### AT: Cap K

#### the positionality of programmers is key to determine the future of capitalism

**Crimethinc 13** [“Deserting the Digital Utopia,” Crimethinc, Oct 28, 2013 <http://www.crimethinc.com/texts/ex/digital-utopia.html>]

The Force Quits¶ For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. Integration creates new exclusions; the atomized seek each other. Every new form of control creates another site of rebellion. Policing and security infrastructure have increased exponentially over the past two decades, but this has not produced a more pacified world—on the contrary, the greater the coercion, the more instability and unrest. The project of controlling populations by digitizing their interactions and environments is itself a coping strategy to forestall the upheavals that are bound to follow the economic polarization, social degradation, and ecological devastation wrought by capitalism.¶ The wave of uprisings that has swept the globe since 2010—from Tunisia and Egypt through Spain and Greece to the worldwide Occupy movement, and most recently Turkey and Brazil—has largely been understood as a product of the new digital networks. Yet it is also a reaction against digitization and the disparities it reinforces. News of Occupy encampments spread via the Internet, but those who populated them were there because they were unsatisfied with the merely virtual—or because, being poor or homeless, they had no access to it at all. Before 2011, who could have imagined that the Internet would produce a worldwide movement premised on permanent presence in shared physical space?¶ This is only a foretaste of the backlash that will ensue as more and more of life is fitted to the digital grid. The results are not foreordained, but we can be sure there will be new opportunities for people to come together outside and against the logic of capitalism and state control. As we witness the emergence of digital citizenship and the identity market, let us begin by asking what technologies the digitally excluded non-citizen will need. The tools employed during the fight for Gezi Park in Istanbul in summer 2013 could present a humble starting place. How can we extrapolate from protest mapping to the tools that will be necessary for insurrection and survival, especially where the two become one and the same? Looking to Egypt, we can see the need for tools that could coordinate the sharing of food—or disable the military.¶ Understanding the expansion of the digital as an enclosure of our potential doesn’t mean ceasing to use digital technology. Rather, it means changing the logic with which we approach it. Any positive vision of a digital future will be appropriated to perpetuate and abet the ruling order; the reason to engage on the terrain of the digital is to destabilize the disparities it imposes. Instead of establishing digital projects intended to prefigure the world we wish to see, we can pursue digital practices that disrupt control. Rather than setting out to defend the rights of a new digital class—or to incorporate everyone into such a class via universal citizenship—we can follow the example of the disenfranchised, beginning from contemporary uprisings that radically redistribute power.¶ Understood as a class, programmers occupy the same position today that the bourgeoisie did in 1848, wielding social and economic power disproportionate to their political leverage. In the revolutions of 1848, the bourgeoisie sentenced humanity to two more centuries of misfortune by ultimately siding with law and order against poor workers. Programmers enthralled by the Internet revolution could do even worse today: they could become digital Bolsheviks whose attempt to create a democratic utopia produces the ultimate totalitarianism.¶ On the other hand, if a critical mass of programmers shifts their allegiances to the real struggles of the excluded, the future will be up for grabs once more. But that would mean abolishing the digital as we know it—and with it, themselves as a class. Desert the digital utopia.

