

THE INHUMANIST MANIFESTO



Dr Julius Neubronner's 'Camera Pigeon', 1908.¹

Gary Hall

ART + RESEARCH

THE INHUMANIST MANIFESTO

EXTENDED PLAY

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The Techne Lab, University of Colorado 2017

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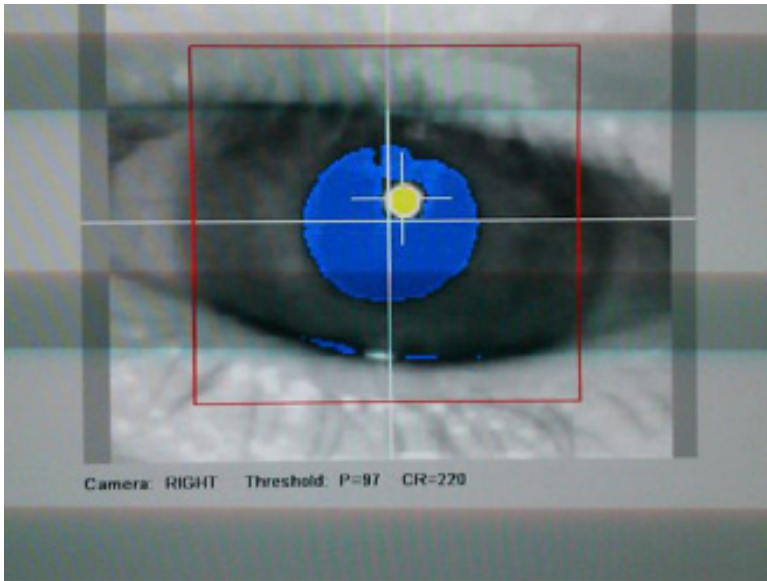
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The Inhumanist Manifesto



EyeLink 1000 and Michael Wamposzyc, *Observing the Observer*, 2012.²

How I Came To Write A Manifesto

The writing of this manifesto has multiple points of origin. I want to single out two in particular.

At an event called 'What Does the Anthropocene Mean?: Art, Ethics and Collaboration for a New Era', held at the GV Art gallery in London in late 2014, there was much talk of how art+science practices have responded to the way 'human activities have profoundly altered the natural course not only of the atmosphere, but also of the biosphere (life on earth), the hydrosphere (water on earth) and the lithosphere (the earth itself).'³ After the discussion between the visual artist Anaïs Tondeur, the scientist Jean-Marc Chomaz and the cultural theorist Joanna Zylińska, I raised a question from the audience that ran more or less as follows. 'OK, so the subject of our work as artists and writers may be concerned with the *posthuman*: with undermining the human's "natural" boundaries with the animal, technology, and the environment, and dislodging the self-identical humanist subject from its privileged place in the world. Yet how come, for all we may have entered a *new era*, most of us continue to act in more or less the same ways as we've always done?'



James Vaughan, *Television Eyeglasses*, 1963.⁴

Say that—like Tondeur, Chomaz, Zylinska and indeed myself—you're a writer working on how humanism and the human are now being challenged by an aspect of contemporary 'art+-science'—whether it concerns the environment, technologies, animals, insects, plant life, fungi, compost or the cosmos. Regardless of this, you will almost invariably continue to operate according to norms and practices that originated in a very different era. In fact, as I argued in a book published two years later, a number of those norms and practices:

would be familiar to scholars in the second half of the seventeenth century, when the world's first peer-reviewed journal was established, let alone the nineteenth or twentieth. With surprisingly rare exceptions, they're those of the rational, liberal, humanist author working alone in a study or office ... [who] produces a written text designed to make an argument so forceful and masterly it is difficult for others not to concur.

Claiming it as the original creative expression of his/her own unique mind, the lone author submits the written work for publication as part of a paper (or papercentric) journal or book. Once the work has been peer-reviewed and accepted for publication, it is eventually made available for sale under the terms of a publisher's policy, license, or copyright agreement. The latter asserts his/her right to be identified and acknowledged as its author and to have it attributed to him/her as his/her intellectual property; transfers the rights to the commercial exploitation of the text or work as a commodity that can be bought and sold to the publisher; reserves the right to control and determine who publishes, circulates, and reproduces the text, how, where, and in which contexts; and prevents the integrity of the original, fixed, and final form of the text from being modified or distorted by others.⁵

Yet is it only our *ideas* that are required to change if we are to be posthumanist—or, at any rate, *not simply humanist*? Or does the Anthropocene mean we must change our *ways of being and doing in the world too*? In other words, if we *really* want to explore how humanism and the human subject are being

decentred from their traditional place at the heart of Western culture, do we need to fundamentally transform not just how we think, but also how we work, act and live as artists and scientists, authors and theorists?

Then, in the spring of 2017, I received a request to help launch a new open access journal, *Media Theory*.⁶ The idea was that a number of authors would each produce a manifesto as to why such a journal was necessary and what they would like to see it do. I responded by explaining that, although the manifesto mode of political writing is associated with some of the themes and topics I've engaged with the most—posthumanism, piracy, Marxism, open access, the commons—I was nevertheless hesitant to take up such an invitation.

Now I'm not particularly interested in setting agendas or laying out policies with my work. Nor do I wish to get involved in *debates*. Yet the reason I hesitated was not *just* because I'm reluctant to promote new ideas with prescriptive notions about how to carry out those changes I believe need to be made. Nor was my wavering over the writing of a manifesto due simply to a concern that the power of this particular textual form of communication may have waned as a result of too much unthinking repetition, and an associated preference on my part for less obvious ways of acting. Having launched an open access theory journal myself a number of years ago—*Culture Machine*—I was also aware there was danger of my coming across as if I was telling those behind *Media Theory* what they should do with their journal. (Sometimes the most responsible decision anyone who has attained even a modest position of authority can make is to step aside after a while. Of course, it can be difficult to relinquish what are often hard-won roles. Nevertheless it is important to do so, *regardless of any success*, in order to create opportunities and openings for others. Which is why my colleagues and I decided to celebrate *Culture Machine's* 15th anniversary by passing editorial control over the journal's future direction on to Gabriela Méndez Cota and Rafico Ruiz, two early career theorists who are located in Mexico and Canada respectively. And I would no more consider telling the editors of *Media Theory* what to do with their journal than I would Gabriela and Rafico with *Culture Machine*.)

Still, I wanted to take the opportunity to offer those involved in launching this new open access theory journal my continuing support. So if a manifesto can be understood as a public declaration of the views, motives or intentions of the issuer, I thought I would take the risk of replying to their invitation by briefly making obvious the theory that lies behind the development of *Culture Machine* and some of the other projects with which I'm involved (and of course my question to the panel at the 'What Does the Anthropocene Mean?' event). I would then leave it to them to decide how much, if anything, of this was relevant as far as their intentions for *Media Theory* were concerned.

