male to magically realize their ideal. Soldiers immersed in these armoring devices had massive arms and legs, but no head (they look similar to Robert Minor's early 20th century cartoon of the "perfect soldier"). They also had no genitals. As such, they were perfect components of a disciplined macro-machine (ego-control of behavior and genitally-generated desire are missing, hence nothing to disrupt the execution of orders).

In Avatar, Theweleit's soldierly-male was doubled into two split-off forms of armored body. The older, ultra-butch Colonel Quaritch was armored with the technical, metallic, acephalous and castrated AMP while the young, soft and already-crippled (castrated) Jake Sully was armored with the biological body of his Na'vi avatar. Sully, inside of his armored avatar body, went through rigorous boot camp training at the hands of the beautiful native princess, transforming himself into the toughest warrior in the forest, defeating all actual natives. Sully's young blue-bodied soldierly-male became supple, sexually potent and capable of intimate surrender, love and commitment while his split-off double, Colonel Quaritch, remained a classic killing machine in the pattern outlined by Theweleit.

The Colonel's mechanical exoskeleton was complete with bionic, metallic extensions and advanced, integrated weaponry. The price of this armor, like the price for Theweleit's soldiers, was the surrender of intimate object relations. This sacrifice was apparent in the imagery of the MIC headquarters in Avatar. Truly a military-industrial complex, the set design incorporated an almost perfect fusion of military and corporate aesthetic. Mod furniture and anonymous artwork that one normally sees in corporate offices are minimized. Medals, trophies and other honorific insignia of the military are also minimized: no parade grounds, medals, dress uniforms, etc. Inside the exoskeleton or outside of it, the Colonel functioned as a one-sided, abusive drill sergeant rather than an officer. All remnants of gentile, honorific conduct or the habitus of chivalry linked to larger social values were absent from his character.

Colonel Quaritch came very close to realizing a pure form of the soldierly-male constructed by Theweleit. He engaged in weight lifting and other tough exercise to keep himself hard: "You get soft, Pandora will shit you out dead with zero warning," he tells Sully in their first meeting and orders his subordinates to develop a tough mental attitude. He deployed the imagery of standing firm, forming a defensive barrier or wall, not allowing a breach, in other words, finding safety and security through attachment to a disciplined formation. He feared the "mire," "mud" and ooze: "Out there, beyond that fence, every living thing that crawls, flies or squats in the mud wants to kill you and eat your eyes for jujubes." He expressed fear of being overrun, he wanted missions "high and tight:" the heights were safe while "down there" was danger.

The Colonel manifested dogmatic, black and white thinking. He remorselessly punished those who "crossed the line" in disobedience. He was indifferent to larger strategic or profit motives of the corporation or the values of the larger society. Instead, his desired killing for its own sake, relished opportunities to "get off" on the unleashing of destructive violence. He used language and adopted attitudes that "derealized" the reality of killing. He displayed inappropriate emotion and manifested a decided lack of empathy. The Colonel drank coffee while killing Na'vi, he downplayed the reality of what was actually happening by dramatically understating the consequences of actions. He remained emotionally detached -- "that's how you scatter the roaches" he announced after fire-bombing natives. Throughout the film, the Colonel was entirely devoid of sexual talk or action. In fact, no one within the Hells' Gate compound on Pandora was depicted within an intimate relationship nor were they desirous of sex. The MIC was strangely and entirely desexualized: the MIC administrators, the soldiers, even the "liberal" scientists lacked genital

desire.

Like other imperial-themed films, Avatar depicted the military as a magic agency that could transform young boys with puny, soft "boy bodies" into large, muscular, hardened armored beings. The exoskeletons were merely the imaginary representation of the muscular armoring that was already ignited in fantasy. Though sexless, Avatar depicted an imperial military as a site of immense destructive pleasure. One not only was able to develop a powerful exoskeleton, but one had the enjoyment of unleashing its fury in violent battle.

Theweleit's soldierly-men were vividly aware of the impossibility of simultaneously fulfilling the symbolic mandate of the imperial military and that of domestic civilian life. They were aware of the impossibility of being both an imperial soldier and a domestic spouse or parent. The soldier-male was perpetually absent from home, perpetually at risk of injury or death, maintained close ties to and companionship with other soldiers. The character-structure that found jouissance in such a life was inconsistent with the character-structure that found jouissance thorough intimate love relations, daily presence as a contributor to family life and household economy. Avatar did not confront this symbolic impossibility head-on, but masked it by staging the fantasy that one could have it both ways, that the inconsistencies of the system were somehow mediated through Sully's adoption of the supple, sexually-potent, loving native who is also an armored destructive warrior.

Imperialism should be the master signifier of contemporary magic capitalism, the location of the quilting point that fixes the meaning of all other signifiers. But, in fact, imperialism is a word that rarely appears in contemporary discourse – a symbol that is strangely missing given its obvious signifying power. But then capitalism does not function by overtly providing symbols and concepts that reveal its actual functioning but rather, as Žižek has made clear, operates by masking and obscuring the gaps in the system with "sublime objects" that paste over the holes in the symbolic order – providing not only the appearance of completeness, but more importantly, generating a user's illusion that launches the action necessary to keep the system circulating.

The popularity and appeal of imaginary productions like Craig's Bond and Avatar tell us much about the location of the gaps in the symbolic order. They identify the place of its radical incommensurability, the jarring inconsistencies that most need masking. These imaginary productions maintain the illusion of consistency that enables contemporary magical capitalism and its hidden military support to continue.

In his "Cult of Distraction" Kracauer makes an extremely valuable point when it comes to films that paralyze audiences: "the very fact that the shows aiming at distraction are composed of the same mixture of externalities as the world of the urban masses; the fact that these shows lack any authentic and materially motivated coherence, except possibly the glue of sentimentality, which covers up this lack but only in order to make it all the more visible; the fact that these shows convey precisely and openly to thousands of eyes and ears the disorder of society – this is precisely what would enable them to evoke and maintain the tension that must precede the inevitable and radical change. In the streets of Berlin, one is often struck by the momentary insight that someday all this will suddenly burst apart. The entertainment to which the general public throngs ought to produce the same effect" (1995).

Endnotes

1. The material on Avatar took initial form in "The Inner Logic of Avatar" by Worrell in New Politics, Vol. 52 (2012).

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They Blog, Therefore They Think: Composition 2.0 and Blogging toward Democracy

Lorie Jacobs

A Brave New (Media) World

There has been much discussion recently about the social liberating (and limiting) potential of the internet, particularly its effect on reading, writing, and language. Much attention has been paid to "secret writing" and the young people currently in high school and college (Agger 2009). The scholarly world is practically obsessed with the attempt to conceptualize and read the thinking and writing of the so-called "Facebook Generation" who are online using social networking technologies (Barton, 2005; Ducate & Lomicka, 2008; Hansford & Adlington, 2009; Vie, 2008). Other arguments include the fear of the decline of discourse (Agger, 1990) and/or demise of the public intellectual (Jacoby, 1982) as well as a resurrection on both counts in the socially networked internet (Benkler, 2006). One concern that has even made its way onto mainstream media shows like the Today Show and Oprah is a growing obsession with the mundane, the off-hand comment typical in online social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook (in lieu of reasoned argument), yielding a society ever more alienated, falsely conscious, etcetera.

As one who teaches first year composition at a large university, responsible for ushering new first-year students into the world of academic discourse, perhaps I have a unique perspective on these matters. It is my contention that the social networking capabilities of the internet, specifically blogs and wikis, Facebook and Twitter, have the potential to foster critical thinking and writing, promise to usher academia into a new type of discourse for students and faculty alike. Rather than contributing to the demise of academic reason, in my view, the rise of social media signals a transition to a post-consumerist salon culture of discussion and collaboration in a true public sphere. While the potential for political-cultural transformation and re-emergence of rational-critical debate is great, without conscious examination and critical engagement we risk leaving next generations to fend for themselves surrounded by media wolves. By embracing the potential of social media within academic contexts, specifically first-year composition, we have the opportunity to shape new media and consciously engage students as emerging public intellectuals.

However, successfully working toward a new academic discourse will also require a redefinition of meaning-full text and discourse. Thus, on the next pages, through a combination of narrative and theory, I will employ Derrida to illustrate the potential of social media as a language/thought liberator. Then, I will examine the goals of the first-year composition classroom as well as some limitations. A brief explanation of how I began using digital pedagogy helps illuminate additional benefits, particularly for this generation of students. Using classroom accounts, I will next demonstrate how my own students developed as critical thinkers and writers using by blogging in a public classroom forum. And finally, I will argue that the "digital revolution" can only take place once we fully embrace its academic potential within the institutional context of our own classrooms. Consider this a Marxist re-imagining of First-Year English, a digital manifesto, if you will.

Thinking = Writing = Participation

For Derrida (1967), language is a prison, standing between the mind and the world. One of his assertions, stemming from the structuralist school of thought, is that language constructs our conceptualization of the world and thus is a prison in the sense that we can't ever view the world any other way – it traps the writer into a certain set of understandings, determined by her knowledge base, her culture, her social network, etcetera. However, Derrida as a post-structuralist, moves beyond this limited view of language and suggests that "the reading must always aim at a certain relationship, unperceived by the writer, between what he commands and what he does not command of the patterns of the language that he uses" (p. 1825). In other words, it is the reader who determines the meaning – which is not necessarily the same as the writer's intended meaning.

I concede that language can sometimes feel limiting, particularly when as a writer, I am all too familiar with the search for the perfect word or the perfect sentence construction to communicate my thoughts. However, if language constructs human conceptualization of the world it permits/enables thinking to happen in the first place. Consider briefly, the urban-legendary Sapir-Wharf hypothesis concerning the Eskimos (the Inuits are actually only one of several native languages examined in the study) and the oft referenced "fifteen words for snow" (Pullum 1991). When you have fifteen words for snow, you view snow as a much more complex topic than if you view the world with only one word for snow, or so the theory goes. In this sense it's a chicken or egg scenario in that it is difficult to tell which came first: the complex view of snow or the fifteen words. Presumably somewhere in the evolution of the Inuit language, the fifteenth word developed because fourteen was not enough to describe the vast capabilities and characteristics of snow in the Polar regions. This frequently repeated tale demonstrates that fourteen words were too limiting, a prison, if you will. But it also demonstrates the capability of language to evolve as society needs new words to describe things, actions, and thoughts and communicate with other listeners. More importantly, for all those born after that fifteenth word emerged, there are now fifteen (rather than merely fourteen) ways to think about snow, to talk about snow, to write about snow. The thinking is altered by the language and vice versa. Thinking is altered, perhaps limited, by language certainly, but more so in terms of other social functions than language itself, and on that Derrida, and his predecessor Saussure, have a point: we can only communicate with the words we know, and further, without the words, perhaps the thinking never happens in the first place. But thought is also liberated by language: When there are fifteen ways to think about snow, that sure does open a lot of possibilities for discussion! Thus, language informs thinking as much as it limits it.

But of course, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis was rather famously debunked by Geoff (Pullum, 1991). However, the original tale still circulates regularly. I believe this occurs because it raises the existential question: which came first: The thought? Or the language? It turns out, a lot of the difference between Inuit and English stems from structure rather than vocabulary. Hence what appears to be a different word in Inuit is actually a single word with several possible suffixes and prefixes to modify the original word. We do the same thing in English with adjectives, adverbs, compound words and the like. To illustrate, in Inuit there is a word plus a suffix (quanuk) that means "snowflake" (Grey, 2008). We communicate the same information by compounding two words rather than adding a suffix to a single word. English, in actuality, has just as many lexemes for snow if not more. Even though the Eskimo tale has been distorted and exaggerated over the years, it does shed light on the evolutionary nature and multiplicity of meaning possible in language – even if no word technically exists, people fairly regularly make up new ones to accommodate needs. A more modern example of this is the new definition of the verb texting, which is in widespread use today and updated in the OED in 2005, reflective of both technological advancement and cultural shift. The verb is a much more efficient way to describe the action of sending a typed text-only message via a cellular phone. These examples are intimately connected to audience, the need for a speaker/writer to communicate to others. Which is, after all, the primary purpose of language for social beings. Language evolves to accommodate our social needs, new technologies, new cultural phenomenon.

In my case, which can also be extended to the "experienced writer," especially as defined by composition researchers (Ede & Lunsford, 1984; Perl, 1980; Sommers, 1980) much ado stems from the writer's attempt to satisfy her reader. Because the experienced writer is aware that she must anticipate multiple readers' understandings of her words, meaning expanded, altered, or developed in combination with other surrounding words, the text, which may start out as unclear and undeveloped, is eventually shaped to accommodate reader expectations. In composition, we refer to this as moving from writer-based prose to reader-based prose. Or to echo Derrida (1967), "a certain relationship" between perceived and unperceived functions of language – the experienced writer much

more comfortably balances what she commands and doesn't command in language use. As writing teachers, it is our job to illuminate this process so that our students might do the same.

Just trying to get this paper out is a shining example of the connection between thinking and writing and participation: I think about all these issues and theories concerning thinking, writing, social media – there are so many – and so I write to sort them out; in the process of writing, loosely defined, I think of more ideas that enrich and develop the original thread. More specifically, the act of writing helps me to develop my ideas for communication to another – it is the concern for my audience that allows me, indeed requires me, to consider my ideas further, to perform an act of telepathy between my mind and that of the reader (King, 2002). And by sharing these ideas in any public forum, I am participating in academic discourse, adding to the conversation and opening the floor for further debate.