#### Capitalism is reaching a tipping point – saturating the entire globe with digital products ensures the constant evaluation, ranking, and disposability of all people – their alt fails without subverting this technological paradigm – the aff’s radical altering of the way technology functions is the only hope for destabilizing the expansion of capitalism

**Crimethinc 13** [“Deserting the Digital Utopia,” Crimethinc, Oct 28, 2013 <http://www.crimethinc.com/texts/ex/digital-utopia.html>]

The ideal capitalist product would derive its value from the ceaseless unpaid labor of the entire human race. We would be dispensable; it would be indispensable. It would integrate all human activity into a single unified terrain, accessible only via additional corporate products, in which sweatshop and marketplace merged. It would accomplish all this under the banner of autonomy and decentralization, perhaps even of “direct democracy.”¶ Surely, were such a product invented, some well-meaning anti-capitalists would proclaim that the kingdom of heaven was nigh—it only remained to subtract capitalism from the equation. The anthem of the lotus-eaters.¶ It would not be the first time dissidents have extrapolated their utopia from the infrastructure of the ruling order. Remember the enthusiasm Karl Marx and Ayn Rand shared for railroads! By contrast, we believe that the technology produced by capitalist competition tends to incarnate and impose its logic; if we wish to escape this order, we should never take its tools for granted. When we use tools, they use us back.¶ Here follows our attempt to identify the ideology built into digital technology and to frame some hypotheses about how to engage with it.¶ The Net Closes¶ In our age, domination is not just imposed by commands issued from rulers to ruled, but by algorithms that systematically produce and constantly recalibrate power differentials. The algorithm is the fundamental mechanism perpetuating today’s hierarchies; it determines the possibilities in advance, while offering an illusion of freedom as choice. The digital reduces the infinite possibilities of life to a lattice of interconnecting algorithms—to choices between zeros and ones. The world is whittled down to representation, and representation expands to fill the world; the irreducible disappears. That which does not compute does not exist. The digital can present a breathtaking array of choices—of possible combinations of ones and zeros—but the terms of each choice are set in advance.¶ A computer is a machine that performs algorithms. The term originally designated a human being who followed orders as rigidly as a machine. Alan Turing, the patriarch of computer science, named the digital computer as a metaphorical extension of the most impersonal form of human labor: “The idea behind digital computers may be explained by saying that these machines are intended to carry out any operations which could be done by a human computer.” In the fifty years since, we have seen this metaphor inverted and inverted again, as human and machine become increasingly indivisible. “The human computer is supposed to be following fixed rules,” Turing continued; “he has no authority to deviate from them in any detail.”¶ Just as timesaving technologies have only made us busier, giving the busywork of number crunching to computers has not freed us from busywork—it has made computing integral to every facet of our lives. In post-Soviet Russia, numbers crunch you.¶ Since the beginning, the object of digital development has been the convergence of human potential and algorithmic control. There are places where this project is already complete. The iPhone “Retina display” is so dense that an unaided human eye cannot tell it is comprised of pixels. There are still gaps between the screens, but they grow smaller by the day.¶ The Net that closes the space between us closes the spaces within us. It encloses commons that previously resisted commodification, commons such as social networks that we can only recognize as such now that they are being mapped for enclosure. As it grows to encompass our whole lives, we have to become small enough to fit into its equations. Total immersion. Information Everywhere, Communication Nowhere¶ The Digital Divides¶ Well-intentioned liberals are concerned that there are entire communities not yet integrated into the global digital network. Hence free laptops for the “developing world,” hundred-dollar tablets for schoolchildren. They can only imagine the one of digital access or the zero of digital exclusion. Given this binary, digital access is preferable—but the binary itself is a product of the process that produces exclusion, not a solution to it.¶ “We were once told that the airplane had ‘abolished frontiers’; actually, it is only since the airplane became a serious weapon that frontiers have become definitely impassable.”¶ –George Orwell,¶ “You and the Atomic Bomb”¶ The project of computerizing the masses recapitulates and extends the unification of humanity under capitalism. No project of integration has ever extended as widely or penetrated as deeply as capitalism, and the digital will soon fill its entire space. “The poor don’t have our products yet!”—that’s the rallying cry of Henry Ford. Amazon.com sells tablets below cost, too, but they acknowledge it as a business investment. Individual workers depreciate without digital access; but being available at a single click, compelled to compete intercontinentally in real time, will not make the total market value of the working class appreciate. Capitalist globalization has already shown this. More mobility for individuals does not ensure more parity across the board.¶ To integrate is not necessarily to equalize: the leash, the rein, and the whip are also connective. Even where it connects, the digital divides.¶ Like capitalism, the digital divides haves from have-nots. But a computer is not what the has-not lacks. The has-not lacks power, which is not apportioned equally by digitization. Rather than a binary of capitalists and proletarians, a universal market is emerging in which each person will be ceaselessly evaluated and ranked. Digital technology can impose power differentials more thoroughly and efficiently than any caste system in history.¶ Already, your ability to engage in social and economic relations of all kinds is determined by the quality of your processor. At the lower end of the economic spectrum, the unemployed person with the smartphone snaps up the cheaper ride on Craigslist (where hitchhiking used to be equal opportunity). At the upper end, the high-frequency trader profits directly on the processing power of his computers (making old-fashioned stockbroking look fair by comparison), as does the Bitcoin miner.¶ It is unthinkable that digital equality could be built on such an uneven terrain. The gap between rich and poor has not closed in the nations at the forefront of digitization. The more widespread digital access becomes, the more we will see social and economic polarization accelerate. Capitalism produces and circulates new innovations faster than any previous system, but alongside them it produces ever-increasing disparities: where equestrians once ruled over pedestrians, stealth bombers now sail over motorists.11. You can use a 3D printer to make a gun, but the NSA can make computer worms that seize control of entire industrial systems. And the problem is not just that capitalism is an unfair competition, but that it imposes this competition on every sphere of life. Digitization makes it possible to incorporate the most intimate aspects of our relations into its logic.¶ The digital divide doesn’t just run between individuals and demographics; it runs through each of us. In an era of precarity, when everyone simultaneously occupies multiple shifting social and economic positions, digital technologies selectively empower us according to the ways we are privileged while concealing the ways we are marginalized. The grad student who owes fifty thousand dollars communicates with other debtors through social media, but they are more likely to share their résumés or rate restaurants than to organize a debt strike.¶ Only when we understand the protagonists of our society as networks rather than freestanding individuals can the gravity of this hit home: digital collectivity is premised on market success, whereas we all experience failure in isolation. In the social networks of the future—which advertisers, credit agencies, employers, landlords, and police will monitor in a single matrix of control—we may only encounter each other insofar as we affirm the market and our value on it.¶ The more widespread digital access becomes, the more we can expect to see social and economic polarization accelerate.