So what follows is an attempt on my part to put my money where my mouth is, as it were, by articulating some of the ways myself and many of those with whom I collaborate (including Joanna Zylinska) are trying to change how *we* act, work *and* think.

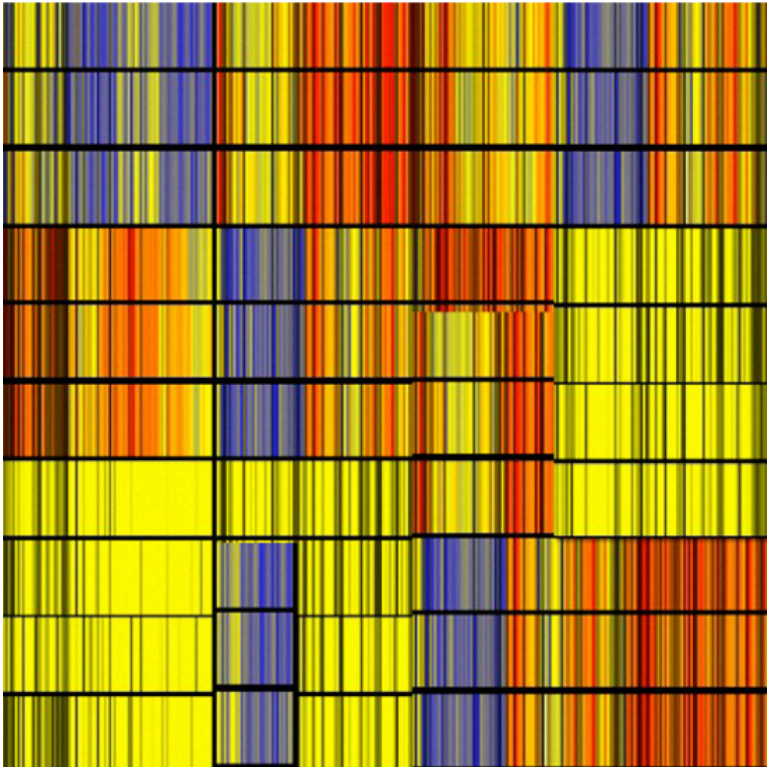
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Dirk Dallas, *Light Painting with a Drone 1*, 2014.⁷



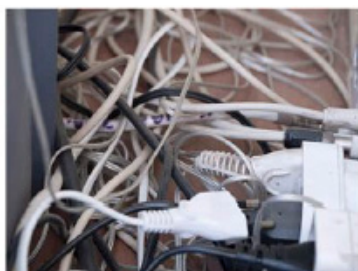
Walter Van Der Mäntzche, *Des perturbations sont à prévoir / Disturbances are expected*, 2013.⁸



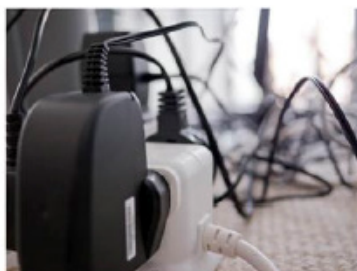
Veronique Blanc and Qin Wang,
*Manipulated Image of DNA Chip Analysis, 2002.*⁹



Shahrokh Dabiri, *White Rose_Anaglyph 3D*, 2011.¹⁰



Panasonic Quinrix SR TV
Philips Cinema Center Speaker CS710
Philips Super Audio CD and Digital A/V Surround Receiver
Technics AV Control Stereo Receiver SA-EX100
Technics Stereo Cassette Deck RS-TR474
Technics Compact Disc Player SL-PG480A
Philips CD Sound Machine AZ1832B
Micromod UHF Audio/Video Modulator
Samsung Digital TV Tuner DSB-S305G



Toshiba 32WLT5B LCD Colour TV
Aiwa FX2900 Video Cassette Recorder
Philips DVP5960 DVD Player
Virgin Media Cisco Systems 1TB TiVo box
Virgin Media Super Hub VMDG480
Sennheiser HDR120 Wireless Headphones with Battery Charging Stand

Joanna Zylinska, *The Vanishing Object of Technology*, 2012.¹¹

The Inhumanist Manifesto

Putting my theory of media in the language of a manifesto, I believe in:

1. WORKING COLLABORATIVELY AND COLLECTIVELY. I collaborate with a number of different groups and organizations, some of which go under the names of *Culture Machine*, Open Humanities Press (the open access publisher founded in 2006), and the Radical Open Access Collective (which emerged out of the Radical Open Access conference held in 2015).¹²

2. OPERATING ACCORDING TO A NON-PROFIT PHILOSOPHY. For example, Open Humanities Press (OHP) is a Community Interest Company that makes leading works of contemporary critical theory available worldwide on a free (*gratis*) open access basis, and many of them on a reuse (*libre*) basis too. Launched publicly in 2008, the OHP community currently consists of nineteen journals and to date has published over thirty 'traditional' open access (OA) books. Meanwhile, the Radical Open Access Collective represents an *alternative* OA ecosystem of which Open Humanities Press is a part. A community of not-for-profit presses, journals and other projects, the Radical OA Collective seeks to build a politically progressive future for open access based on experimenting with non-profit and scholar-led approaches to publishing.¹³

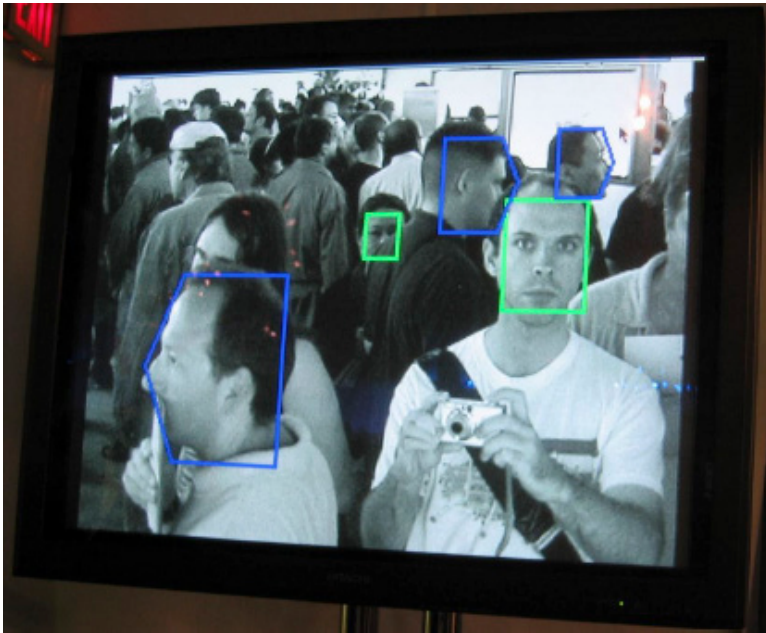
3. ACTING IN A NON-RIVALROUS FASHION to explore new models for the economy, property and ownership. This involves

Open Humanities Press sharing its expertise and publications with other open access publishers and journals (such as *Media Theory*). But these new models also include the collective use of knowledge and materials associated with online file sharing networks, shadow libraries and so-called internet piracy.