I help my students "think-write" every day in my classes with an exercise I call "Sacred Writing Time." Students are asked to freewrite for 5-10 minutes upon arrival to class. Generally, I provide a prompt connected to the day's topic of discussion. The idea is two-fold: First, in order to develop sufficient thinking for participation in classroom discussion, I ask students to write; second, the exercise serves as a model for a writerly self, another goal of teaching composition. Thinking individuals are writing individuals are participating individuals and vice versa. Academic debate and consensus (and hence a modern democratic society) emerge directly from all of the above. And all the better if we are conscious of the process along the way….

Academic Initiation and the Problem of Print

Like many (Marx; Dewey, 1938; Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1997; to name but a few) I believe that an educated society is the first step to liberation and equality, particularly in bridging the well documented "achievement gap" between the white middle class student and everyone else. For me, participation in academic discourse, even at the first-year level, is a liberating and democratizing principal. Students become better citizens, better participants in culture, when they are thinking and writing and engaging in academic debate. I value this philosophy greatly because, in my view, first year composition is the first step in a long road toward a higher education degree. As teachers of college writing, we provide the foundation upon which their academic freedoms will be built, the initiation, if you will. Further, students, especially those who come from lower socioeconomic and/or non-white backgrounds, in all likelihood benefit from all the help they can get in unlocking the secrets of academic discourse (Bartholomae, 1985; Birkenstein & Graff, 2007; Delpit, 2006).

Stephen Yarbrough, in After Rhetoric: The Study of Discourse Beyond Language and Culture(1999), proposes that we should drop an outdated composition studies from the curriculum and replace it with a discourse studies model. He argues that we cannot teach a "how to write" course any more than we can teach a "how to live" course (Yarbrough, 1999, p. 213). Composition can and should be reinvented into a more effective course, one that not only takes advantage of student enthusiasm, but seeks to model participation in the democratic public sphere, sought after by Giroux, Agger, Jacoby, Kellner, and others.

With pressures from the state and the public to improve higher education's ability to yield adults prepared for productive lives, universities are emphasizing critical thinking and active learning campus-wide and such dogma has spread like wildfire across the academic nation. The composition course perhaps needs a more conscious agenda, but it definitely fills an important need on the college campus and, therefore, should not be "dropped," as Yarbrough (1999) suggests. If, as Yarbrough (1999) points out, students are tied to their already held beliefs of language and culture, then the composition course becomes the perfect (if not the only) place where we might challenge and expand those beliefs. Why can't the composition course embody the discourse studies pedagogy that Yarbrough calls for? One reason is its three-decade marriage to the printed text.

Throughout my teaching career, I have found "audience as collaborator" is the most difficult concept to teach first-year students. Yet once they get it, everything else seems to fall into place. I believe that academic discourse is hard for many students to envisage, to take an authentic part in, to make a real and meaningful part of their lives, precisely because it is an abstraction, quite distant from the printed page itself. For example, at best in a traditional paper-based classroom, a student writes an essay for a teacher who is responsible for giving that student a grade and hopefully some feedback for improving current or future work. Only the teacher and maybe a few peers see and respond to the text. The student paper exists outside of academic discourse, confined to the borders of the

classroom. The printed paper, regardless of prompts or instructions requesting a specific audience, is essentially intended for the teacher and no one else. And in other classes across the department and the disciplines, this is even more likely to be the case, whereas few instructors encourage revision or formal peer feedback. So how then, can a student fully understand how her words might be received and shaped by an audience? The student paper becomes little more than an exercise in pleasing the teacher. There is not much authenticity in this model, little for students to take with them beyond the classroom and into their daily lives. Certainly many students do just fine. But perhaps we and, by extension, they can do better.

In order to provide the academic initiation of first-year students so that they may eventually become thinking-writing-participating democratic citizens, there is a lot to address in the first-year composition classroom and, like most things worth doing, it is far more easily said than done. Perhaps it will help to summarize, briefly, what students can and should learn in the postmodern composition (how to be an academic writer) classroom. Students must encounter (master?):

- Discourse itself: recognizing and participating in the ongoing conversation within and without the university.
- Conventions of academic discourse.
- Means of persuasion to be able to participate and achieve discoursal goals more effectively.
- Audience awareness.
- Critical thinking: self-questioning, questioning authority and assumptions.
- Inherent nature of language to posit social action.
- Embracing difference and dissensus as a means of identifying consensus.
- Benefit of collaboration and negotiation in yielding a more effective discourse.
- Concept of language as creation of meaning rather than mere representation of meaning.
- Learning processes: Consciously reflective, student-centered approaches help achieve all of the above.

To truly accomplish these goals, the composition classroom needs an upgrade. Thus, what I shall propose in the remaining sections of this essay is that the best way, perhaps the only way, to include these goals in the future composition classroom is via Web 2.0 technologies, socially interactive user-defined media, where participant is author and expert collaborating with other author-experts. Think of it as equal parts rhetoric, critical pedagogy, and discourse studies, all existing and rehearsed pedagogical approaches. But with the addition of new media to the equation, the student, and perhaps the academy, benefit by (literally) becoming public intellectuals, active educated participants in the democratic public sphere. This, I believe, allows my students to achieve multiple goals by integrating what they learn in the writing classroom into their daily lives, making participant education a reality.

Getting from Point A to B

I'm a Gen-Xer, a member of the original "slacker" generation. The term was invented to describe us in our youth (circa 1991) and stuck around long enough to define us. We did not grow up with computers; at least not the way kids do today, though many of us had the first video game consoles as children and used Commodore 64's in the school library. We wrote our papers on old DOS systems and used easily corruptible floppy disks (that weren't really floppy). Most of us were in high school, college, or just beginning our careers when AOL popularized the chat room. Many of us have tried online dating at least once. We started with dial-up but were also the young adults who invented Google and Yahoo, who populated Silicone Valley at its height, who made millions selling start-up internet companies and created both the internet boom and its subsequent crash. We are not Millennials, or Generation M, as those born after 1980 are affectionately called. We are the generation sandwiched in between Boomers and Millennials, adults who were born between 1960 and 1980. We invented blogging.[1]

I bring this up because a lot of attention is paid to "kids today" and what they are doing online and on their phones in the way of "secret" writing (Agger; Hansford & Adlington, 2009; Jeffrey T. Grabill & Hicks, 2005; Lunsford, 2006). And some of it smacks of the usual generational conflict I remember suffering through when I was a teenager and young adult: "You kids today, all you want to do is listen to grunge and hang around coffee shops and internet cafes…". Remember the television sitcoms Seinfeld and Friends? That's us. Coffee shop slackers. And it wasn't so long ago older people were trying to figure out what Gen-Xers were all about and who we were going to become. Now, the conversation has turned to the Millennials, as expected – and truth be told, I find myself on occasion raising my metaphorical cane to the sky and pleading with unknown powers, "What's with these kids today?"

Part of the fascination and frustration is the sheer voracity with which Millennials have embraced and overwhelmed new media technologies like Facebook, YouTube, blogging, Twitter, and the like. These social networking and interactive technologies where users create the content has become known as Web 2.0. This is not news, I realize. In fact, you can catch a story on the major network news pretty much any day of the week on user-generated media and how it is redefining "kids today" along with everyone else. Not so long ago, Oprah dedicated an entire hour to the phenomenon of Twitter (Winfrey, 2009). Nearly every television program has its own Facebook fan page. Networks regularly solicit viewer participation via new media channels. It's everywhere and rapidly taking over the world. I have never felt so plugged into the Matrix.

All grown up now, I have been teaching for just over six years in the English Department, mostly first-year composition. I am a self-reflective teacher, striving to build a better classroom, a better learning experience for my students. Since I'm a doctoral candidate, too, I am well versed on all the theory of teaching composition: I read the journals, I help develop departmental rationales for learning outcomes, and I actively search for new ways to assist my students in achieving them. Several years ago at the beginning of my teaching career, I started using message boards and WebCT (now Blackboard) as an option to keep my students busy if I needed to attend conferences or otherwise miss class. It started as a way for a young teacher to keep the conversation going from afar. It worked! And at the time it was "cutting edge." As time went on, I gradually incorporated more and more online learning in my face-to-face classroom. Today, I use a hybrid teaching model: mostly face-to-face meetings, but some are entirely online, the class is "paperless," and all formal assignments take digital form.

I really like this hybrid model. Perhaps more importantly, they really like it – most of them, anyway. For me, embedding social media into my face-to-face classroom yields more actively engaged students and thus, aids those students in thinking and writing and participating more and better, which shall be demonstrated in the next section. For students, I imagine the benefit is the same, though I suppose they are likely to be less conscious of this. The "like" for them probably comes from the interactive, multimedia nature, the free-form feel, the fact that using social media is less like work and more like play. The future of composition, Composition 2.0, if you will, is moving away from the static academic research paper and moving toward the dynamic academic conversation. If you'll indulge me, Dear Reader, I would like to explore this idea further with a few examples from my own classroom. It will help to understand the assignments my students work with, so I will describe those as well.

Blogging toward Academic Discourse

In my department, a common writing assignment is the "reading journal" or "summary-analysis" which is a brief summary of the assigned text plus an analysis and/or response. Response should move beyond what a student likes or dislikes about a text and engage reasonable consideration of a text's purpose, audience, methods, and so on. There are two correlating goals: provide a means for students to prepare for in-class discussion while encouraging an interaction with, among, and between texts. Through this common assignment, students should begin answering back to an intangible author and making connections between their worlds and those of others.

In my class, students are asked to post their reading journals online on the Discussion Page of our class blog, http://Revisionary.edublogs.org. In the beginning of the semester, I provide a discussion question for the student to respond to. As the semester progresses, students take turns "hosting" the blog for a day and they write a brief exploratory essay plus two open-ended critical questions about the required reading or a related issue. Each non-hosting student chooses one of the host-student's questions (there may be as many as six available at any one time), writes her online reading journal-esque response, and posts it online in the comment section of the blog, prior to the next class meeting. They choose which texts interest them, which questions interest them, and as a result which academic conversations they want to lead and/or participate in.

Allow me to illustrate: For the following selection of student writing, the assigned reading was Eighner's "On Dumpster Diving" (1994), a first-person exploration of modern waste and consumption through the view of someone who was once homeless. Since "On Dumpster Diving" appears very early on the syllabus, and to help students get the idea, I wrote my own brief exploratory essay discussing the text and posted the following question: "In par. 6, p. 455, Eighner explains, 'I have learned much as a scavenger. I mean to put some of what I have learned down here, beginning with the practical art of Dumpster diving and proceeding to the abstract.' Do you think Eighner's purpose goes beyond educating his readers? What other purpose does he have?" (Jacobs, 2008, September

2). Following are a few sample student responses:

> hxt7815 - Posted: Wed, September 3rd 2008 11:48 PM
> As Eighner stated "I mean to put some of what I have learned here." Most of his article discussed of what things can be and can usually be picked up in dumpsters. Actually, his real purpose of writing the article is not just to tell his readers that can is a good food from dumpsters; as the article goes on, the author begins to search reasons why the trash was littered and even stories behind them. Here he comes to some sentimental discussions inspired by the dumpsters; as stated in the question "beginning with the practical art of dumpster diving and proceeding to the abstract." So in the end of the article, Eighner pointed out that not everything is worth acquiring. This is an abstract experience in life. However, I still feel that the author is educating his readers; what I mean is that he is not to teach how to find edible garbage, but to teach them a life theory.
>
> This is also a belief I hold in my personal life, and I can feel a strong resonance from this text. Once upon a time when I was a little student, possessing almost nothing myself, like the author, was offered free fruits in front of the classroom by my teacher. Little children besides me rushed to the front as if they have never eaten in their whole life; and in a minute, the fruit basket is empty, and some of my classmates are still fighting fiercely for some extra ones. But I can't see any value in their behavior because everybody has apples in their homes.
>
> Therefore, while I hold the same belief as the author, this article may play a role to me as an acknowledgement of my personality and an encouragement of my life. But for most people, I still believe, this article is just a lesson on life philosophy.
>
> "antijazz" - Posted: Thu, September 11th 2008 10:40 PM
> On first read of the essay, it appears the Eighner is merely recounting his past experiences as a "Dumpster diver" and passing on his skills to the audience. However, whilst reading it a second time I noticed that there was a deeper, stronger message behind the story that Eighner was trying to portray; 'another man's trash is another man's treasure' is the phrase that comes to mind. Eighner brings to light the wasteful nature of people in today's society where food is discarded 'for minor imperfections' (Eighner p.503) when in reality there is nothing wrong with the item it just isn't as 'pretty' as the desired.
>
> Eighner talks about scavenging Dumpsters in more affluent areas, particularly around Colleges where students tend to 'throw everything out when they move at the end of a semester...and since it is Daddy's money...' (Eighner p.504) they tend not to think about what they are throwing out; thus proving the wasteful nature of today's society where people take for granted what they have because they never have to think about where their next meal or pair of jeans comes from (Jacobs, 2008, September 2).

In these samples, an excerpt from a longer series of posts, students engage with the text, quickly addressing two of the greater messages behind the seemingly straightforward prose: that there is a social stigma against scavenging, even if items are carelessly discarded; and Americans (perhaps this can be expanded to "people," because the first student is referring to events in his native China) are quite wasteful and spoiled as a group. Students write about the text and thus learn from it. In this example, early in the semester, students have not yet developed the interactive nature that differentiates online writing from traditional paper-based writing, so essentially they have copied and pasted to the online forum, what they likely would have turned into the teacher in a paper-based course. Nor are they moving beyond the text itself or their own personal knowledge. But, it's only week two in a 15-week course – they will get there.