### Anti-Politics

#### American politics is dead – the extreme right controls mainstream discourse and an entirely depoliticized public is allowing the 1% to steer the US toward fascism

**Giroux 11** [Henry A. Giroux, Global TV Network Chair in English and Cultural Studies at McMaster University, 1 June 2011, “Zombie Politics, Democracy, and the Threat of Authoritarianism - Part I”]

In the world of popular culture, zombies seem to be everywhere, as evidenced by the relentless slew of books, movies, video games, and comics. From the haunting Night of the Living Dead to the comic movie Zombieland, the figure of the zombie has captured and touched something unique in the contemporary imagination. But the dark and terrifying image of the zombie with missing body parts, oozing body fluids, and an appetite for fresh, living, human brains does more than feed the mass-marketing machines that prey on the spectacle of the violent, grotesque, and ethically comatose. There is more at work in this wave of fascination with the grotesquely walking hyper-dead than a Hollywood appropriation of the dark recesses and unrestrained urges of the human mind. The zombie phenomenon is now on display nightly on television alongside endless examples of destruction unfolding in real-time. Such a cultural fascination with proliferating images of the living hyper-dead and unrelenting human catastrophes that extend from a global economic meltdown to the earthquake in Haiti to the ecological disaster caused by the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico signals a shift away from the hope that accompanies the living to a politics of cynicism and despair. The macabre double movement between “the dead that walk”[2] and those who are alive but are dying and suffering cannot be understood outside of the casino capitalism that now shapes every aspect of society in its own image. A casino capitalist zombie politics views competition as a form of social combat, celebrates war as an extension of politics, and legitimates a ruthless Social Darwinism in which particular individuals and groups are considered simply redundant, disposable—nothing more than human waste left to stew in their own misfortune—easy prey for the zombies who have a ravenous appetite for chaos and revel in apocalyptic visions filled with destruction, decay, abandoned houses, burned-out cars, gutted landscapes, and trashed gas stations. The twenty-first-century zombies no longer emerge from the grave; they now inhabit the rich environs of Wall Street and roam the halls of the gilded monuments of greed such as Goldman Sachs. As an editorial in The New York Times points out, the new zombies of free-market fundamentalism turned “the financial system into a casino. Like gambling, the transactions mostly just shifted paper money around the globe. Unlike gambling, they packed an enormous capacity for collective and economic destruction—hobbling banks that made bad bets, freezing credit and economic activity. Society—not the bankers—bore the cost.”[3] In this way, the zombie— the immoral, sub-Nietzschean, id-driven “other” who is “hyper-dead” but still alive as an avatar of death and cruelty—provides an apt metaphor for a new kind of authoritarianism that has a grip on contemporary politics in the United States.[4] This is an authoritarianism in which mindless self-gratification becomes the sanctioned norm and public issues collapse into the realm of privatized anger and rage. The rule of the market offers the hyper-dead an opportunity to exercise unprecedented power in American society, reconstructing civic and political culture almost entirely in the service of a politics that fuels the friend/enemy divide, even as democracy becomes the scandal of casino capitalism—its ultimate humiliation. But the new zombies are not only wandering around in the banks, investment houses, and death chambers of high finance, they have an ever-increasing presence in the highest reaches of government and in the forefront of mainstream media. The growing numbers of zombies in the mainstream media have huge financial backing from the corporate elite and represent the new face of the culture of cruelty and hatred in the second Gilded Age. Any mention of the social state, putting limits on casino capitalism, and regulating corporate zombies puts Sarah Palin, Glenn Beck, Rush Limbaugh, and other talking heads into a state of high rage. They disparage any discourse that embraces social justice, social responsibility, and human rights. Appealing to “real” American values such as family, God, and Guns, they are in the forefront of a zombie politics that opposes any legislation or policy designed to lessen human suffering and promote economic and social progress. As Arun Gupta points out, they are insistent in their opposition to “civil rights, school desegregation, women’s rights, labor organizing, the minimum wage, Social Security, LGBT rights, welfare, immigrant rights, public education, reproductive rights, Medicare, [and] Medicaid.”