4. **ADOPTING A HYPER-POLITICAL APPROACH**, not least to open access, free and open source software, open data, open science and open education.

5. **GIFTING LABOUR** as a means of developing notions of community, the common and of commoning that break with the conditions supporting the unified, sovereign, proprietorial humanist subject.

6. **GENERATING PROJECTS** that are concerned not only with representing or critiquing the world, but also with intra-acting with it in order to make (other) things happen.



Peter Merholz, *Self-portrait Through Surveillance Technology*, 2004.¹⁴

One of terms I've used to characterize these performative projects is *media gifts*. Along with the already-mentioned *Culture Machine*, Open Humanities Press and Radical Open Access Collective, they include Liquid Books, Liquid Theory TV, Living Books About Life, *Culture Machine Live*, *Photomediations: An Open Book*, and *after.video*.¹⁵

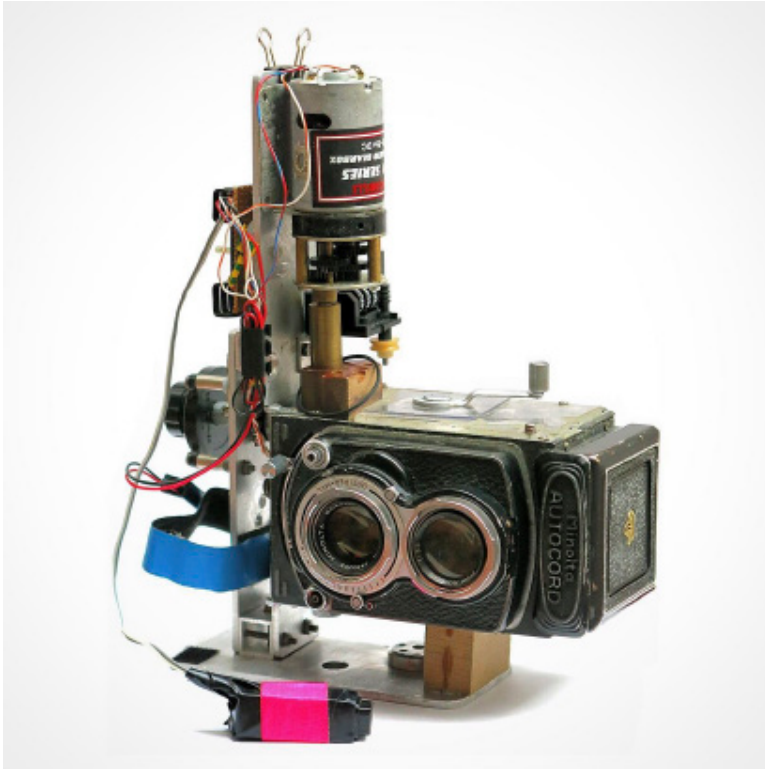
Together, these gifts form a discontinuous network of books, journals, presses, podcasts, videos, websites, collectives and communities that are engaged in organizing and shaping theory and criticism.

Having said that, the projects with which various collaborators and myself are involved are not confined to the world of media theory. Rather they constitute a plurality of forms of intervention that respond to specific issues across a number of different sites: art, activism, education, business, culture, politics, technology, the media. Their shared aim is to disarticulate the existing playing field and foster instead a variety of antagonistic spaces that contribute to the development of counter-institutions and counter-environments. The reason it's important to produce a range of such interventions is because, as Chantal Mouffe puts it, the 'counter-hegemonic struggle is a process involving a multiplicity of ruptures'.¹⁶ What these different performative media projects have in common is that they are characterized by a willingness to open up an unconditional space for thinking about politics and the political beyond the ways in which they have conventionally been conceived. This is what is meant by the 'hyper-political.'

The political here is not merely about the kind of intended consequences and effects that can be articulated in advance. The political is also something that has to be invented and created in relation to specific practices, in particular contingent situations and contexts, by performing the associated decisions, and otherwise doing things that may be unanticipated and

unpredictable—and which are thus *beyond* analysis. There is something artistic and poetic about this invention: it is not just theoretical or philosophical. Hence my interest in poeticity and singularity.

Critical artists and critical artistic practices certainly have a vital role to play in society through opening up spaces where it's possible to subvert existing configurations of power and elaborate alternatives through the construction of new practices and subjectivities. They can thus help make very different social relations possible.



Jonathan Shaw, *Customised Camera*, undated.¹⁷

At the same time, the reinvention of human subjectivity should not be restricted to artistic practices. It is important we reinvent subjectivity in other ways and places too: with forms of practice that are associated more with education, science, business, politics, the economy and the media—not forgetting philosophy, or what those of us in humanities call ‘theory’.

**Theory can’t be just about critical analysis.
As authors we have the responsibility to
construct new practices and new subjecti-
ties too.**

This is why I often describe these media gifts projects as operating at the intersections of art, theory, politics and media.

To this end my current work-in-progress, provisionally titled *Data Commonism vs. ÜberCapitalism*, does not merely offer a critique of the for-profit sharing and gig economy businesses of digital capitalism. It is also part of a performative media project designed to intra-act with other texts and objects in the world in order to help invent a different, more caring future: for the sharing and gig economies; for our towns and cities; but also for post-industrial, post-capitalist society. The aim is to make a counter-hegemonic intervention by re-articulating the situation in a new configuration, thus affirmatively disrupting digital capitalism so that we might begin to replace Uber, Airbnb, Deliveroo et al. with a multi-polar consortium of counter-information and data platforms. Among other things, *Data Commonism vs. ÜberCapitalism* asks: how can we as theorists work collaboratively to invent new ways of organizing platforms, institutions and communities that don’t just repeat the anti-political reductionism and individualistic, liberal democratic humanism that characterize other accounts of community and the commons? (And I would include those associated with platform cooperativism in this.)

What if we were to devise our own collaborative community or information and data commons as a way of creating an actual, affective point of potentiality and transformation with a view to countering übercapitalism and its for-profit sharing and gig economies?