Here, it is enough that they model for each other the structure and style of academic writing. In my experience, the more advanced students, those already comfortable with the basic conventions of academic argument, are generally the first to post (students have a great deal of choice as to when they want to respond). Initial posts serve as a baseline for other students to get the idea as they develop critical thinking and writing skills. As the semester goes on, along with the benefit of classroom instruction, students who were less comfortable using reason and evidence to support claims at the start of the semester, eventually learn to do so, in part by imitating the work of more advanced peers.

Later in the semester we moved on to an examination of media influence in the 2008 presidential election. Students were reading critical essays concerning the role of media in politics as well as paying close attention to the issues under debate between Candidates Obama and McCain. In this specific instance, the text under discussion is Huxley's 1958 "Propaganda under a Dictatorship" (reprinted in Kirszner & Mandell, 2007). The following exchange picked up on a new page after there were enough posts to fill up the first one – in other words, this is one of many online discussions that went on for several days, even after the "homework" was completed and course requirements were already met. Miss Lopez is making a comparison between Hitler and Castro, neither of whom were discussed in class. It was her week to act as discussion leader, although she had already posed the question in a previous post and gotten several replies, thereby successfully completing the assignment. So this is simply spontaneous inquisitive

discourse, beyond course requirements, where she adapts to peer responses and further refines her thinking, on her own, without prodding from an instructor or the promise of assignment points:

> "rosielopez131" - Posted: Tue, September 30th 2008 4:48 PM[2]
> Fidel Castro is very similar to Hitler's dictatorship not because he promised race superiority instead he promised social equality, and a better economy and has promoted a strong feel for nationalism that in a way isolated them from the rest of the world's ideals. Hitler "nationalism" or "nativism" is comparable because in his speeches he appealed to the audience by calling out to the German people. His extreme repugnance to the Jewish people is very obvious because he attacked them every time he gave his speeches ,but surrounding those attacks he said that Germany's economy would be better, that the purity of Germany would prevail, and the German people would live better lives (Stein). Castro's statements are similar because they [both] appeal to the public ... and used media and technology to disperse their manipulating thoughts.
>
> "bje1486" - Posted: Wed, October 1st 2008 4:14 PM.
> I guess I can't really agree with the Cuba regime idea. Both of the dictators were very harsh and misunderstanding of the people in their countries but I don't see the comparison between the two. Hitler practiced primarily military strength in his regime and didn't have much to do with a strong national economy. He was like the little kid who just wanted to control, control, and control. Castro however has never tried to control another country. He is primarily concerned with the economy of his country. He never actually invaded another country unlike Hitler.
>
> "rosielopez131" - Posted: Thu, October 2nd 2008 10:46 AM
> Ok, so, I think we can all agree that Hitler and Castro have their differences and similarities. I was not trying to say they are exactly a like. I was trying to compare a past dictatorship with a recent one. And about the national economy comparison, check this out: http://www.ess.uwe.ac.uk/genocide/statements.htm ... look under Hitler's Closing speech at the Nuremberg Party Conference, 1938 (12 September), and Hitler's Speech to the Reichstag, 30 January, 1939:....Basically blamed them for economic problems and if they were gone there would be better economy in Germany and worldwide. You are completely right about Hitler being a "little kid who just wanted control, control, and control", but again just trying to make past and present comparison.... Hopefully we can move on. I will not bring it up again.
>
> "bje1486" - Posted: Thu, October 2nd 2008 5:18 PM
> .... I was thinking of this in the class today do you guys really feel like we could be headed towards this type of government in the states? I don't necessarily agree with the idea that Bush would become the next Hitler but the conditions are right. the economy is in a slump and the next ruler only has to convince the people that they will get us out of the depression. We have no idea that the next president won't control our country just as Hitler did. Just as I said before, it would be really easy to brainwash the masses at a time like this.
>
> "rosielopez131" – Posted: Fri, October 3rd 2008 2:36 AM
> Wow, having another Hitler. When I heard Mrs. Jacobs say that in class I was a bit astonished -no one wants to hear that - ,but then I thought a little [more deeply] and it is true in the sense that when presidents are being elected they try to convince the masses that they are just like them, that they can lead them into a better future, and ,today, can drastically change the "slump" in the economy. Politicians....they can get so caught up in their election campaign. It is scary to think that they -in a way- persuade you in passionately agreeing with their statements. It is extremely similar to manipulation so might as well call it that. Politicians manipulate the masses into agreeing with their statements. I mean unless you know a little bit about economics you don't know how tax cuts in private corporations effect you or if you agree with the reasons are for the government to take funds out of our generation's social security. I don't even really know and I like to watch the news! Like we all agreed in class, in order to present a case or give argumentative statements you have to pretend like you know what you are talking about. Politicians do just that ,but do they really understand the public or do they just really want to get elected? What do yall think?
>
> "bje1486" - Posted: Fri, October 3rd 2008 10:14 AM
> Another point that made more sense to me was last night when I was watching the Vice Presidential national debate, it became evident that some of the platforms that the two candidates stand for will not get accomplished. When the question came up about whether either candidate had any platforms in the campaign that they could not keep, Joe Biden told everyone of a couple that he could not keep. All that the politicians have to do is make some silly claim that they will lower taxes or end abortion and they have everyone on their side. But what happens when someone asks which platform they cannot uphold? They slowly change their opinion and pretty soon their campaign does not have the same views and agenda in which it started with. This is quite scary if you really think about it. It happens all the time.
>
> "chasenwilliam" - Posted: Fri, October 3rd 2008 10:14 AM
> Politician's are in the business of being in power. They will and often do exploit the ignorance of the masses who have a vote. It is up to the voter to be informed on topics and have their own ideas about what they want to see happen. I think most people in America are completely stupid when it comes to politics (yes, they really are, I promise) because they feel disconnected from the process. They believe that their one vote does not matter. Most of them are correct, too. If you live in a Red state and want to vote blue, oh well, your vote will be counted in number, but it will not count in worth due to the

> outdated Electoral College system. .... America needs to move to a pure popular vote. If that were the case, Al Gore very well may have been our president for the last seven and a half years.

In this rather long and at times heated discussion, they bring in at least a dozen cultural references unique to their own individual understanding of the world and the texts around them. Not only are they expanding and developing meaning from the Huxley essay they were assigned to read, they are building upon what their peers add to the conversation. Here, they are acting out Derrida's (1967) exploration of textual meaning in multiple ways: 1) by sharing their own unique understanding so that others may grasp their ideas; 2) by adding and extending into their own "libraries" of information – whatever it is that they have read or watched or talked about that has helped them reach certain conclusions; and 3) by taking in and responding to the input of their peers, which in turn expands their original ideas. It is the exchange in writing via a public forum that enriches their thinking, ensuring faster and more meaningful learning of course concepts.

In addition, students get a real-world understanding of how readers interpret their own texts. Taking a closer look at Rosie's second post, she states, "Hopefully we can move on. I will not bring it up again." This is a one sentence "retreat" because she fears her first post was taken out of context by her peer bje1486. Rosie may be acting out a gender construction here, backing off a bit so that she doesn't come across as "pushy." Or perhaps, she simply misread her peer's post. But either way, she is experimenting with ways to re-connect with a reader in writing: explain and clarify. And this also illuminates for students one key difference between spoken language and written text: absence of tone and intonation. The experienced writer knows that the author's intent can easily get lost in typeface. Here, novice writers get to experience this for themselves – in future, perhaps bje1486 and Rosie will more carefully consider how their words are read, as opposed to spoken, something markedly different about online discussion in comparison to classroom discussion. This is one of the great benefits of using online social media: it merges the rhetorical goals of writing and speaking, public and private. In a sense, this type of discussion is "writing out loud," similar to thinking out loud as one might do in the classroom discussion, but with the added benefit of time for reflection and revision, greater consideration and adaptation.

Quite naturally, with hardly any influence from me other than the original assignment, they have created their own public forum to exchange ideas, debate, discuss. Eventually, they come to several agreements, a consensus, about the text(s) and about the nature of politics. This was particularly exciting to watch given the ongoing presidential election. These students are all first-year college students, all first time voters, all between the ages of 18-20. The depth of analysis and synthesis surrounding election events was truly amazing. These students are thinking critically about real events that will have a real effect on their lives, and effectively expressing thinking in writing. These students are shaping themselves (and each other) into concerned, actively political citizens. Democracy in action!

The above sample took place in the middle of the semester. A few weeks later, the election would be decided and most of them voted –hopefully due in part to their participation in a democratic public forum. Yet, the excerpts demonstrate that students become thoughtful participants in academic discourse when given the opportunity to do so. They blogged, they thought, they blogged more. What I particularly like about these selections is the reasoning used in support of their claims. Students use references from both assigned texts and their own experiences to support the claims they make. This is precisely the end goal in the first-semester composition course.

Regardless of how each writing teacher chooses to get there, the end result should be the same: By the close of the semester: students should be able to use reason and support their claims with textual and experiential evidence, participating in an ongoing conversation with other academics, on a variety of topics. I have assigned and collected traditional printed-on-paper reader-response type student writing my whole career. Yet, these online versions are vastly superior in the depth of thought demonstrated, in the acknowledgment and anticipation of a real audience, and in the respectful inter-textual conversation (both between/among individual students and between students and text). They are doing it. They are participating in an ongoing academic discourse that looks back toward collective and individual data while looking forward to a responsive interlocutor. They are becoming academic writers and public (literally) intellectuals.

I believe this is possible in an online public forum for several reasons. First, students are well aware of the fact that their peers and their teacher will be reading and evaluating their posts. In traditional paper-based response or journal writing, only the teacher sees their work in most cases. Nothing is more motivating to the human psyche than direct comparison to one's peers. Second, the exchange is genuine. Whereas in paper-based writing, students are expected to anticipate the needs of a reader, that reader is absent and distant from the text and therefore hard to conceptualize. In the online forum, students very quickly figure out how their language is interpreted by others

and adapt accordingly. Third, Generation M students are already adept at communicating online and thinking inter-textually, as demonstrated by the inclusion of hyperlinks to outside images and texts. This medium allows them to execute those already acquired skills for a specific academic purpose. In other words, any instructor can confirm that it's not always easy to engage first-year students in the importance and purpose of properly citing sources in academic writing. But this age group seems to know instinctively, that if they want someone to see or read a reference, they should include the hyperlink. Once they discover this for themselves, it is relatively easy to illustrate the purpose and conventions of referencing sources for an academic reader. As educators know, effective instruction helps students connect the dots between what they already know and what we want them to be able to do on paper… and online.

An additional reason that might explain the effectiveness of this assignment is that these students were already engaging in this type of online forum. I am completely speculating here, because I have no idea how much or how little my students spent online outside of class for social purposes. However, it seems like a fair assumption that the Web 2.0 bug has bitten this particular group as deeply as any of their generational peers. I did not have to do any significant instruction in how to post in an online forum. They already knew.

Composition 2.0: A Digital Manifesto

Lately, the conversation in composition studies and in academia at large (a quick search revealed similar conversations in far reaching disciplines like Art, Mathematics, Medicine, Physical Education, Economics, Foreign Language, Political Science, etc.) has turned more and more to using Web 2.0 social networking in the classroom: blogging, Facebook, wikis, YouTube, Twitter, etc. And what used to be cutting edge and forward thinking is now everywhere…. At least everywhere in print – the journals in English and Rhetoric can't stop talking about it. Major national organizations embrace 21st century writing and literacy for annual convention themes: 2008 National Council for Teachers of English was called "When Shift Happens: Teaching in the 21st Century;" the 2009 Modern Language Association Convention chose "The Tasks of Translation in the Twenty-First Century;" and the 2010 Conference on College Composition and Communication was "The Remix: Revisit, Rethink, Revise, Renew." And all of them imply a reinvention on the horizon, a rethinking or reimagining of the ways in which we teach and learn language and literacy. When I talk to fellow Graduate Teaching Assistants and the early-career academics who make up my circle of peers, it seems more of us than not are discussing our students' class blogs, YouTube videos, or Facebook groups. We all use this media regularly as Gen-Xers and early Millennials so it stands to reason we would feel comfortable, empowered, even obligated to venture into social networking in the classroom space as well. In short, it feels to me like this conversation is everywhere, and therefore, that everyone must be incorporating new media into their teaching.

But then I started wondering, how widespread is this really? Confronted with a professor who called new media pedagogy "cutting edge," I started to wonder if what feels 'normal' and commonplace, is not so after all. I used Facebook to take an informal poll of fellow Rhetoric and Composition specialists, asking them to report on common practices in their own departments: GTAs, adjuncts, full-time faculty, and writing program administrators (WPAs) in an assortment of higher education institutions around the country. Turns out, there is considerable movement toward consciously using online social media in the classroom, but it seems to be coming mostly from the younger members (read: less powerful) of departments. While many young academics are incorporating new media more and more in their classrooms, digital pedagogy is still not sanctioned by departments at large.