[5] The walking hyper-dead even oppose providing the extension of unemployment benefits to millions of Americans who are out of work, food, and hope. They spectacularize hatred and trade in lies and misinformation. They make populist appeals to the people while legitimating the power of the rich. They appeal to common sense as a way of devaluing a culture of questioning and critical exchange. Unrelenting in their role as archetypes of the hyper-dead, they are misanthropes trading in fear, hatred, and hyper-nationalism. The human suffering produced by the walking hyper-dead can also be seen in the nativist apoplexy resulting in the racist anti-immigration laws passed in Arizona, the attempts to ban ethnic studies in public schools, the rise of the punishing state, the social dumping of millions of people of color into prisons, and the attempts of Tea Party fanatics and politicians who want to “take back America” from President Barack Obama—described in the new lexicon of right-wing political illiteracy as both an alleged socialist and the new Hitler. Newt Gingrich joins Glenn Beck and other members of the elite squad of the hyper-dead in arguing that Obama is just another version of Joseph Stalin. For Gingrich and the rest of the zombie ideologues, any discourse that advocates for social protections, easing human suffering, or imagining a better future is dismissed by being compared to the horrors of the Nazi holocaust. Dystopian discourse and End Times morbidity rule the collective consciousness of this group. The “death panels” envisaged by Sarah Palin are not going to emerge from Obama’s health care reform plan but from the toolkits the zombie politicians and talking heads open up every time they are given the opportunity to speak. The death threats, vandalism, and crowds shouting homophobic slurs at openly gay U.S. House Representative Barney Frank already speak to a fixation with images of death, violence, and war that now grips the country. Sarah Palin’s infamous call to a gathering of her followers to “reload” in opposition to President Obama’s policies—soon followed in a nationally televised press conference with a request for the American people to embrace Arizona’s new xenophobic laws—makes her one of the most prominent of the political zombies. Not only has she made less-than-vague endorsements of violence in many of her public speeches, she has cheerfully embraced the new face of white supremacy in her recent unapologetic endorsement of racial profiling, stating in a widely reported speech that “It’s time for Americans across this great country to stand up and say, ‘We’re all Arizonians now.’”[6] The current descent into racism, ignorance, corruption, and mob idiocy makes clear the degree to which politics has become a sport for zombies rather than engaged and thoughtful citizens.[7] The hyper-dead celebrate talk radio haters such as Rush Limbaugh, whose fanaticism appears to pass without criticism in the mainstream media. Limbaugh echoes the fanatics who whipped up racial hatred in Weimar Germany, the ideological zombies who dissolved the line between reason and distortion-laden propaganda. How else to explain his claim “that environmentalist terrorists might have caused the ecological disaster in the gulf”?[8] The ethically frozen zombies that dominate screen culture believe that only an appeal to self-interest motivates people—a convenient counterpart to a culture of cruelty that rebukes, if not disdains, any appeal to the virtues of a moral and just society. They smile at their audiences while collapsing the distinction between opinions and reasoned arguments. They report on Tea Party rallies while feeding the misplaced ideological frenzy that motivates such gatherings but then refuse to comment on rallies all over the country that do not trade in violence or spectacle. They report uncritically on Islam bashers, such as the radical right-wing radio host Michael Savage, as if his ultra-extremist racist views are a legitimate part of the American mainstream. In the age of zombie politics, there is too little public outrage or informed public anger over the pushing of millions of people out of their homes and jobs, the defunding of schools, and the rising tide of homeless families and destitute communities. Instead of organized, massive protests against casino capitalism, the American public is treated to an endless and arrogant display of wealth, greed, and power. Armies of zombies tune in to gossip-laden entertainment, game, and reality TV shows, transfixed by the empty lure of celebrity culture. The roaming hordes of celebrity zombie intellectuals work hard to fuel a sense of misguided fear and indignation toward democratic politics, the social state, and immigrants—all of which is spewed out in bitter words and comes terribly close to inciting violence. Zombies love death-dealing institutions, which accounts for why they rarely criticize the bloated military budget and the rise of the punishing state and its expanding prison system. They smile with patriotic glee, anxious to further the demands of empire as automated drones kill innocent civilians—conveniently dismissed as collateral damage—and the torture state rolls inexorably along in Afghanistan, Iraq, and in other hidden and unknown sites. The slaughter that inevitably follows catastrophe is not new, but the current politics of death has reached new heights and threatens to transform a weak