Obviously, an understanding of data is crucial as far as any construction of a data commons is concerned. So to this list of public declarations as to how groups of us are trying to change the way we act, work and live can be added a commitment to:

7. INTERROGATING THOSE FUNDAMENTAL PROPOSITIONS THAT ARE TAKEN FOR GRANTED BY THEORIES OF DATA, THE DIGITAL AND THE COMMONS. The word 'data' has its English origins in the mid-17th century as the plural of the Latin word 'datum'. The latter means a proposition that is assumed, given or taken for granted, upon which a theoretical framework can be constructed or a conclusion drawn as a result of reasoning or calculation.

It is those propositions and datum points that our culture assumes as a given in order to construct theories and draw conclusions about data that we are committed to investigating. They include the 'digital' itself, in many ways now an irrelevant attribute, given that nearly all media involves *becoming with* digital information processing.¹⁸ Other datum points are the human, technology, the printed text, the network and copyright.



Steve Rhodes, *5,377,183 Suns from flickr (partial)* 4/28/09
by Penelope Umbrico at SFMOMA, 2010.¹⁹

For example, who does the measuring when it comes to data and who is this measuring for? Conventionally, it is the human subject. (It is *people* who are the presumed viewers of data visualizations. So these visualizations contain an implicit humanism.) With what is the measuring performed? With technology and tools seen as separate from the human (which is the case even if the data is machine-read). How are the measurements—the data—recorded, published and disseminated? Via print texts and computerized information networks. How is their circulation controlled? It is controlled through copyright.

The etymology of the word data thus raises a significant issue for ideas of an information and data commons. Datum points that are at risk of being taken for granted in the construction of such a theoretical framework include capitalism, liberalism, humanism, freedom, democracy, community, communism and even the commons itself.

8. ENGAGING WITH THE EXISTING INSTITUTIONS (E.G. LAW, POLITICS, THE PRESS) SO AS TO TRANSFORM THEM. Since they are the institutions to which theorists are most closely tied, in our critical-creative work my colleagues and I focus in partic-

ular on the university, the library and the scholarly publishing industry. In doing so, we interrogate their associated liberal humanist values and practices, based as they are on ideas of the individual proprietorial author, authenticity, the codex print text, and the finished and finishable static object. The intention is not only to question but to transform what it means to create, publish and disseminate knowledge and research. Some of our projects thus concentrate on writing, the book, fixity, and copyright, others on education, teaching, the archive and academic social networks.

My 2016 book *Pirate Philosophy*, for example, draws attention to the *material factors* of intellectual labor. The latter include the work of 'publishers, editors, peer-reviewers, designers, copy-editors, proofreaders, printers, publicists, marketers, distributors, retailers' (as well as that of the 'agency workers, packers, and so-called "ambassadors"' in Amazon's fulfillment centers).²⁰ It also takes in the financial investments made when producing, publishing and distributing knowledge and research, 'the energy and resources used, the plants, minerals, dyes, oils, petroleum distillates, salts, compounds and pigments, the transport, shipping and container costs, the environmental impact, and so forth'.²¹ Meanwhile *Disrupting the Humanities: Towards Post-humanities*, a special video issue of the *Journal of Electronic Publishing* I produced with Janneke Adema, engages critically with the traditional modes of scholarly communication such as the seminar and seminar series, the talk, paper or presentation, and the journal issue, as well as with the individualistic nature of most humanities (and, indeed, posthumanities) research.²²

It is important to engage actively with institutions. Simply abandoning or rejecting them in favor of establishing places *outside* where 'the common' can be achieved risks our work being co-opted by these institutions all the more.

Consider the way the Autonomist Marxist theorists Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri support the aggressive, profit-maximizing capitalist publishing companies Amazon and Penguin Random House.²³ There is little sign of these post-operaist thinkers transforming the accepted common sense rules of the game regarding how theory is produced and exchanged (i.e., as original, rational, linearly written and organized, copyrighted books), so that a new politics of publishing can be articulated based on the ideas of communism and the commons they advocate for other spaces.²⁴



Photo by Floor van de Velde via Josephine Dorado,
Warning: This Body Is Networked, 2007.²⁵

From this point of view, as Pauline van Mourik Broekman, Ted Byfield, Shaun Hides, Simon Worthington and myself argue in *Open Education*:

- There is no outside to the university in any simple sense, this idea of an 'outside' being itself a university (that is, a philosophical) idea, even if it is one that has not always been theorized rigorously.
- Efforts to occupy a place or space that is autonomous from the traditional university (whether physically located outside

the institution or not) too often end up unwittingly trapped inside it, in that they unconsciously repeat many of its structures and problems. In particular, such efforts tend to take insufficient account of the way many of those involved in establishing such supposedly *autonomous* institutions are themselves the products of, and maintain a relationship with, the traditional university: through ongoing links to it as a site of employment and funding, and through a reliance on the research that is produced within it.

- Attacking the public university poses a danger of lending force to neoliberalism's practice of bolstering global corporate institutions while simultaneously undermining nearly all others.
- There is a case to be made for supporting and defending the university as one of the few remaining public spaces where difficult, challenging and avowedly non-commercial ideas can still be developed, explored and disseminated. As recent protests by university students and cleaners in the U.K. and elsewhere attest, it is also one of the places where the imposition of neoliberalism and its emphasis on privatization and the interests of the market is being struggled over and actively resisted.²⁶
- Creating autonomous spaces outside of the established institutions risks leaving the traditional university—along with the scholarly publishing industry and the library—in place and unquestioned.²⁷

9. USING NUMEROUS AND AT TIMES CONFLICTING FIGURES, VOICES, REGISTERS AND SEMIOTIC FUNCTIONS—multiple differential authorial 'I's, as it were—in order to transform my own work processes and produce something different: not only from 'the microentrepreneur of the self' that übercapitalism is making us become; but also from the liberal humanist subjectivity that is the default alternative adopted by even the most radical of theorists.