Warning: here comes the big pitch. If we take a moment to review the earlier listed goals for the critical rhetoric discourse-studies class (above, p. 9), what is commonly known as first-year English, we will find that every item is addressed in whole or in part in the samples of student online writing above. It was earlier suggested that the field at large anticipates a reinvention on the horizon, a rethinking or reimagining of the ways in which we teach and learn language and literacy. However, while many young academics are incorporating new media more and more in their classrooms, it is not, to my knowledge, currently sanctioned or even formally encouraged by many departments or institutions at large, with several notable exceptions, of course. Yet, in examining my students' online work, this informal study suggests that use of the online social medium produced greater depth of thought, more genuine acknowledgment and anticipation of audience, and more engaged inter-textual conversation than traditional paper-based models. Through this blogging assignment, students created and participated in an ongoing academic discourse that draws on collective and individual knowledge while looking forward to a responsive interlocutor, modeling the

values of old and new composition at once. And further, even the less advanced student makes significant progress through the course of the semester using an online pedagogical model. The proof is in the pudding.

Now, there are drawbacks and qualifications to be made. I do not mean to suggest that this single assignment, which represents only 20% of the final grade in the Fall 2008 course, is the end all and be all of composition work. Student success is largely determined by appropriate supporting assignments: good readings, good class discussion, strong major paper assignments, etc. Nor am I suggesting that the online assignment should replace entirely the traditional extended reasoned argument. In my classes, online discussion is currently a tool to reach the same old goal of a well-written, well-argued, researched essay in a primarily face-to-face classroom. However, with such tremendous success in achieving the goals of student writing, it doesn't seem a far leap that composition teachers, indeed all discourse-based instructors, could reap tremendous value from a more purposeful integration of social media in the classroom. It is the interactive, live, self-publishing aspect of this assignment that is the key to its success. Rather than simply talking about or imitating a loose understanding of academic discourse, students get to practice it, to try it on, to see how it feels, all in a cultural medium they are already active participants in (Bartholomae, 1985). And I find that doing so greatly improves their formal written work. But perhaps my favorite part of the whole wonderful enchilada, is the exploration of academic debate and consensus that is central to a strong democracy, a strong educated people. Particularly, the second set of student writing samples, demonstrates the potential for politico-cultural engagement for this generation. I suggest the more critical engagement and academic direction we give students in using online interactive medium, the more consciously involved they become in that medium.

A little discussed benefit for all scholars in this information age is the easy access to quality research and electronic versions of books, both classic and modern. Truth be told, while I read much of the theory for this essay on pulp at some point in my academic career, easily two-thirds of the reference list is locatable in full-text online. We owe it to students to show them how to mine the rich scholarly depth of the deep web (Google Scholar, WorldCat, university databases, and so on) as much as we owe it to them to point out the trappings of less credible sources.

I am certainly not the only compositionist discovering the teaching and learning potential of online social media and calling for change. I am in good company – Lunsford, Yancey, Faigley, Brooke, Hawisher, Selber, Selfe, Vie, and many, many more. What remains is to formally incorporate an active digital pedagogy into our official collection of critical thinking tools. In short, we owe it to this generation and their successors to venture with them toward a revised version of critical thinking pedagogy, Composition 2.0. The only question is how quickly we will embrace the call to reinvent ourselves.

Endnotes

1. Actually the exact birthday of blogging cannot be pinpointed because in truth, it was a collaborative effort that spanned some fifteen years. However, the people most often cited as the "forefathers" of blogging are Jon Barger, Peter Merholz, Justin Hall, Andrew Sullivan, and Brad Fitzpatrick (McCullagh & Broache, 2007; Carvin, 2007; Rosenberg, 2009). All but Barger are GenXers and some argue that Barger's weblog is too far removed from the interactive version that defines the medium today (Rosenberg, 2009).

2. I have edited these online postings for clarity and style while maintaining their original intent and meaning. However, it should be noted that formal editing is not a requirement of the blogging assignment and students regularly make errors in spelling and grammar. Because the genre of blog comments often overlook formal English grammar, I do not stress it in this environment either, respecting the generally accepted conventions of the genre. We do discuss the benefit of using proper grammar even online, as a reflection of ethos and credibility.

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Digital Media and the Convergence of Geographic Cultures

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Introduction

Urbanization is one of the themes of modernization and a central concern for contemporary social theory (Lefebvre 1991; Saunders 1995). It proceeds at different speeds and through different mechanisms depending on the context, but urbanization in some form is nearly universal among developing countries (Clark 1996). The process usually involves a profound social shift as workers leave the country and take up new lives in cities. Traditional forms of association are broken and the deracinated migrants must construct new lives in an open-ended urban setting (Inkeles and Smith 1974). Among the effects of urbanization is the formation of two distinct, often antagonistic human environments: the city and the country.

For many social theorists, the city and the country are distinct worlds (Soja 1989; Williams 1975). Some portray the former as progressive and cosmopolitan in contrast to the reactionary and parochial country (Horkheimer 2002; Marx 1990). Others claim that city life is morally corrupt and that rural communities offer genuine associational life (see Short 1991: 45). The distinct modes of production, level of exposure to other cultures, and relationships to nature are credited with encouraging different forms of life. The details of this thesis vary, but the existence of two or more distinct cultures, shaped by built environments, is widely accepted (Short 1991).

The physical differences between city and country, like population density and extent of construction, may not disappear in the near future. However, the social effects attributed to these environments are not necessarily connected to anything physical. Among the cultural differences attributed to the city and the country are their distinct relations to nature, modes of production, levels of tolerance, and ranges of free expression. Differences of the first and second sort have already been largely eliminated but the third and fourth are still pronounced. Tolerance and individualism are often associated with cosmopolitan urban spaces, but new technologies, especially the internet, have the potential to change this. Television has produced some cultural convergence, but tends to do this in a negative way, eliminating difference without replacing it with any new forms of expression. Networked technologies have the potential to overcome spatial limitations in a more positive way. Consequently, city and country may become different geographic spaces that lack the distinct forms of life these geographies once helped to produce. The digital space is neither urban nor rural, but it shares many of the characteristics of the former and has the potential to affect a convergence of geographic cultures.

Theorizing Human Environments

The relation between city and country was of central importance for modernization theorists well into the twentieth century (Angell 1951; Gerschenkron 1962; Lipset 1959; Miner 1952; Wirth 1938). Many judge the rise of cities as a positive, albeit painful, stage of historical progress. Communists invoked it as a moment in the story of the supersession of the feudal order (Gramsci 1992; Marx 1978; Marx 1999). Fascist futurists like Filippo Marinetti

celebrated the resulting industrialization and mechanization of life (2006). A range of liberal, conservative and reactionary theorists have favored traditional forms of life, epitomized by small, rural communities or have considered cities dangerous sites of civil unrest (Short 1991: 109-125). However, even those who oppose urbanization or are skeptical of its consequences have generally accepted the terms of the discourse and argued from the assumption that societies are geographically bifurcated (Rousseau 2003).

Many social theorists have been enthusiastic about the long-term effects of urbanization. In some cases, there is outright hostility to the old modes of life represented by those in the country. For example, the normative project of overcoming agrarian life is one of the themes of Marxist scholarship. Marx could find no place for the peasantry in the socialist state and therefore classified it as an essentially reactionary class that had to be absorbed into industrial society (2008). More recent Marxists like Horkheimer and Gramsci advocate urbanization as a means of destroying traditional life and overcoming conservatism (Gramsci 1992; Horkheimer 2002).

Raymond Williams argues that the contrast between the two worlds is central to modern consciousness (1975). According to him, it helps people conceptualize what is gained and lost through progress. He thinks that the perception of the two spheres is largely based on myth but it is a myth that helps us cope with the troubles of modernization. By his account, which focuses on the literature of nineteenth century England, the city is represented as an evil place, and the country an idyllic homeland. In the twenty-first century, the country continues to represent the lost natural existence, but the city is usually the favored sphere with the benefits of progress outweighing the loss of tradition. Contemporary cities stand as symbols of modern technology and the dream of a human environment safe from a capricious natural world (Kaika and Swyngedouw 2000).

Williams is right to argue that the two spheres are less distinct than the ideal types imply. Culturally, there are many links between urban and rural residents of the same country. In most western countries, all citizens undergo similar programs of public education, consume the same media, speak dialects of the same language and are subject to the same national values. There is also a growing physical link between city and country, or rather, a blurring of the boundary between the two. Cities have become decentered as jobs have shifted toward the periphery in order to be easily accessed by suburban residents (Clark 2002). Moreover, the growth of suburban communities, which became particularly prominent in the 1990s, has added a third residential category in many areas.

In light of the growth of suburbs, erosion of urban spaces and emergence of new technologies, some poststructuralists have challenged the reality of urban environments and predicted their supersession. Virilio argues that telecommunications allows people to transcend space (1999). Whereas once space was something positive, a necessary precondition for association and political action, it has become a barrier. Virilio is correct in describing the changing character of space, but he exaggerates the extent to which space can be overcome. Much of life continues to take place in the physical world and probably always will. While the poststructuralist position that Virilio exemplifies has some merit, and is partially endorsed in this essay, it overstates the case by conflating profound social changes with a geographic change.

The expanding suburbs and changing character of the city blur the borders between city and country, but do not efface them. Work describing the growth of suburbs tends to reaffirm city and country as normative categories. While both city and country are presented as having faults and redeeming value, suburbs are maligned spaces (Daniels 1999). Objecting to them presupposes the existence of more authentic spaces, whether these are the natural spaces of the country or the associational spaces of the city. Indeed, any discussion of suburbs and decentered cities presupposes that there is still something left of the urban space, as these ideas depend on an oppositional concept that they can be defined against.

Perhaps the clearest evidence of the continuing relevance of the distinction between city and country is the role that it plays in contemporary political discourse. In the United States, antagonisms between city and country are still part of popular political discourse. Politicians routinely associate themselves with a small town background and associate cities with elitism (Alsayyad 2010: 85). Conservatives are the most eager to perpetuate this distinction. Their anti-intellectual rhetoric is often closely linked to anti-urban judgments (Beck 2003). The Tea Party movement shows the virulence of this way of thinking (Zernike 2010). New York in particular is singled out as an emblem of everything that conservatives oppose. They describe the city as if it were a foreign space that lies outside the "real America" (Carr and Kefalas 2009; Frank 2004). Although some of these claims may be purely rhetorical, the difference between geographic cultures seems to be a core part of the ideology of conservative populists. Their statements tend to be hyperbolic, overemphasizing the differences between regions, but the sentiment is informative, as it shows that many still see a cultural divide between the city and the country.

Enduring Differences

The concentration of buildings and people make urban environments easily identifiable, but the cultural and structural qualities that arise from the physical characteristics of urban spaces are usually the foremost concerns for social theorists (Saunders 1995). Among the cultural characteristics used to distinguish the city and the country are different relationships to nature, modes of production, levels of tolerance and opportunities for personal expression. These four distinguishing features are by no means the only ways of differentiating the geographic cultures, but they are among the most popular and this makes them a useful starting place for analysis (Binnie, Holloway, Millington, and Young 2006; Groth and Corijn 2005; Soja 1989; Young, Diep, and Drabble 2006). The accuracy of these cultural distinctions can be assessed by examining the extent to which they still unique to one environment.

The proximity to nature is both a physical and cultural characteristic of rural life because being physically close to the natural world is may create a psychological or spiritual connection it or to a more primitive form of life (Holloway and Hubbard 2001). This distinguishing feature of rural life tends to be invoked by those who lament something that was lost in modernization. However, the glorification of the rural may be unique to the outsider, as it generally comes from those who have lived in cities (Williams 1975). It is the product of those so far removed from a form of life that they can imagine it without fault. As Raymond Williams explains, natural country life is a myth constructed as the alternative to the anomic city of the industrial revolution (1975).

The idea of the natural country and unnatural city is largely mythical. Land outside cities is profoundly affected by human interference. Pollution, human intervention in the development plant and animal species, and the marks of resource extraction have rendered natural world less natural than it may appear to be (McKibben 2006, Barry 2007). By contrast, cities can provide some experience of the natural world. They often have parks, zoos, and aquariums that can simulate other environments and house a diverse range of plant and animal species. In fact, when measured in terms of diversity, cities are superior to some rural areas, especially rural areas that have been heavily farmed (Wolch 2002). Thus, the proximity to nature is inadequate for marking the difference between city and country, as either a cultural or a geographical feature.

Marxists tend to consider the city an artificial space, but this is judged favorably, as this is the source of the city's liberating potential. Marx and Engels define city and country by the divergent modes of production (1978). The city is industrial; the country is agricultural. The former is dominated by a class struggle between the bourgeoisie and proletariat, while the latter is home to the decaying feudal classes of the aristocracy and peasantry. Marx draws a sharp binary, defining the two environments to separate moments of history. However, a strict Marxist interpretation is untenable in the twenty-first century because of the industrialization of the agriculture and the diversification of work in cities.

As Marx predicted, capitalism has transformed agricultural production. Over the past century, it has been heavily industrialized. Farms now resemble factories, with complex divisions of labor and little respect for biodiversity (Pollan 2006). Consequently, a Marxist could explain agrarian production in terms of the same class relationship as urban production. The character of work in cities has also changed dramatically. Most city-dwellers work in the service sector as production jobs become increasingly scarce (Kasarda 1995: 239). Furthermore, digital technologies allow many jobs requiring intellectual labor to be performed anywhere. Postindustrial cities are increasingly becoming areas of consumption rather than production (Zukin 1998). Thus, it is difficult to define urban, suburban and rural spaces by their modes of production, as the modes of production have become more similar and work has become less attached to a geographical space.