democracy into a full-fledged authoritarian state. A Turn to the Dark Side of Politics The American media, large segments of the public, and many educators widely believe that authoritarianism is alien to the political landscape of American society. Authoritarianism is generally associated with tyranny and governments that exercise power in violation of the rule of law. A commonly held perception of the American public is that authoritarianism is always elsewhere. It can be found in other allegedly “less developed/civilized countries,” such as contemporary China or Iran, or it belongs to a fixed moment in modern history, often associated with the rise of twentieth-century totalitarianism in its different forms in Germany, Italy, and the Soviet Union under Stalin. Even as the United States became more disposed to modes of tyrannical power under the second Bush administration—demonstrated, for example, by the existence of secret CIA prisons, warrantless spying on Americans, and state-sanctioned kidnaping—mainstream liberals, intellectuals, journalists, and media pundits argued that any suggestion that the United States was becoming an authoritarian society was simply preposterous. For instance, the journalist James Traub repeated the dominant view that whatever problems the United States faced under the Bush administration had nothing to do with a growing authoritarianism or its more extreme form, totalitarianism.[9] On the contrary, according to this position, America was simply beholden to a temporary seizure of power by some extremists, who represented a form of political exceptionalism and an annoying growth on the body politic. In other words, as repugnant as many of Bush’s domestic and foreign policies might have been, they neither threatened nor compromised in any substantial way America’s claim to being a democratic society. Against the notion that the Bush administration had pushed the United States close to the brink of authoritarianism, some pundits have argued that this dark moment in America’s history, while uncharacteristic of a substantive democracy, had to be understood as temporary perversion of American law and democratic ideals that would end when George W. Bush concluded his second term in the White House. In this view, the regime of George W. Bush and its demonstrated contempt for democracy was explained away as the outgrowth of a random act of politics— a corrupt election and the bad-faith act of a conservative court in 2000 or a poorly run election campaign in 2004 by an uncinematic and boring Democratic candidate. According to this narrative, the Bush-Cheney regime exhibited such extreme modes of governance in its embrace of an imperial presidency, its violation of domestic and international laws, and its disdain for human rights and democratic values that it was hard to view such antidemocratic policies as part of a pervasive shift toward a hidden order of authoritarian politics, which historically has existed at the margins of American society. It would be difficult to label such a government other than as shockingly and uniquely extremist, given a political legacy that included the rise of the security and torture state; the creation of legal illegalities in which civil liberties were trampled; the launching of an unjust war in Iraq legitimated through official lies; the passing of legislative policies that drained the federal surplus by giving away more than a trillion dollars in tax cuts to the rich; the enactment of a shameful policy of preemptive war; the endorsement of an inflated military budget at the expense of much-needed social programs; the selling off of as many government functions as possible to corporate interests; the resurrection of an imperial presidency; an incessant attack against unions; support for a muzzled and increasingly corporate-controlled media; the government production of fake news reports to gain consent for regressive policies; the use of an Orwellian vocabulary for disguising monstrous acts such as torture (“enhanced interrogation techniques”); the furtherance of a racist campaign of legal harassment and incarceration of Arabs, Muslims, and immigrants; the advancement of a prison binge through a repressive policy of criminalization; the establishment of an unregulated and ultimately devastating form of casino capitalism; the arrogant celebration and support for the interests and values of big business at the expense of citizens and the common good; and the dismantling of social services and social safety nets as part of a larger campaign of ushering in the corporate state and the reign of finance capital? Authoritarianism With a Friendly Face In the minds of the American public, the dominant media, and the accommodating pundits and intellectuals, there is no sense of how authoritarianism in its soft and hard forms can manifest itself as anything other than horrible images of concentration camps, goose-stepping storm troopers, rigid modes of censorship, and chilling spectacles of extremist government repression and violence. That is, there is little understanding of how new modes of authoritarian ideology, policy, values, and social relations might manifest themselves in degrees and gradations so as to create the conditions for a distinctly undemocratic and increasingly cruel and oppressive social order. As the late Susan Sontag suggested in another context, there is a willful ignorance of how emerging registers of power and governance “dissolve politics into pathology.”