In *Pirate Philosophy*, by way of response to this dilemma, I adopt the persona or mask of the pirate, someone who for the ancient Greeks and Romans does not belong to a 'community tied... to a clearly delimited territory', but lives a more fluid life, and who tries, tests, teases and troubles as well as attacks.²⁸

Why attack? Didier Eribon articulates it best when, praising Jean-Paul Sartre for having insulted Raymond Aron, he stresses the importance of 'daring to break with the conventions of polite academic "discussion"—which always works in favour of "orthodoxy", and its reliance on "common sense" and what seems "self-evident" in its opposition to heterodoxy and critical thought.'²⁹

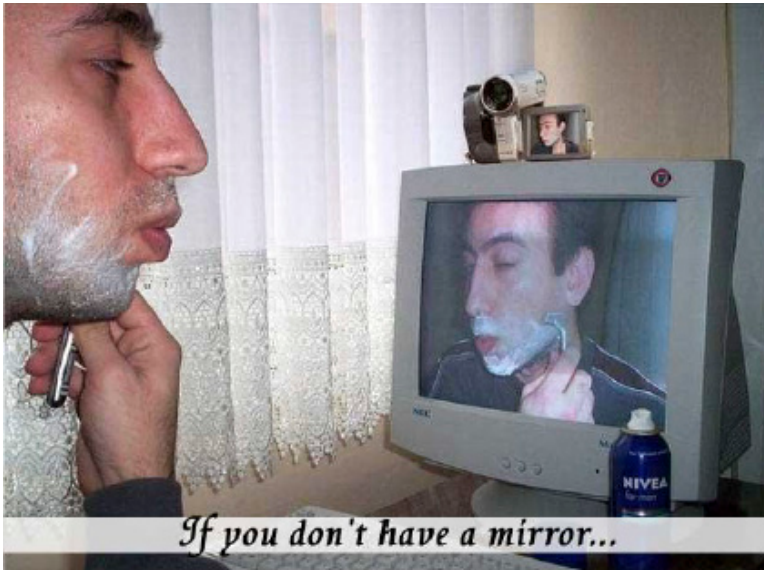
Meanwhile, in *The Uberfication of the University*—which is where the concept of the microentrepreneur of the self is outlined—I articulate my subjectivity more in terms of the experimenter.³⁰ As Jean-François Lyotard makes clear, the latter differs from the intellectual in that they are not endeavoring to speak for a universal subject, be it 'man, humanity, the nation, the people, the proletariat'.³¹ An experimenter does not have a pre-given addressee, whether this is an individual, group or political party that they are trying to communicate with, win over and seduce. (There is therefore no subject or referent for them to address by means of the mode of writing that is the manifesto.) The experimenter is by definition involved in questioning the limits of pre-constituted fields in order to ask, what is art, or writing, or philosophy—or, in my case, *what is theory*, and what is it to be a *critical theorist*?

So I'm not trying to come up with a big, new, masculine philosophical system or ontology of my own; something to rival those of speculative realism, media archaeology or 'the stack', say—which of course is what theorists and philosophers traditionally do. (Object-oriented philosophy, new materialism, accelerationism and so on are all deeply conservative philosophies in this respect.) I am more interested in exploring mul-

multiple different ways of being and doing things as a theorist: i.e. different ways for theorists to organize themselves and their subjectivities. This is why when it comes to articulating my theory of media, I move between a range of concepts and philosophies: new cultural studies, open media, liquid theory, disruptive humanities, posthumanities, pirate philosophy, media gifts ...

Ideas and passages are repeated across my work to promote heterogeneous, non-linear forms of engaging with it.

One further point may help to explain what I've been saying here and especially the way I've been saying it. This concerns the profound implications of such a performative approach for our *styles* of writing. Because I'm not interested in making myself appear more *human* in my work, I provide very little in the way of autobiographical information as a means of peaking people's interest and holding their attention. Next to nothing about my life, background, family, friends, pets, hobbies, holidays, where I live, where I've travelled to, or what's happening with me. I don't endeavor to tell a story or otherwise engage audiences with a first person journey or narrative, complete with plot, characters and suspense. I'm not interested in sharing what it feels like to be me, or in telling people about the conflicts and struggles I've overcome to get where I am, and how that process has *changed* me. Nor do I create 'conversation fodder' or opportunities to form interpersonal relationships with me by using Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter et al. I don't make my work about *people* in the hope it will be shared more on social media and I'll have a greater prospect of being 'liked'. In fact I try to avoid anything that might have the effect of obviously *humanizing* me, such as providing friendly photographs of myself, even though I know 'Instagram photos with faces are 38% more likely to receive likes and 32% more likely to receive comments than photos without faces'.³²



Yang Zhao, *nomirror*, 2005.³³

Since it's clearly leading me to break many of the rules about how to attract and retain a 21st century audience, I realize a lot of this risks coming across as my being willfully difficult and provocative, if not self-defeating in many respects. It's certainly an approach that is likely to be counter-intuitive to many. And all the more so when one considers the value that is attached these days to being inclusive, accessible and instrumentally useful. But if I'm interested in transforming the dominant discourse network and its manufactured 'common sense' about how knowledge is created, published and circulated, then that's a chance I have to take.

Besides, pressure may well be placed on us by both our institutions and government to act as public figures and convey the 'usefulness' of our work and how it impacts on 'real life' through the cultivation of relationships with journalists, the writing of easy-to-follow pieces for the press, appearing on radio and TV, even using blogs and social media to promote our work. Yet research shows that specialist knowledge is often not transferable, generalizable or even broadly applicable.³⁴

I'm quite prepared to produce texts that can be difficult and time-consuming to read and understand.

That said, if we want to avoid falling passive victim to styles of writing that are already established in advance, we need to be careful not to simply substitute one set of rules and restrictions for another: those associated with the production of long-form books of posthumanist theory, say. It's for this reason that the work of my collaborators and myself does not necessarily adhere to predefined ideas concerning what forms a theoretical text can take. In fact it does always appear as *writing*. Depending on the particular situation and context, it might be a piece of software, a work of art, an organization, an institution, even a business. As this manifesto demonstrates, it may also be hybrid, multi-modal, even *post-literary* in form.

Yet for all my emphasis on performativity and hyperpolitics it is crucial that we do not give up on critique. Instead of taking *critique* as yet another datum point, we need ask, along with Michel Foucault and Judith Butler, 'What Is Critique?'. For both Foucault and Butler critique is an art, a practice, a doing that entails 'self-transformation'. To engage in critique is therefore to do something different to what is usually attributed to it: that is, the making of opposing, corrective arguments. To engage in critique is rather 'to risk one's very own formation as a subject'.³⁵

'If we lack the courage to practice the art of critique'—if we neurotically abandon, or enthusiastically advocate, the tradition of critique to which Kant and Adorno are seen as belonging because we associate it merely with identifying contradictions and arriving

at judgements by uncovering the stupidity or ideological biases of others—‘there is a danger of restricting ourselves primarily to the replication of what we already know and are and do’.³⁶

The importance Foucault and Butler attach to critique as an *art* thus brings us back once again to what we have already seen is one of the main datum points in theory and criticism: human subjectivity.