A more promising reason for cultural divergence is that there are different educational opportunities for people living in different areas. Whether or not formal education is the same for residents of urban and rural communities, education outside a formal academic context can differ immensely. Small towns may offer few opportunities to interact with people from foreign countries or who follow different value systems. Although many small communities, especially those along borders, have ethnic diversity, it tends to be more limited than the heterogeneous mixture of peoples in cities (Colombijn and Erdentug 2002; Soja 1989). Urban-dwellers, especially those in cities with large immigrant populations, have myriad opportunities to learn about other cultures, especially when the city has large immigrant communities that preserve foreign traditions (Bollens 2007: 20). Robert Paul Wolff describes cities as places uniquely suited for encouraging toleration. They are cosmopolitan places because of their "size, functional differentiation, speed of movement, fragmentation of social groupings, and density of population" (1968: 140). Some urban spaces have been even designed to encourage random encounters and to promote toleration (Donald:

138).

The close contact between different ethnic groups in cities is not always peaceful. It can lead to isolation and violence. Some have suggested that cities are less suited to cosmopolitan life than they were in the past because of increasing compartmentalization and conflict between groups (Sibley 1995). However, segregation into ethnic neighborhoods and conflict between ethnic groups living in cities is hardly a new phenomenon; these are themes of urban life (Mumford 1961). Even at their most divided, cities at least provide the potential for interaction between groups – a potential that is lacking in many small communities. Moreover, empirical studies suggest that the diversity of the city does have a positive effect on tolerance for most residents (Tittle and Grasmick 2001; Wilson 1991).

Aside from the distance from nature, one of the most popular criticisms of urban life is that it is alienating. This claim is found at least as far back as Durkheim's study of suicide and his argument serves as the basis for many later studies (1997). Kevin Lynch attributes the alienation to inhabitants' mental representation of their environment. By his account, cities are not intrinsically alienating; whether they have this effect is determined by how they are structured. The alienating city is one that lacks landmarks or distinctive features that can be used as reference points with which to locate oneself and create a mental map of a space (Lynch 1960). Others find that the norms that govern interaction between people in crowded spaces can be alienating. Among the most prominent examples of this are the deliberate displays of inattention people use to navigate urban spaces, such as avoiding eye contact with others and limiting conversation with strangers (Goffman 1959; Lofland 1998). These forms of alienation seem to be largely negative, but alienation produced by isolation can be empowering as well.

If one defines freedom negatively, as an absence of restraint, then the large, anonymous city is almost utopian. In them one finds "an atmosphere of expanding personal freedom and individual opportunity" because they weaken or sever the premodern ties to kinship and land and allow individuals to replace these with any meanings they choose (Barth 1980: 3). In this way, cities are powerful tools for self-creation. The myriad opportunities they present allow for experimentation with different identities. In fact, Barth argues that there is a historical link between the cities and interest in individual freedom (1980: 16).

Wolff links the cosmopolitanism of the city to its anonymity, making the latter a precondition of the former. Anonymity allows one to experiment with different identities and become part of new groups that support them. The country, by contrast, is a place that a classical liberal like John Stuart Mill would find repressive because of the community involvement in personal affairs.

> It is a commonplace that in the anonymity of the big city one can more easily assemble the precise combination of tastes, habits, and beliefs which satisfy one's personal desires and then find a circle of friends with whom to share them. In the small town or suburb it is impossible to escape from the sort of social interference in private affairs which Mill condemned (Wolff 1968: 140).

The anonymity of cities is still a meaningful way of differentiating city from country. One might object that it is easy to become anonymous in the country by avoiding small communities and living completely alone in a remote area. This is true, but the kind of anonymity produced is somewhat different. One can escape from the watchful eyes of others by living in isolation, but this is not the same as the empowering anonymity of the city. The strength of urban anonymity is in the capacity to act without interference and to still be in a place that offers opportunities to make use of this liberty.

There are other ways for distinguishing city and country, but these four are among the most commonly cited by social theorists. The first two, which define the environments by their proximity to the natural world or the mode of production, are poor candidates for describing the relation at present. The others, urban cosmopolitanism and the anonymity facilitating self-creation, continue to be important byproducts of urban life. Nevertheless, as the next section will show, new communications technologies create the potential for these to be more accessible qualities that are not confined to a particular geographic space.

Digital Technology and Cultural Convergence

The benefits of city life are closely linked to the physical environment, but this link does not entail an essential connection between them and the environment, nor does it mean that there is only one way of producing the positive effects described in the previous section. The connection between an environment and a culture may appear

necessary, but only because earlier levels of technology did not permit the transcendence of space. Until the final decades of the twentieth century, environments could be exclusively defined by the physical spaces, but with the rise of networked technologies people spend much of their lives living outside the spaces they occupy physically (Yee 2006b). With increasingly easy access to networked technologies, it is possible for alternate spaces to erode the cultural barrier between city and country by making benefits of urban life widely available.

Although, some scholars argue that the categories of space and time have become compressed or that they are nearly meaningless (Robbins 1988; Virilio 1999) it seems unlikely that space will cease to matter. Our bodies and the technologies for overcoming spatial constraints must occupy physical locations and be subject to spatial influences. A more plausible thesis is that the physical world is no longer the only one that people inhabit. As Bolter and Grusin explain, someone who lives a networked life can lead multiple lives simultaneously – one in the physical world and others in cyberspace (2000: 232). Networked people tend to be less connected to their physical and cultural surroundings and to their daily interactions with others, yet they are engaged in networks that transcend these surrounding (Varnelis and Friedberg 2008). Thus, the prevalence of networked technologies challenges the city and country dichotomy by creating a virtual space that residents of the city, country, and suburb can each occupy while still living in their respective geographic locations

With those living in different physical spaces increasingly occupying the same digital world, differences between urban and rural cultures will likely diminish. There are good grounds for expecting such a change based on the changes initiated by older media. Studies of nationality show that widely distributed print media was instrumental in replacing local identities with large group identities (Anderson 1983; Deutsch 1953; Gellner 1983). Critics of film and television have argued that these also have a standardizing effect on audiences (Adorno and Horkheimer 1969; Adorno 1991a; Adorno 1991b). The weakness of television and other traditional media as means of producing cultural convergence is that they tend to also reproduce hierarchical power relations (Ito 2008: 3). These media are created and distributed by a relatively small collection of firms and given consumers who are usually denied the right to modify the content. By contrast, networked media, which use what Ito calls a "many-to-many" form of distribution (Ito 2008: 7), are far more open to user created modification and decentralized communication (Benkler 2006; Jenkins 2006a; Jenkins 2006b; Russell, Ito, Richmond, and Tuters 2008). As Lim and Kann put it, "Networked cultural production assails traditional structures of authority and disrupts the received logic of consumption by breaking down barriers between consumers and producers" (2008: 71).

Networked technologies are well suited to providing some of the benefits that follow from urban life to those who are geographically isolated. The internet is a profoundly cosmopolitan space, since anyone with an internet connection is capable of communicating with people of almost any background. Even people living in countries with restrictions on internet use often find ways of circumventing filters and communicating with outsiders (Zha and Perlmutter 2008: 281). In fact, the internet surpasses cities as a cosmopolitan space because it allows contact with a broader range of people than one would find in even the most diverse location. More importantly, when people are online the many-to-many mode of distribution means that they are encouraged to communicate with each other, rather than simply gathering information from common sources. They can watch Youtube videos from places they cannot visit, find new friends on Facebook, or read strangers' blog posts; they can also produce their own videos and blog posts for others to view.

The widespread use of networked technologies and the decentralized modes of transmitting information facilitate random encounters between individuals who would not usually interact. Moreover, they often encourage interaction in settings that provide incentives for engaging in group activities that encourage mutual understanding. Massively Multiplayer Online Role-playing Games (MMORPGs) are one of the most prominent examples of this. Players find new friends from other regions or from foreign countries and work alongside them in completing quests and forming teams or guilds. The existence of common interests that can only be fulfilled by cooperating with others makes association a prerequisite for playing many of these games, especially as players become more advanced. In some cases, individual games can even be like virtual cities. As Humble points out, the MMORPG Everquest alone has so many players that they would qualify as the United States' 35th largest city if they were located in one place (Humble 2004: 25). Networked fan communities, political interest groups, forums, and blogs are likewise sites of communication between people from diverse backgrounds who share common interests, making them ideal places for recreating urban cosmopolitanism (Jenkins 2006a; Jenkins 2006b).

A growing body of research suggests that the internet may help to overcome the decline of associational life by forming new online places where people can meet and interact (Rheingold 2000; Steinkuehler and Williams 2006;

Bennett 2008; Dahlberg 2011; Schulzke 2011). These claims are often formulated as though networked technologies were compensation for something that once existed but was lost. However, networked technologies not only provide a means of replacing traditional associational ties, but also surpassing them by engaging people who live in rural and suburban areas where extensive contact with a diverse range of people is more difficult.

Networked technologies also have strong implications for self-creation and experimentation with identities. In this regard, they resemble city life. Urban and digital environments are prone to creating feelings of alienation, but the alienation can be empowering to the extent that isolation and anonymity are redeemed as preconditions for exploring or developing one's identity. When online, anonymity permits everything from discussion of controversial beliefs in a relatively secure setting to the creation of alternate personas.

Ethnographic research shows that users make excellent use of the online space as a mode of self-creation (Taylor 2006). Customizable websites and profiles give users a chance to create personalized spaces (Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe 2007). Online video games and virtual worlds go even further, allowing players to create characters and represent themselves in an entirely new way (Boellstorff 2008; Cogburn and Silcox 2009; Taylor 2006; Wolfendale 2007; Yee 2006a). With so many people using the internet as a medium through which to experience a heightened sense of individual liberty and creativity, the city-dweller's ability transform in new contexts is no longer unique. One can replicate the experience online by engaging with other people in digital communities. Someone with few opportunities to experiment with different identities, or even someone confined to a homogenous or intolerant place, may find respite in the anonymous liberty of networked technologies.

Conclusion

Although the line between the city and the country has blurred, physical and cultural differences persist. Urban spaces suffer from many shortcomings – they can be crowded, polluted and plagued by high levels of crime – but cities can also be open and diverse environments that create myriad avenues for self-creation and cultural exchange. These benefits of urban life have, until recently, been confined to cities. However, they have become more widely available as networked technologies have allowed users to transcend their locations in space. These technologies may affect a convergence of geographic cultures as users interact in settings that mirror the cosmopolitanism and anonymity of urban spaces.

Although this essay is primarily concerned with the benefits associated with urban life becoming generally accessible, technological development is not uniformly positive. The rise of digital technologies can also damage relationships within physical spaces. Living part-time in the digital world requires leaving one's own for the same duration. For some, the internet is so appealing and addictive that it leads to neglected responsibilities in the physical world. This problem is especially pronounced with video games, as those which recreate entire worlds online encourage constant play (Chappell, Eatough, Davies, and Griffiths 2006; Ng and Wiemer-Hastings 2005). Overindulgence in the digital world threatens any goods provided by ones physical environment. Thus, it is essential to limit the normative force of the argument. Networked technologies have enormous potential as means of temporarily transcending the limits of physical space, but enthusiasm for them should always be checked by attention to the costs of excessive use.

It is also important to remain skeptical of some of the interests that regulate the internet. While Mitchell is right to claim that "cyberspace is profoundly antispatial" (Mitchell 1995: 8), it is possible to understand the problems digital spaces by drawing analogies from scholarship dealing with physical spaces. Many of the same problems Weberian and Marxist scholars found in cities have reappeared online. Weberian analysis, which focuses on gatekeepers and their control over territories and resources, is just as relevant to networked technologies as it was in describing the dynamics of urban life. Users of these technology are forced to access digital spaces through gatekeepers and by means of the gatekeepers' technology, allowing business elites and governments to control access as effectively as in the past (Hindman 2009). The Marxist approach of exploring the connection between economic power and the distribution of space is relevant for the same reasons. Digital spaces are open to resource based discrimination, as new technologies allow for prioritized service to select individuals (Graham and Marvin 2001). Therefore, if networked media are to realize their potential of bridging geographic barriers, users must continually challenge attempts to impose limits akin to the ones that are responsible for unequal access in the physical world.

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Resisting Commodification (with Friends!): Facebook and the Spectacle of Capitalism

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Introduction

It is almost ludicrous to mention how big Facebook has become. In less than a decade Facebook has gone from an innovative social networking upstart to genuine economic giant. There are those who have lauded Facebook for the ways it has changed socialization and our interaction with the Web (Mui). Others fear that Facebook is rapidly becoming the quintessential Orwellian Big Brother[1], where rather than having the government looking over our shoulder, advertisers and marketers collect our information for unknown and potentially dangerous purposes. The original version of this paper was my Master's thesis, in which I considered both the commodifying nature of Facebook, as well as its revolutionary political potential. In that work (which I defended over a year ago now) I concluded that Facebook was on a precipice – edging toward becoming devoid of revolutionary or political potential. But I was still quite hopeful that "the Social Network" would continue to provide avenues for resistance to the commodifying forces of contemporary capitalism, even as the site itself became more entrenched in what Guy Debord termed "the Spectacle" of capitalist consumerism. However, in this paper I focus on those commodifying aspects of Facebook and speculate on what potential harms could arise with the continued commodification of what has now become a nearly ubiquitous communication tool.