I emphasize the significance of collaboration—rather than the cooperation promoted by, among others, the platform cooperativism movement—for similar reasons. Strictly speaking, there is a crucial difference between *cooperation* and *collaboration*. In cooperation the project is something you help someone with: something they are working on, but which they are ultimately responsible for and that they own and can sell individually. In collaboration a collective owns the project jointly. Even more than that, collaboration disrupts the idea of the single, individual, unified author. As Florian Schneider articulates it: ‘While cooperation happens between identifiable individuals within and between organizations, collaboration expresses a differential relationship that is composed by heterogeneous parts which are defined as singularities: out of the ordinary, in a way that produces a kind of discontinuity and marks a point of unpredictability.’³⁷



Mariano Cecowski, *Cueva de las Manos (Cave of Hands)*, 2005.³⁸

Far from simply positioning my theory in a relation of contrast and opposition to that of *competing* thinkers, I frequently enact it by collaborating critically and creatively *with* the work of other contemporary theorists. They include Rosi Braidotti, Jodi Dean, Stuart Hall, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, Richard Hoggart, Lev Manovich, Angela McRobbie, Chantal Mouffe, Bernard Stiegler and Raymond Williams. It is a manner of doing things that ensures my theory is *not* always the same in every situation and circumstance. Instead it responds in singular ways to specific thinkers and specific issues across a number of different sites.

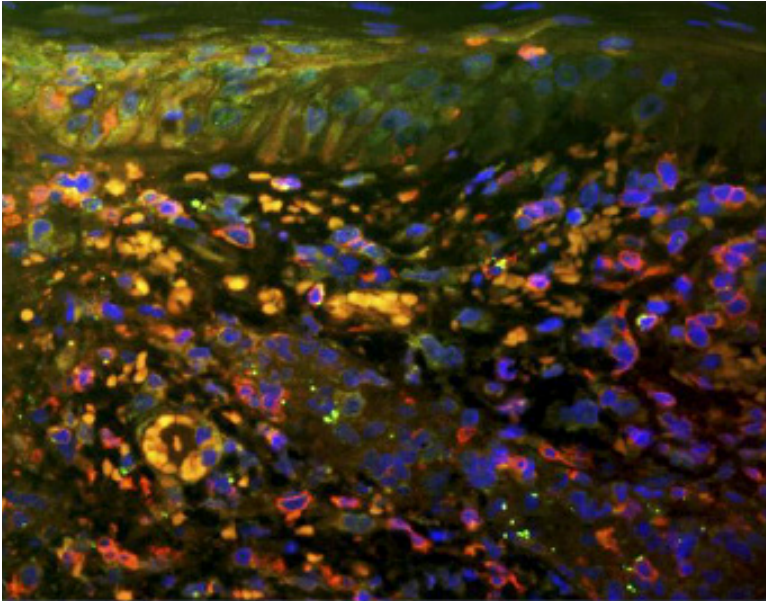
When I write 'I' here, I am not referring to myself in a naive sense, as if I am still operating according to a model of the sovereign,

unified human author as individual creative genius.

The projects I characterize as *media gifts* emerge out of my processual intra-active relations with a multitude of different actors, institutions and communities. To build on the work of Mark Amerika and Alfred North Whitehead, they can best be thought of as stimulating the development of a *novel togetherness* that comprises neither singularities, nor pluralities, nor collectivities.

10. REINVENTING THE HUMANITIES AND POSTHUMANITIES.

To decenter the human according to an understanding of subjectivity that perceives the latter as produced by complex meshworks of other humans and nonhumans requires us to act differently as theorists from the way in which the majority of those associated with the posthuman, the nonhuman and the Anthropocene, act. We need to displace the humanist concepts that underpin our ideas of the author, the book and copyright, together with their accompanying practices of reading, writing, analysis and critique. And we need to do so by performing these concepts and practices differently in the ways in which we live and work as theorists. Otherwise we risk the human subject retaining a privileged place at the heart of our theory, along with an implicit and unexamined humanism.



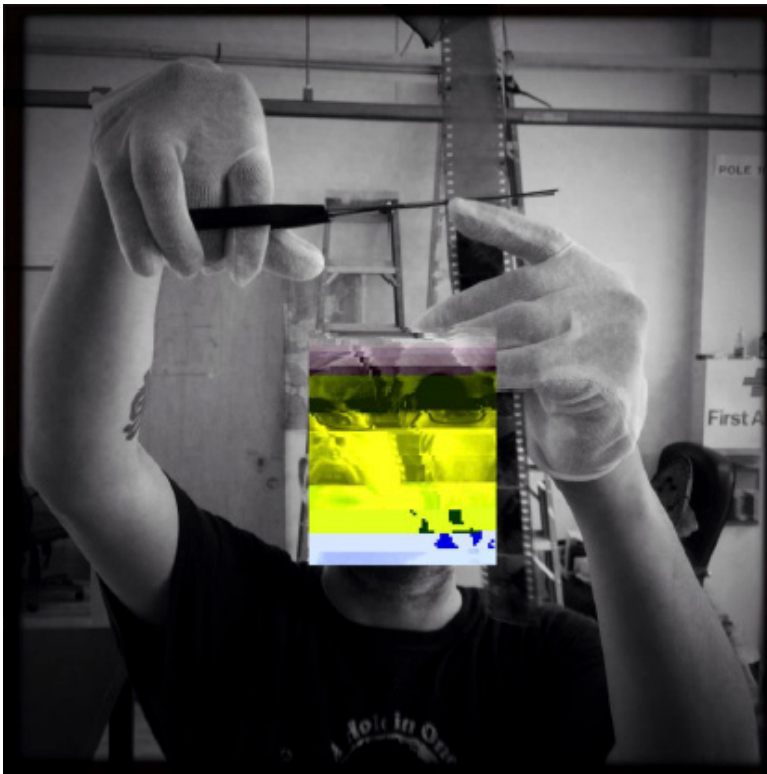
Daniel Paris (University of Oxford),
Immune Cells of the Skin Fighting a Typhus Infection, undated.³⁹

For sure, everything I have written here can be gathered under the sign of the 'posthumanities'. Approaches to the posthumanities, however, have been dominated by the 'posthuman humanities' of Rosi Braidotti, Donna Haraway and Cary Wolfe. My proposal is that the above transformative conception of the human and the humanities may therefore be more productively articulated in terms of the inhuman and the inhumanities. The reason for this is that such a rhetorical and conceptual shift might enable us to better challenge the self-identical, liberal humanist subject that serves as a datum point to so many theories—not just of the humanities, but of the posthuman and posthumanities, too.

The use of the term 'inhuman' also relates to way the human can't simply be opposed to the nonhuman. Put far too quickly and crudely, there is no such thing as the nonhuman—nor the human for that matter. Each is born out of its relation to the other. In this sense, the 'nonhuman' is already in *(the)* human.

If the inhuman equals the human intertwined
with the nonhuman, then the inhumanities
are the humanities, only with this intra-active
inhuman figure at their heart.

In other words, the inhumanities are a way of acting, thinking
and working that—rather than trying to ignore or otherwise
deny it—actually takes *account* of and *assumes* an intra-active
relation *with* the so-called nonhuman.



Doctor Popular, *AntiTagging*, 2014.⁴⁰

Ten Ways To Be Inhuman

Proceeding on the basis that a manifesto works by performatively creating the very subject it purports to address, let me put all this in the form of a ten-point written statement. Consider it a gift.

- Work collaboratively and collectively.
- Operate according to a non-profit philosophy.
- Act in a non-rivalrous, non-competitive fashion to explore new models for property, ownership and the economy.
- Adopt a hyper-political approach.
- Gift labor as a means of developing notions of the community, the common and of commoning that break with the conditions supporting the unified, sovereign, proprietorial subject.
- Generate projects that are concerned, not only with representing or critiquing the world, but also with intra-acting with the world.
- Interrogate those fundamental propositions and datum points that are otherwise taken for granted by philosophy and theory. (The list is a long one. It includes data, the digital, the human, technology, the printed text, the network and copyright. Other propositions that are assumed by theorists when drawing conclusions about the media are capitalism, liberalism, humanism, freedom, democracy, community, communism and the commons.)
- Engage with the existing institutions—especially those to which theorists are most closely tied, such as the university, the library, and the scholarly publishing industry—so as to transform

them.

- Use different personas or masks to experiment with producing multiple authorial 'I's, different to the liberal humanist subjectivity that is the default adopted by even the most radical of theorists.
- Reinvent the humanities and the posthumanities as the inhumanities by adopting ways of being that actually take account of and assume an intra-active relation with the nonhuman.



Officer Valluet, *Aerial Photograph of Vaudesincourt, 1917*.⁴¹

Notes

- ¹ 'Upon the arrival of courier pigeons, all images taken by the camera were turned into postcards.' Source: Public Domain Review. License: Public Domain.
- ² 'The cybernetic motto visualised as a self-referential loop of eye-tracking the eye-tracking. The Source and Outcome are interlinked and controlled in a structural coupling of the process. Part of a series of experiments for Visual Discourses in the Cognitive Research Lab of the University of Potsdam.' Source: Artist's own archive. License: CC BY-SA.
- ³ GV ART, 'What Does the Anthropocene Mean? Art, Ethics and Collaboration for a New Geological Era', November 18, 2014, <https://www.gvart.co.uk/events-1/2017/6/20/what-does-the-anthropocene-mean-tuesday-18-november-2014-630pm-for-a-7pm-start>. A video recording of the event is available at: <https://vimeo.com/112990961>.
- ⁴ 'Hugo Gernsback wears a mockup television visor as an example of future technology he believed would be invented. Gernsback was an inventor, writer, editor, and magazine publisher, best known for publications including the first science fiction magazine *Amazing Stories*.' Source: Flickr. License: CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.
- ⁵ Gary Hall, *Pirate Philosophy: For a Digital Posthumanities* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2016), 57-58.
- ⁶ An earlier, shorter, text-only version of 'The Inhumanist Manifesto' appeared in *Media Theory*, Vol. 1, No.1, 2017, <http://journalcontent.mediatheoryjournal.org/index.php/mt/article/view/29>.
- ⁷ 'Long exposure image of a flying drone with coloured LEDs attached.' Source: Flickr. License: CC BY-NC 2.0.
- ⁸ 'Glitch art: an unexpected result of malfunction as a curious example of contemporary avant-garde art.' Source: Flickr. License: CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.
- ⁹ 'DNA chip analysis comparing the gene expression patterns of normal and cancerous prostate cells.' Source: Europeana / The Wellcome Library. License: CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.
- ¹⁰ 'Three-dimensional depth on a two-dimensional surface. Contemporary plastic surgery makes extensive use of 3D photography.' Source: Flickr. License: CC BY-NC 2.0.
- ¹¹ 'Between 2011-2012 the artist took photographs of tangles of cables and wires in domestic and office settings to capture the supposed transition towards a wireless future.' Source: Author's own archive. License: CC-BY SA.
- ¹² See *Culture Machine* (<http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm>); Open Humanities Press (<http://openhumanitiespress.org>); and the Radical Open Access Collective (<http://radicaloa.disruptivemedia.org.uk>).

¹³ Janneke Adema, 'Radical Open Access Website Officially Launched', *Radical Open Access*, October 23, 2017, <http://radicaloa.disruptivemedia.org.uk/radical-open-access-website-now-live/>.

¹⁴ 'A self-portrait of the photographer mediated through surveillance screens with face recognition detection.' Source: Flickr. License: CC BY-SA 2.0.

¹⁵ See Gary Hall and Clare Birchall, eds, *Liquid Books* (London: Open Humanities Press) <http://liquidbooks.pbwiki.com/>; Gary Hall, Clare Birchall and Pete Woodbridge, *Liquid Theory TV*, <http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/view/354/358>; Gary Hall, Clare Birchall and Joanna Zylinska, eds, *Living Books About Life* (London: Open Humanities Press), <http://www.livingbooksaboutlife.org/>; Janneke Adema, Clare Birchall, Gary Hall and Pete Woodbridge, eds, *Culture Machine Live*, <http://culturemachinepodcasts.podbean.com/>; Kuc et al, *Photomediations: An Open Book*; and Adnan Hadzi, Oliver Lerone Schultz, Pablo De Soto and Laila Shereen Sakr, eds, *after/video* (London: Open Humanities Press, 2016), <http://www.openhumanitiespress.org/books/titles/after-video/>.

¹⁶ Chantal Mouffe, in Íñigo Errejón and Chantal Mouffe, *Podemos: In The Name Of The People* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2016), 40.

¹⁷ "'From his earliest work Shaw has been designing, cannibalizing and building his own customized camera equipment to produce his strange yet somehow accurate images'" (Time/Motion, 2003). Source: Artist's Own Archive. License: CC BY-NC.

¹⁸ For more, see Janneke Adema and Gary Hall, 'Posthumanities: The Dark Side of "The Dark Side of the Digital"', in Janneke Adema and Gary Hall, eds, *Disrupting the Humanities: Towards Posthumanities*, *Journal of Electronic Publishing*, Vol. 9, No.2, Winter, 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/3336451.0019.201>.

¹⁹ 'Began in 2006 and still ongoing, Umbrico's project explores ideas of originality and replication in the culture of online sharing. The artist zooms on a snapshot she finds that features a sunset, cuts out the sun from it, resizes it and adds it to the ever growing grid of burnt out white globes.' Source: Flickr. License: CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

²⁰ Hall, *Pirate Philosophy*, 115.

²¹ Hall, *Pirate Philosophy*, 115.