I: (Mis)Information

Perhaps rather than fearing Facebook as an instrument of Orwellian domination we should instead examine it as the next step in a "Huxleyan future" (Postman 156). In his 1984 book Amusing Ourselves to Death, media theorist Neil Postman used Aldous Huxley's seminal work A Brave New World to criticize television culture and propose that cultural domination may not come from an overtly oppressive governmental force (as in George Orwell's 1984). Instead, Postman noted that Huxley's dystopia came from a society so inundated with triviality and entertainment that they were unable to see their oppressors at all (vii-i). Postman suggested that people should be more concerned about oppression through "technologies that undo their [citizens'] capacities to think" than the potential for total domination by an oppressive government (vii). While Postman was critically evaluating television culture, his "Huxleyan warning" resonates with today's Web culture more than ever (155).

One of the most often praised aspects of Facebook and other social networking websites is the speed at which information can be distributed through and across different networks to become nation-wide and even global knowledge. Within minutes of a noteworthy event (and many non-worthy events as well) a Facebook user's News Feed might be inundated with links to articles, friends' reactions to what has happened, and predictions about what can or will happen next. This can be tremendously beneficial in a world where information – and seemingly the

world itself – has sped up. In 2004, sociologist Ben Agger noted that Internet technologies had accelerated the pace of "communicating, writing, connecting, shopping, browsing, surfing, and working" to the point that many people today expect instant gratification in almost everything they do (Speeding Up 3). Although written just before Facebook exploded in popularity, Agger's reference to "instantaneity" (5) seems to fit perfectly with what users of social networking technology have come to expect when they log on: all of the most important information (as defined by the user) about politics, entertainment, science, technology, sports, and social activism available as soon as something happens in quickly digestible headlines.

I am not arguing that this kind of access to information is in and of itself harmful. On the contrary, having the ability to receive and review information instantly and to redistribute it among differing networks has the potential to make the world more connected (perhaps Mark Zuckerberg's favorite buzzword next to "openness") and has the potential to open ongoing dialogues about important social and political issues as they arise. Where this instantaneity can and has done damage is when false or misleading information makes its way into the information stream. Sometimes this information is relatively innocuous and quickly corrected[2]. However all too often the speed at which information is disseminated is used as a tool for those who can benefit from the false information. One need only look at Barack Obama's presidency to find countless examples of US-based political propaganda attempting to frighten the public with tales of a foreign birth cover-up, hidden terrorist agendas and associations, and a malicious socialist healthcare bill. Although proven untrue on countless occasions, these and other rumors continue to permeate the United States' national discourse, arising again and again with any new piece of legislation.

This is not to say political mud slinging is something new – far from it. The difference is the speed at which these stories fly. In one of the most prominent and divisive examples of social media being used to deceive large segments of the public, former Alaskan Governor and Vice Presidential candidate Sarah Palin posted on Facebook that she did not want her grandparents or son to have to face "Obama's 'death panel'" as a result of proposed health care reform (Bank). Even though there was and is absolutely no basis for the claim that the health care bill would require people to visit a "death panel" to prove they are "worthy of health care," within minutes the post created a panic among many conservatives as more and more users reposted Palin's comments and expressed their fear and revulsion at the thought that life could be treated so cavalierly. Within hours the phrase "death panel" became the rallying cry against health care reform (Bank). And despite how many politicians and experts denounced the idea, no matter how many pointed out that it was ludicrous to think that the government would kill sick and elderly patients, people continued to cling to the catch phrase as they protested the health care reform bill.

Facebook alone cannot be entirely blamed for the spread of misinformation. It is a platform through which information may be disseminated and those who knowingly post false information are clearly to blame for their misuse of this powerful tool. However Facebook is not merely a passive platform, but also participates in the spread of political spin. "US Politics on Facebook" and pages like it (there are several including "Congress on Facebook" and "Government on Facebook") aggregate posts by and about elected governmental officials and political candidates. There are certainly benefits to having important political information centralized on a single page that reposts the news and announcements from around the country[3]. The problem here is twofold. The first (and probably unavoidable) problem is that repeating and disseminated the thoughts and comments of politicians means that this page participates in the dissemination of political spin. Each politician on Facebook has his or her own agenda, and as we have seen with Sarah Palin (and countless other politicians from the right and left) sometimes that agenda does not include engaging in honest debate.

But Facebook should not be blamed when a politician makes false or misleading statements on their pages anymore than it should be blamed if any individual were to post incorrect or intentionally misleading information. The second, larger problem is that Facebook does not identify who manages these pages and therefore who decides what information is worth sharing and what is not. The "US Politics on Facebook" groups' stated purpose is to "highlight the use of Facebook by politicians, elected officials, and political campaigns" and to "share tips and best practices as well as news from Facebook" (Facebook). Yet even a cursory glance at the page's Wall clearly shows that the page administrators do not repost every piece of information by every political candidate (to do so would be nearly impossible). This means that there must be some kind of vetting process in which page administrators decide which posts are most worthy, which candidates are most important, and which national and international events warrant discussion. Even if site administrators do not have their own political agenda and are able to ignore their political biases, they are still making decisions on a daily basis that show page viewers only what they think is important in United States politics. While I understand the necessity of filtering, page administrators' choices cannot

be adequately criticized or discussed because they do not identify themselves. Without accountability, none of these pages that attempt to consolidate political information can be truly relied upon.

Moreover, the frequency with which patently false news stories make it into United States political discourse is alarming[4] and may point to a larger problem. More than a decade ago sociologist and Columbia University Journalism professor Michael Schudson described how the new digital age had caused a shift in the way people in the United States interact with politics. In "Changing Concepts of Democracy" Schudson argues that because of the explosion of communications technologies we have moved past the era of the "informed citizen" into the era of the "monitorial citizen." The monitorial citizen is "defensive rather than pro-active" in gathering information and as a result is less discerning and less capable of interpreting the information provided to them (Schudson). This description rings even truer now when one thinks about the Huxleyan deluge of information citizens face on a daily basis. Cable news channels like CNN, Fox News, and MSNBC not only have pundits and newscasters discussing wide-ranging topics twenty-four hours a day, but – in case that is not enough – they also have news tickers streaming across the bottom of the screen nearly constantly. Most of the major American news organizations (and many non-American news organizations too) have a presence on Facebook and Twitter. Radio programs and podcasts are produced on a daily basis on any number of topics – political or otherwise. And that does not take into account the information Facebook users receive via the "News Feed" from their friends (obviously not all of which is political in nature, but still often must be sifted through).

The preponderance of informational sources is at the same time exciting and maddening. It is exciting to live in a world where this much information is – to indulge in the use of a tired cliché – at one's fingertips. It is maddening to parse through the thousands of headlines and vaguely worded status updates to try to find reliable and important information. It is no wonder then, how misinformation is spread so easily and takes hold so strongly. Depending on one's choice of news sources and circle of friends, one could hear and see half a dozen stories and status updates about the atrocity of "death panels" before seeing a single correction or rebuttal. The digital revolution has brought a wealth of information, as well as a pronounced dearth of analysis.

Schudson was ultimately arguing for the importance of professional institutions (the news media) in mediating communication "between private individuals and public governing bodies" – that the monitorial citizen needs the expertise of these institutions to deal with the deluge of information that has resulted from the digital revolution (Schudson). While I do not put much faith in professional institutions' ability to help citizens process information (especially if the professional institutions to which Schudson refers are major news organizations[5]), Schudson's description of a citizenry befuddled by an over-abundance of information resonates in the Facebook age. The more information scattered across the informational landscape, the more difficult it is to process that information. As a result, misinformation spreads with a rapidity that only new social media and communications technologies can provide.

II: Who Needs Privacy When You Have Products?

In What's the Matter with the Internet? Mark Poster notes that the economy always "colonize[s] new media" (2) in order to find ways to sell "cultural objects" (52). To put it another way, the Spectacle infiltrates all new modes of discourse in order to perpetuate its power and to find new ways to reap the culture for commodity signs. Facebook is not exempt from this cultural harvest. By now Facebook's privacy woes have been well documented. In 2009, Facebook settled a lawsuit over the short-lived Beacon program – an advertising service that allowed third party websites to post user purchase information to Facebook without their consent (Grimmelmann "Saving Facebook" 1147)[6]. More recently, Facebook has come under fire yet again (and subsequently changed their privacy settings again) after users, bloggers, and technology experts from all walks of life decried the SNS's more permeable privacy settings[7]. These controversies are only the most visible of what has been a near constant struggle between Facebook users and the social networking giant. When looking at the ire over the years caused by Facebook's quickly changing, difficult to understand and often-insufficient privacy policy it is difficult to not ask why. Why has Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and his team of programmers failed to adequately respond to users' privacy concerns? Why do users continue to frequent Facebook – now more than any other website – when it has been made perfectly clear that the information posted is not totally private? However, while these and other similar inquiries are valuable and have attracted scores of bloggers, journalists and scholars of all disciplines, for the purposes of this paper I

am less concerned with why Facebook management and users continue to allow the violations to occur and more interested in how these privacy policies have allowed the advertising industry and the Spectacle to further imbed itself and consumer culture into users' lives[8].

In "Saving Facebook" New York Law School Associate Professor James Grimmelmann describes six common privacy "harms"[9] he believes are prevalent on Facebook ("Saving" 1164). The first two of these privacy violations, "disclosure" and "surveillance" are closely related to one another. Disclosure occurs when a user's information is available to a wider audience than the user intended. This privacy problem is most often associated with (but not limited to) disgruntled employees and teen and young adult Facebook users who post inappropriate pictures or status updates, incorrectly believing that the incriminating information can only be seen within their network of friends (1165-6). Like disclosure, surveillance occurs when those outside of the anticipated network (for example employers or parents) are able to find information that was intended to be private (e. g. rants about one's terrible boss, or pictures of underage drinking) and use that information to punish the poster (1166-7). Surveillance differs from disclosure in that interested parties must take an active approach in seeking incriminating information. While some might argue that users should shoulder most of the blame for these types of violations (again, because in most cases they must incriminate themselves by posting something objectionable), these privacy violations will have significant legal ramifications in the coming months and years[10] and therefore are worthy of further consideration. I do not believe that these violations are a specific goal of the Spectacle's invasion of Facebook (what does capitalist consumerism gain from having a teen grounded for being caught drinking at a party? Or from an employee being fired for disparaging her employer?), but I do believe they are a side effect. Now school administrators and employers can investigate those they are interested in with only a few keystrokes. Information that in previous generations was unavailable barring significant detective work is now readily available and can be held against users unexpectedly. I am of the mind that monitoring one's posts and being strict about what constitutes a "friend" can help users avoid a vast majority of these types privacy problems. However it is worth note that these privacy violations are symptoms of an imperfect social networking system that allows for much greater privacy violations that allow the Spectacle a greater presence in users' lives.

"Disagreement" and "denigration" are another two closely related privacy harms Grimmelmann discusses in his article. Disagreement most often occurs on Facebook when incriminating or embarrassing photographs are posted not by the person implicated in the photos but by another party (1171). Facebook allows users to untag themselves (or remove their name and a link to their personal Facebook page) from a photo but, as Grimmelmann notes, does not allow users to "demand it be taken down or made private" (1172). Like disclosure, disagreement becomes problematic when someone outside one's own network of contacts sees the photos and misuses them. Denigration occurs primarily through two means: "distortion" – when one or more users lies about or misrepresents another user (or non-user) with the intention of damaging their reputation or credibility – and "appropriation" – when one uses the likeness, identity or public image of another user for their own goals without consent (the best example that comes to mind is when a celebrity's image is used for advertising against their wishes) (1176). Like the privacy harms mentioned above, these violations can cause tremendous damage to an individual's private or professional reputation, and there is little being done by Facebook to prevent them (and perhaps little else that can be done). Slander, libel, and other forms of intentional character assassination have always and will continue to exist, these privacy harms represent yet another way that Facebook allows misinformation to flow rapidly and take hold fervently with little recourse.

Unlike the first four harms – which I believe are side-effects or symptoms of the Spectacle's presence on Facebook – I believe that the final two, "instability" and "spillover," directly enhance the Spectacle's power because they allow the advertising industry to further imbed itself into individual Facebook user's lives. Instability refers to how reliable (or in Facebook's case how unreliable) an organization is in maintaining privacy practices and "information flows" so that users can adequately anticipate who can view their information and how it can be used (1169). I have already mentioned a few of Facebook's instability problems and will, after I define spillover, discuss how these harms combine to give Spectacle advertising even more power over consumers who use the SNS. Spillover is a phenomenon in which people or advertising agencies interested in collecting user demographic data can infer "with good confidence" an individual's age, nationality, sexual orientation or other private information by using "a simple algorithm" surveying their friend's demographic data (1174). This is clearly problematic because Facebook's very structure allows information to be gathered independent of one's privacy settings.

It becomes even more frightening when one looks more closely at how marketers and advertising firms are using spillover and Facebook's privacy instability to further infuse their companies and products with users' lives.

In 2009 Advertising Age – a news magazine and website dedicated to the latest developments in the marketing and advertising industries – published an article by Abbey Klaassen and Beth Snyder Bulik describing the ways in which Facebook is being and can be used to brand-promote through creation and dissemination of apps. It is widely known that because Facebook allows users to create their own apps and offer them to the Facebook community, many corporations and marketing agencies have invested in creating entertaining and functional apps in hopes that users will download them and make them a part of their social networking lives. These companies benefit when the app becomes an almost daily brand reminder for the Facebook user. Klaassen and Bulik note that both Target and JC Penny have created apps that "offer gift suggestions, style tips and fashion trends" as a way of staying prevalent in the consumer's mind[11].