²² Janneke Adema and Gary Hall, eds, *Disrupting the Humanities: Towards Posthumanities*, *Journal of Electronic Publishing*, Vol. 9, No.2, Winter, 2016, <http://www.journalofelectronicpublishing.org/disrupting-humanities.html>.

²³ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Declaration* (self-published and originally released as an Amazon 'Kindle single' in May 2012), <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Declaration-Michael-Hardt-x/dp/0786752904>; Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War And Democracy In The Age Of Empire* (London: Penguin, 2005).

²⁴ In *Pirate Philosophy* I show how this is the case by referring to Nicholas Mirzoeff's teasing of Hardt and Negri:

for having published their pamphlet on the global social movements of 2011 with Amazon using a 'Copyright ... All rights reserved' license. 'For a project about commoning, wouldn't a copyleft or Creative Commons license be more appropriate?' Mirzoeff asks. 'OK, it's only 99 cents on Amazon but you have to have a Kindle-friendly device: why not just put out a free PDF?'

(Nicholas Mirzoeff, 'On Hardt and Negri's "Declaration"', *Occupy* 2012 (blog), May 9, 2012, <http://www.nicholasmirzoeff.com/O2012/2012/05/09/on-hardt-and-negris-declaration/>; quoted in Hall, *Pirate Philosophy*, 12)

Similarly, in their 2017 book *Assembly*, Hardt and Negri can be seen to be doing with regard to social movements more or less what they criticise platform capitalism for doing with regard to the social relations of their users. Hardt and Negri are extracting intelligence from leaderless movements for social justice such as Occupy and Black Lives Matter, accumulating it privately and then controlling access to it. The latter is achieved by their publishing of *Assembly* with Oxford University Press using an all rights reserved copyright license. OUP then make it available, but only at a cost of £20.

²⁵ 'Temporary tattoo on Josephine Dorado. Design by Josephine Dorado, photo by Floor van de Velde.' Source: Flickr. License: CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

²⁶ 'Victory To LSE Cleaners', *United Workers of the World*, accessed October 23, 2017, <https://www.uvwunion.org.uk/justiceforlsecleaners/>.

²⁷ Pauline van Mourik Broekman, Gary Hall, Ted Byfield, Shaun Hides, Simon Worthington *Open Education: A Study In Disruption* (London: Rowman and Littlefield International, 2014), 7-8, <https://curve.coventry.ac.uk/open/file/c04530ce-d16a-46ca-b359-a905195a76cb/1/Open%20education.pdf>.

²⁸ Daniel Heller-Roazen, *The Enemy of All: Pirates And The Law Of Nations* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2009), 17; quoted in Gary Hall, *Pirate Philosophy*, n.106, 219-220.

²⁹ Didier Eribon, *Returning To Reims* (California: Semiotext(e), 2013), 101.

³⁰ Gary Hall, *The Uberfication Of The University* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), <https://curve.coventry.ac.uk/open/items/4b7671d5-371f-438b-83c7-9275935550f8/1/>.

³¹ Jean-François Lyotard, 'The Tomb Of The Intellectual', in *Jean-François Lyotard: Political Writings* (London: UCL Press, 2003), 3.

³² Saeideh Bakhshi, David A. Shamma and Eric Gilbert, 'Faces Engage Us: Photos With Faces Attract More Likes And Comments On Instagram', CHI '14 Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, Toronto, Ontario, Canada – April 26 - May 01, 2014, 965-974, available at ACM Digital Library, <https://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?doid=2556288.2557403>; and cited in Paige Jarreau and Samantha Yammine,

'Scientist Selfies - Instagramming To Change Public Perceptions Of Scientists' *LSE Impact Blog*, August 21, 2017, <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2017/08/21/scientist-selfies-instagramming-to-change-public-perceptions-of-scientists/>. It is from the latter that I have derived many of these points about how (not) to capture an audience.

³³ Found image. Source: Flickr. License: CC BY 2.0.

³⁴ Carl Hendrick, 'Why Students Should Not Be Taught General Critical-Thinking Skills', *LSE Impact Blog*, January 26, 2017, <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2017/01/26/why-students-should-not-be-taught-general-critical-thinking-skills/>.

³⁵ Judith Butler, 'What Is Critique? An Essay on Foucault's Virtue', *Transversal: European Institute for Progressive Cultural Politics* (May 2001), <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0806/butler/en>; Michel Foucault, 'What Is Critique?' in *The Politics of Truth*, ed. Sylvère Lotringer and Lysa Hochroth (New York: Semiotext(e), 1997).

³⁶ Gary Hall, *Pirate Philosophy*, 20-22.

³⁷ Florian Schneider, 'Collaboration: The Dark Side of the Multitude', *Sarai Reader 06: Turbulence*, eds. Monica Narula, Shuddhabrata Sengupta, Ravi Sundaram, Jeebesh Bagchi, and Geert Lovink (Delhi: The Sarai Programme, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, 2006), <http://fls.kein.org/view/174>.

³⁸ 'The Cueva de las Manos (Cave of the Hands) contains an exceptional assemblage of cave art, executed between 13,000 and 9,500 years ago, which bears witness to the culture of the earliest human societies in South America. It takes its name from the stenciled outlines of human hands in the cave, but there are also many depictions of animals and hunting scenes.' Source: Wikimedia Commons. License: CC BY-SA 3.0.

³⁹ 'Resembling an impressionist painting, this 400x magnification fluorescent micrograph shows an *Orientia tsutsugamushi* infection in skin. The cells have been visualised using double-immunofluorescence staining to demarcate the areas of infection.' Source: Europeana / The Wellcome Library. License: CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

⁴⁰ 'Self-portrait taken using the Anti-Tagging iPhone app that anonymizes photos by auto-detecting faces and glitching them out, thus producing a secure selfie.' Source: Flickr. License: CC BY-SA 2.0.

⁴¹ 'This image of the north-eastern part of France is one of the many aerial photographs of the World War One's Western Front, most probably taken by an officer named Valluet. The whole collection, found in the 1980s, contains aerial photographs taken at heights between 2000 and 4200 meters above sea level as well as postcards and other documents. The photographs are clearly identified and dated. One can see in them trenches, communication channels and specific areas hit by shells.' Source: Europeana / Europeana 1914-1918. License: CC BY-SA.

Mark Amerika, *What Is Techne?*

Lelah Mehran and Christopher Coleman, *W3FI*

Charles Bernstein, *95 Theses*

Joel Katelnikoff, *Johanna Drucker Remixed: "no file is ever self-identical"*

Paul Caplan, *Towards an object-oriented practice-research*

Yael Kanarek, *Kisses, Kisses*

Gary Hall, *The Inhumanist Manifesto*