Furthermore, "One market-research firm has launched a Facebook application as a way to gather data on consumers, their friends and the relevant data that comes from comparing ourselves with others" (Klaassen). This app (by now one of many apps tasked with digging up user info) asks users to compare themselves to their friends, and through these comparisons, the market-researchers gather data about "people's motivations and views of themselves" (Klaassen). In the words of the app's creator Tom Anderson, "Marketers can leverage these findings to uncover gaps in self-esteem/self-image and message more effectively on emotional attributes that are most important to us" (qtd in Klaassen). Since the article's publication, Facebook has attempted to crack down on apps and app-creators who try to violate users' privacy, to varying degrees of success. While Facebook does not intentionally provide advertisers with individual user's personal information[12], over the last couple of years it has become easier and easier for advertisers to get it. Additionally Facebook allows advertisers to target ads to specific demographics – which can focus on large groups such as women from 18 to 35, or much more specific groups like men 21-24 who list reading as a hobby and live in the New York area (The Facebook Obsession). Now advertisers can even target ads based on the words users mention in their status updates (Del Rey 94).

In other words, the Spectacle has penetrated Facebook – and as a result users' lives – to an unprecedented degree. Advertisers and marketers are using Facebook as a platform to further disseminate brand information and product advertisements. And they are doing so in a way that is largely invisible to the user. This invisibility (or outright deception) embeds brands into consumers' lives in new ways and forces users to participate in the further spread and growth of Spectacle-domination. Every FarmVille or Mafia Wars invitation one sends or receives is most likely also an invitation for a marketing firm or data collection agency to target you and your network more specifically. Every time one mentions a band they like, quotes their favorite movie or television show, or discusses a hobby with a friend, they are also communicating with advertisers on how to better market to them.

Nevertheless, even these targeted advertisements might not be as impactful on most other websites. But Facebook is different. Facebook is not simply a website that publishes and archives news and information. In its own words it is a platform that gives users "the power to share and make the world more open and connected" (Facebook). Yet a close examination of Facebook's self-narrative suggest that its creators want it to be viewed as more than a mere platform but as a conscious entity to which users become emotionally tied. The first signs of this come on the site's home page. Just above the News Feed, the status update bar reads, "What's on your mind?" This is significant not because Facebook allows its users to speak their mind (most websites today have enabled users to comment on their various articles and postings) but because it suggests a direct conversation between the user and the site itself. The bar could have simply read "Update Status" or something equally mechanical, but the site's programmers chose this specific phrase – something often said between friends (or at least acquaintances) at the beginning of a conversation – in order to situate the website as a conscious entity capable of caring about the user. It is important to note that a Facebook user's friends are not the ones asking what is on the user's mind. On the contrary, it is a crapshoot on whether or not one's friends will respond to or even see any given status update. But Facebook always wants to know and always provides the tools that the user needs to best express themselves – as if Facebook wants to be both a friend and an organizational tool, a confidant and a digital party planner.

Facebook's apparent familiarity with its users is only heightened when one navigates through the site. On the right of each user's profile is a small box that shows users "People You May Know" which links to a nearly endless list of people and pages that the user has some connection to (for the most part, these connections are made up of people with whom the user has mutual friends). When writing or reading messages Facebook shows users photos of their friends, presumably to remind users of the people to whom they are connected. It is worth noting that both of these functions are impressive technological innovations and are not inherently Spectacle empowering. These and other features (too numerous to mention) demonstrate exactly why Facebook has been able to grow continuously: because they offer tools that not only enable socialization but also invite increased interaction between friends. At the

same time, these and other tools send the subtle message that Facebook is more than a website, that it is a rational, thinking entity that genuinely wants to make users' lives better by creating new connections and solidifying old ones.

This personalization of Facebook is confirmed when one click's on the "About" tab at the bottom of the page which hyperlinks to Facebook's own page. In a case of confusingly self-referential overlap, Facebook has its own page on Facebook. On the Wall of this page – like any diligent celebrity or corporation – Facebook posts (favorable) stories about itself that have been recently published[13]. In the "Info" section, Facebook provides its mission statement and some brief information about the page and its purpose. There are also photos of Facebook employees and corporate art work, and a section that allows users to share their "Facebook stories" about how the site has changed users' lives. Facebook's Facebook page is not very different from those of other companies on the social networking giant. Nonetheless, when combined with the site's many direct communications with users and its ability to foster socialization more efficiently than any "real-world" entity, it effectively positions Facebook as a user's close friend. Facebook then uses this familiarity with its users to enhance the effectiveness of its targeted advertisements. By exploiting the intense personal connection it often fosters with its users, Facebook effectively imbeds the Spectacle into socialization. Most websites have advertisements in annoying and inconvenient places. Ads blink along the top of the screen and shout at readers from the margins of whatever they might be viewing. Some ads interrupt the user's ability to navigate the page with large, animated videos and tiny, hidden "close" options. Not Facebook. Facebook advertisements are not intrusive or annoying. The more information Facebook can gather about a user, the more tailored the ads will be to a user's personal preferences. Facebook's ads are more like friendly suggestions from someone who knows you than the depersonalized, often anger-inducing ads on other websites. Facebook's ability to create direct emotional ties to its users give the site – and advertisers that use its targeted marketing feature – subtle power and unprecedented access to consumers' lives.

The swiftness with which market capitalism has invaded Facebook should not be surprising given the power of the Spectacle to instantly commodify culture and cultural spaces. However capitalism has not only found a way to access demographic information via Facebook but has also interwoven itself into the social networking fabric. On Facebook, one's News Feed is not only populated by the comments of friends and acquaintances, but also of any celebrities, news organizations, shoe companies, and fast food chains that the user has "Liked." Thus, the consumer becomes a mechanism of advertising by affiliating themselves with specific products and corporations – quite literally infusing advertising and socialization. The user/consumer becomes tied to the product in a new virtual way and is encouraged to see themselves as in conversation with (or part of a conversation with) the corporate entities they "Like."

III: Selling the Spectacle Self

Perhaps the most intriguing (and almost invisible) way Facebook reproduces consumer ideology is found in its very structure. In the section labeled "Basic Information" users can provide their current city of residence, their hometown, their sex (choices are limited to either "Male" or "Female"), age, sexual preference (this is merely the phrase "Interested In:" next to two checkboxes marked "Women" and "Men") and languages. The location boxes, as well as the "Languages" box are drop down menus that allow users to search for their city or language from a list of possibilities. The user is restricted to only those locations and languages found on the list, but the lists are quite comprehensive (for example, in addition to "American English" I have listed "Pig Latin" among my languages spoken). Additionally, this tab provides an "About Me" section in which users can write a short narrative meant to give further insight into their personality, write a humorous quote or anecdote or simply leave blank. The "Education and Work" section has a similar drop-down menu from which a user can choose from a list of possibilities. However here users can add to the list if their workplace or school is not found. The "Philosophy" section includes the same drop-down style searchable menu for one's "Religion" and "Political Views," again with the option to add to the list if the user's preference is not otherwise available. The "Philosophy" tab is unique in that Facebook allows for a short "Description" below the drop-down menus for "Religion" and "Political Views." Subsequent sections of the users profile ("Arts and Entertainment," "Sports," and "Activities and Interests") work much the same way as the "Philosophy" section, minus the ability to further "describe" these preferences.

Facebook's newest system for self-description is much less restrictive and much more comprehensive than in the past[14]. Now Facebook paradoxically both challenges and affirms consumerist notions of the self. As Mark Poster

explains, "On the Internet individuals construct their identities, doing so in relation to ongoing dialogues, not as acts of pure consciousness" (184). Identity on Facebook is fluid. It allows users to construct and reconstruct identity on a daily basis, emphasizing different aspects of their personalities as they see fit and not as reified artifacts of the self. Microblogging and wall-posting features allow people to virtually/textually construct themselves with a few quick keystrokes. Users have the ability to update their status with inane information about what they had for lunch or ask important questions like how to choose the right college or career. One can post a link to a funny YouTube video in one moment and then post a link to an article exposing political corruption or challenging others to take action over an important social issue the next. This is an intensely powerful view of the self – not bound to a singular identity but capable of many versions of selfhood that sometimes conflict with one another, without repercussion. This multifaceted self may even be more difficult for the Spectacle to consume entirely.

However, Facebook's system for self-description is not without its flaws. First, Facebook's profile set-up may be culturally homogenizing. For their article "Online Language: The Role of Culture in Self-Expression and Self-Construal on Facebook" David C. DeAndrea et al examined Facebook profiles in order to find out how previously established cultural norms regarding self-construal (or self-definition) were expressed. The authors noted that previous research has shown that Westerners tend to favor independent self-construal – or self-expression based on differentiating themselves from others (427). The most common Western notion of self is "seen as intransient, not bound to particular situations or relationships" (427). The authors characterize interdependent self-construal as an expression of the self, dependent upon relationships and group affiliations, where individual attitudes and capabilities are only secondary markers of self. They noted that interdependency in self-definition has been found to be "relatively more prominent in many Asian cultures" than in the Western world (427). Based on these well-established principles, DeAndrea et al examined the language used in the profiles of a small sample of Caucasian, African-American, and "ethnic Asian" students (one-hundred and twenty people total) to find out if cultural norms for self-construal held up on Facebook.

As it turns out, ethnic and cultural background was not a clear indicator of how people self-express on Facebook. The researchers found no significant difference between the internalized attributes expressed by the Caucasians and ethnic Asians studied (437). Furthermore, the group predicted that ethnic Asians would have the greatest "proportion of social affiliation self-description" (self-expression that emphasizes social ties), which was found to be false (437-8). The authors acknowledge that the second hypothesis may have merely been an incorrect supposition on their part. Yet they also note that it is possible that "characteristics of [Facebook]'s interface and/or user norms influence self-presentations" (438). As the writers explain, even though Facebook is international, the three countries with the most users at the time of this article's publication (the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada) are Western countries "associated with independent self-construal" (438).

We cannot draw any certain conclusions from this experiment, first because the experiment was not designed to test if Facebook's structure invites cultural homogenization. Their explanation was merely an attempt to interpret data they collected that contradicted their original hypothesis. Secondly the experiment was conducted entirely on the Facebook pages of students, faculty, and alumni "the same large Midwestern University" (the specific university in question was never mentioned) (432). The similarities in self-presentation could very well have been the result of socialization that took place outside of Facebook. However, given Facebook's birth and development in the United States and given the Spectacle's growing grip on Facebook it is more than reasonable to ask the question: does Facebook's structure have a culturally homogenizing effect? It is no secret that Spectacle of capitalist consumerism has gained power over the years by appropriating difference (often in the form of counter cultural protest) and making it yet another sellable commodity[15]. Therefore this study should serve as a warning to those who recognize the Spectacle's power to make homogeneity appear to be difference. If people of other cultures feel forced or even pressured to express themselves in traditionally Western terms – if the Spectacle's power has reached so deeply into Facebook's structure that independent self-expression becomes the primary means of self-construal cross-culturally – then it may be too late to resurrect Facebook as a potentially revolutionary platform.

Furthermore, despite the changes to Facebook profiles that allow users more space to define themselves religiously, politically and socially, there is still an equal emphasis on users' entertainment choices and other product-oriented identifiers. This is not to say that one's favorite films, books or even clothing brands are not important or do not offer insight into one's personality. Neither am I suggesting that Facebook is responsible for making people define themselves through that which they consume. On the contrary, the Spectacle's thorough cultural domination and the advertising industry's enticing commodity narratives that tell consumers that their lives will be made better if supplemented by a particular product has created an environment in which many people feel they must (at least to

some degree) construct their identities through that which they consume (Goldman and Papson 6). This association between brand, product and self is often how companies create consumer loyalty. Over time, this tendency to associate products with personality – to define oneself through brand name affiliation – has become an ingrained part of the Western psyche. Instead of blaming Facebook for a trend that has been a part of Western society for decades, I mean only to criticize the social networking giant for making this association between self and brand choice more prominent and accessible by displaying a single page which casts religion and political affiliation on equal footing with product-related self descriptions. For some in Western society the self has been overtaken by the "commodity-sign" of advertising and shopping. When this extant trend is combined with privacy settings that allow advertisers more access to consumer's lives than ever before (with ads that can target highly specific demographics) product-exploration can and will often replace self-exploration. When this happens – when perfectly constructing a list of TV shows, films, musicians, products, and brand names becomes more important in defining an individual than other indicators of personality (whether it be independent self-construal through discussion of personality traits and opinions, or interdependent self-construal through discussion of group and familial affiliations) – the act of constructing the self can become an even more dangerous mimesis of capitalist consumerism.

In a 2009 study of college Facebook use, developmental psychologist Tiffany A. Pempek et al found that over 90% of students surveyed claimed that expressing their identity and opinion was not one of their primary reasons for using Facebook (232). This suggests that many students using Facebook (and presumably many non-student users as well) do not understand that their profiles, status updates, comments on friends' pages, "Likes," and group affiliations are all acts of self-construal. However of the same sample, over 90% of the students admitted to at least "some lurking"[16] (235). Clearly even those who do not believe they are expressing (or constructing) themselves through Facebook are being constructed by people in their social network when they view their pages and survey their personal information with or without commenting. If college students and other Facebook users do not understand that the information they post about themselves is a construction of identity and if those identity markers emphasize product and brand-affiliations, then their self-construal on Facebook is nothing more than self-promotion or self –advertising. Rather than using their Facebook profile as a way to express themselves as works in progress – as multifaceted, clearly political beings with many interests that range for the quotidian to the ideological – many people use their profile to express themselves as mere objects of the Spectacle, marketable commodities to sell to friends and acquaintances. This terribly reductive act promotes the self as apolitical (even if the user types "democrat" or "republican" into the space provided) and inherently and inescapably tied to the Spectacle.

Conclusion: Educated by the Spectacle

In the Spectaclized world children are often used as pawns for marketing strategies and political agendas. Children are marketed to quite heavily. Turn on any kid- or young adult-themed television show or network and you will see advertisements for the latest toys, movies and theme parks highlighting the fun and excitement of their product. Conversely, kids are all too often used as political props to scare constituents into controversial decisions. State and national budget cuts are almost always framed as attempts to protect future generations from mountainous debt (usually ignoring the debt already waiting for the future generations). Many arguments in favor of looser restrictions on gun laws refer to one's ability to protect the family. Those against gay marriage frequently and fervently state that "traditional marriage" must be upheld because children can only be properly raised in households with one mother and one father (despite all evidence to the contrary). As I mentioned in section II, former Alaskan Governor Sarah Palin even managed to link child safety to the healthcare reform debate by suggesting that new government policies might cast children with Downs Syndrome in front of "death panels." Yet despite all of the ways children and young adults are used in Spectacle society – both as subjects of comprehensive marketing strategies and as objects of political strategies – children are essentially apolitical. Educational theorist David Buckingham notes that many children are not able to define themselves as "political subjects" because they do not have the right to vote, are not addressed by the news, and rarely see others their age involved in political processes (Jenkins 228).

Like advertisers and politicians, the news media never hesitates to cover stories about children – always searching for the next educational, social, or health-related crisis to warn concerned parents about. Yet they rarely speak to children. Instead, children are educated by the Spectacle (that is not to say that the news media is outside of the Spectacle – but that is an entirely different argument). They are socialized to consume and do so vigorously. As a

result, kids become alienated from the political process until it is thrust back upon them in their late teenage years, when they often reject it and cling to the familiarity of political non-commitment or dogmatic loyalty to the political views of their parents. The obvious danger here is that Spectacle education favors social ignorance over an informed citizenry and spending over political action.

Much has been written about the potential for Web 2.0 technologies to revolutionize or at least revitalize education[17]. Vice-President of the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), Linda W. Braun has argued that new technologies like blogs (the social, micro-blogging site Twitter for example), computer and consol-games, and text and instant messaging (IM) have altered the definition of reading and writing and that teens have adopted these new forms of writing without realizing or acknowledging that they are in fact forms of literacy or education (38). Braun emphasizes the importance of not only making young adults aware of the staggering amount of reading and writing they do on a daily basis, but also in finding ways to use these new social tools to improve the quality of their reading and writing skills (40).

Educational theorist and e-learning advocate Herbert Thomas has gone a step further, arguing that the "traditional learning spaces in the form of classrooms and lecture halls" actually hinder students' learning ability (502-3). Because these spaces are highly formal and emphasize the teacher as the center of the classroom and because current approaches to teaching emphasize active student engagement and participation, Thomas suggests that the traditional classroom setting promotes outdated teaching models and makes it difficult for both teachers and students to engage in new and productive forms of learning (504). Thomas posits that to achieve this new learning environment, educators must first acknowledge that traditional boundaries between work, home and school no longer exist as they once may have (505). As Mizuko Ito explains, most schools today (and not just Western schools) ignore and even decry forms of entertainment (like television and online gaming) and imaginative play that do not fit into traditional educational models[18] (80). This purposeful ignorance and rejection of all new media forms sends the signal to children that popular entertainment and education are always divorced from one another – that learning does not take place during play.

It seems that Thomas and Ito are arguing (and even if they are not, I am) that the prevalence of new communications technologies has already changed the ways people communicate, socialize, play and learn and that educators must catch up to these changes in order to engage and educate new generations of learners. Thomas's vision for these new learning spaces is unclear. He uses words like "flexible," "bold" and "future proof" to describe them (504) and suggests that they must be "enchanting" as well as architecturally sound (510). What is clear is that Thomas believes these spaces should not be strictly physical but virtual as well (507). The new models of learning – in both physical and virtual environments – should allow for collaborative learning where the student does not merely receive information from a teacher, book, video, or website, but actively participates in the construction of the lesson with their peers as well as the instructor (503).

Both Braun's and Thomas's observations point to ways that technology-infused classrooms can help enlighten children about the world around them and help engage them in their education more thoroughly. Henry Jenkins argues that one way to combat a lack of political awareness among today's youth is to introduce them to "microlevel" political power at earlier ages (228). Jenkins argues that allowing young people to be politically active in an environment with which they feel comfortable (his primary example is The Sims online, a massively multiplayer online game) will ready them to face real-world political and social conversations and decisions when they come of voting age (232-3). Because of its popularity, Facebook could allow children to take part in political and social conversations that are typically reserved for adults in an environment in which their inexperience and inability to vote would not preclude them from having an opinion.

Because so many kids are already familiar with Facebook's format, it could at least be an intermediate step toward a more progressive and egalitarian learning environment. If set up with adequate privacy controls (admittedly a difficult task given Facebook's privacy environment) it can provide a sufficient platform through which teachers and parents can monitor, but not control, students' interactions. One could argue that several extant Internet technologies could allow the same kinds of engagement for those outside of the political spectrum. Blogs can offer an informal and anonymous space for kids to disseminate their political concerns and ideas. Discussion forums can link networks of people allowing them to share information and freely discuss any number of subjects. Social networking websites in general and Facebook specifically can combine the benefits of both the blog and the discussion forum while allowing kids to remain within comfortable and familiar communities of friends and peers.

One example of this potential for political growth (it is important to recognize it as potential and not a fulfilled

ideal) comes from my own particular use of Facebook. As a teacher of freshman composition, I want my students to leave class with at least some sense for how to engage in academic and (broadly defined) political discourse. To this end, each semester I require students to maintain an account on Facebook and join a class "group." Through the group I am able to message the students simultaneously, notify them of changes to the course schedule and post interesting and informative videos and news articles. I also require each student at some point in the semester to post an open-ended discussion question to the group's "Discussion Board." Students often choose to ask about issues discussed in class or found in the films or readings for class, although they are allowed to ask questions about current events not referenced in the classroom. Students' questions and responses range from the highly insightful (during the 2008 Presidential election a student asked about the validity and ethicality of specific campaign tactics) to the commonplace (students have asked about how others react to "tough times") and everything in between. Some students take the exercise seriously and genuinely seek out discussions that are important to them and some simply post the minimum amount of responses on the last possible day, only because they know it is part of their grade (and some do not participate at all, to their own detriment). The system is imperfect. It is simply my way of trying to encourage (or coerce, or force) students to think about the highly political world around them – something many of them have never been asked to do.

Just before the 2008 election, in a discussion with each of my classes, a small number of students said they were considering voting in part because of discussion started in class and continued on Facebook. Whether those claims are true or merely an attempt to curry favor from the teacher, I do not know (and would not care to speculate). However I am optimistic that this "coerced" discourse community helped many students at the very least become more aware of the politics that surrounds them and affects their lives on a daily basis.

In "The Impact of Facebook on Our Students" co-founder of ChildrenOnline.org (a website dedicated to promoting safe Internet use among children and young adults) Doug Fodeman levels a number of criticisms against Facebook and other SNSs, ultimately concluding that they do not belong in children's education. Many of Fodeman's arguments against Facebook are related to the website's spotty privacy record and the dangers of online socialization (i.e. that online socialization damages one's "real world" social skills) (40). Fodeman is right to suggest that Facebook gives users – perhaps young users most of all – "a false sense of privacy" (36). Furthermore, Fodeman is right in warning parents and teachers against the aggressive, targeted marketing that takes place on Facebook (38). The problem with merely ignoring Facebook's educational potential because of the dangers inherent in its imperfect, Spectaclized system is that most high school age students already use Facebook and Twitter and are already exposed to the dangers. Rather than clinging to traditional education methods (which are not without danger) and eschewing new forums for learning, parents and teachers should use Facebook and other social networking websites and make these dangers part of the conversation. Whether parents and educators like it or not, online socialization and education happen. If children and young adults have access to the Web – even if they are successfully banned from social networking websites – they will be exposed to the Spectacle and all of the physical and psychological dangers that accompany it. Rather than trying to shelter young adults from the dangers of social networking, we should evaluate how we can use these tools (which, again students are already using in great numbers) to educate them about the political and social world around them. To fail to acknowledge and openly discuss the power of Facebook, Twitter and other social networking tools is to allow the Spectacle to educate them about it.

I am not the first instructor to use Facebook or other social networking websites for such a purpose. And most of my students are of voting age. Yet programs similar to mine might yield similar or even better results for younger children. Allowing children to participate in real political discussion in a place where they feel like they can safely express themselves (i.e. somewhere they will not be harshly judged for what they may not know) may help them see themselves as the political subjects they are. If we expect nothing of children, they will often oblige. If educators ignore popular forms of entertainment merely because they are popular, we risk missing opportunities to reach them. However, if educators engage students in important discourses on their terms at an earlier age, they may be less resistant to the discourses they have been taught to hate through the Spectacle of capitalist consumerism and may actually desire to understand and participate in the governmental political process as they get older.

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1. One example is Daniel Lyons of Newsweek who has written articles called "Facebook's False Contrition" and "the High Price of Facebook" staunchly critical of Facebook and its privacy policies.

2. For example, in January of 2011 social networking sites became clogged with posts simultaneously fearing and mocking the possibility of changed Zodiac signs, when in-fact the Western Zodiac system was not affected. For more info see Virginia Bell's Huffington Post article "New Zodiac Sign: Astrology Makeover or Misinformation?"

3. There could be even greater benefits if these pages – which focus solely on politics of the United States – had a greater emphasis on international politics.

4. There are too many false or misleading stories to even scratch the surface adequately here. A couple of recent examples are lies (from both parties) about President Obama's 2012 budget, misleading comments about Social Security's impact on the deficit and fundamental misreadings of Wisconsin union pay and benefits (www.Factcheck.org).

5. See the Kevin Coe et al "Hostile News: Partisan Use and Perceptions of Cable News Programming" for a recent discussion of how some news organizations have trended toward politically biased reporting.

6. For news coverage of the Beacon controversy see Juan Carlos Perez's "Facebook Beacon More Intrusive Than Previously Thought" and Jon Brodkin's "Facebook Halts Beacon."

7. I will again refer to Daniel Lyons' Newsweek articles that I mentioned above, as well as John Dvorak's "Why Facebook's Privacy Settings Don't Matter."

8. James Grimmelmann has written an interesting article, "Privacy as Public Safety," in which he calls for a new mindset about privacy laws on social networking websites. In it, he argues that current database regulation models are insufficient to protect users' information, and that lawmakers should look at product-liability law for ideas for a new model for regulating information flows on SNS.

9. Grimmelmann notes that these are adapted from Daniel Solove's A Taxonomy of Privacy.

10. See Sam Hananel's MSNBC.com article "Woman Fired Over Facebook Rant; Suit Follows" for just one of dozens (if not hundreds) of examples of people being punished for comments or photos posted on Facebook. There is even a group on Facebook called "Fired By Facebook" which allows users to document these types of privacy harms.

11. Since Klaassen and Bulik's article's publication, the group discount website Groupon has imbedded marketing and purchasing even further into Facebook by allowing users who "Like" the site to purchase geographic-specific group coupons (hence the name Groupon) directly from their Facebook page.

12. Emily Steel and Geoffrey A. Fowler's Wall Street Journal article "Facebook in Privacy Breach" details the most recent incident in which Facebook unintentionally allowed the transfer of user information to advertising and data collection agencies.

13. As I write, there is a post about how Facebook has used its "check-in" feature to measure what locales are "the world's most social landmarks."

14. In previous incarnations of user profiles, stringent word or character limits were placed on how much one could describe and discuss their religious and political views, while at the same time users were given seemingly limitless space to list their favorite television shows, movies, sports, and other consumer products. This imbalance suggested a hierarchy of self in which one's entertainment choices outweighed their personal philosophies.

15. One prominent example is the image of Che Guevara emblazoned on t-shirts and coffee mugs, available at a variety of stores and online retailers.

16. Also called "creeping" or "freeping" (a portmanteau of the words "Facebook" and "creeping"), lurking is reading and viewing friends information "without directly interacting in any way" (Pempek 235).

17. A couple of recent examples are Wilma Clark's "Beyond Web 2.0: Mapping the Technology Landscapes of Young Learners" about new technologies that complicate and aid new learning spaces and Harry Pence's "Preparing for the Real Web Generation" which argues that today's college students merely represent a transitional period in education and that the real Web generation (the generation of students who truly and deeply engage with web-related technologies) is more than a decade away. There are dozens if not hundreds of other examples from the last decade and earlier.

18. Although television and online gaming may be the most obvious examples of villainized forms of popular entertainment, Ito's primary example is the "media mix" Yu-Gi-Oh!, which is a manga comic, animated television show, and multi-player card game. Ito argues that media mixes can provide a unique form of socialization and participatory education that should be utilized by the education system, not rejected (91).

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