[10] It is generally believed that in a constitutional democracy, power is in the hands of the people, and that the long legacy of democratic ideals in America, however imperfect, is enough to prevent democracy from being subverted or lost. And yet the lessons of history provide clear examples of how the emergence of reactionary politics, the increasing power of the military, and the power of big business subverted democracy in Argentina, Chile, Germany, and Italy. In spite of these histories, there is no room in the public imagination to entertain what has become the unthinkable—that such an order in its contemporary form might be more nuanced, less theatrical, more cunning, less concerned with repressive modes of control than with manipulative modes of consent—what one might call a mode of authoritarianism with a distinctly American character. [11] Historical conjunctures produce different forms of authoritarianism, though they all share a hatred for democracy, dissent, and civil liberties. It is too easy to believe in a simplistic binary logic that strictly categorizes a country as either authoritarian or democratic, which leaves no room for entertaining the possibility of a mixture of both systems. American politics today suggests a more updated if not a different form of authoritarianism. In this context, it is worth remembering what Huey Long said in response to the question of whether America could ever become fascist: “Yes, but we will call it anti-fascist.”[12] Long’s reply suggests that fascism is not an ideological apparatus frozen in a particular historical period but a complex and often shifting theoretical and political register for understanding how democracy can be subverted, if not destroyed, from within. This notion of soft or friendly fascism was articulated in 1985 in Bertram Gross’s book Friendly Fascism, in which he argued that if fascism came to the United States it would not embody the same characteristics associated with fascist forms in the historical past. There would be no Nuremberg rallies, doctrines of racial superiority, government-sanctioned book burnings, death camps, genocidal purges, or the abrogation of the U.S. Constitution. In short, fascism would not take the form of an ideological grid from the past simply downloaded onto another country under different historical conditions. Gross believed that fascism was an ongoing danger and had the ability to become relevant under new conditions, taking on familiar forms of thought that resonate with nativist traditions, experiences, and political relations.[13] Similarly, in his Anatomy of Fascism, Robert O. Paxton argued that the texture of American fascism would not mimic traditional European forms but would be rooted in the language, symbols, and culture of everyday life. He writes: “No swastikas in an American fascism, but Stars and Stripes (or Stars and Bars) and Christian crosses. No fascist salute, but mass recitations of the Pledge of Allegiance. These symbols contain no whiff of fascism in themselves, of course, but an American fascism would transform them into obligatory litmus tests for detecting the internal enemy.”[14] It is worth noting that Umberto Eco, in his discussion of “eternal fascism,” also argued that any updated version of fascism would not openly assume the mantle of historical fascism; rather, new forms of authoritarianism would appropriate some of its elements, making it virtually unrecognizable from its traditional forms. Like Gross and Paxton, Eco contended that fascism, if it comes to America, will have a different guise, although it will be no less destructive of democracy. He wrote: Ur-Fascism [Eternal Fascism] is still around us, sometimes in plainclothes. It would be much easier for us if there appeared on the world scene somebody saying, “I want to reopen Auschwitz, I want the Blackshirts to parade again in the Italian squares.” Life is not that simple. Ur-Fascism can come back under the most innocent of disguises. Our duty is to uncover it and to point our finger at any of its new instances—every day, in every part of the world.[15] The renowned political theorist Sheldon Wolin, in Democracy Incorporated, updates these views and argues persuasively that the United States has produced its own unique form of authoritarianism, which he calls “inverted totalitarianism.”[16] Wolin claims that under traditional forms of totalitarianism, there are usually founding texts such as Mein Kampf, rule by a personal demagogue such as Adolf Hitler, political change enacted by a revolutionary movement such as the Bolsheviks, the constitution rewritten or discarded, the political state’s firm control over corporate interests, and an idealized and all-encompassing ideology used to create a unified and totalizing understanding of society. At the same time, the government uses all the power of its cultural and repressive state apparatuses to fashion followers in its own ideological image and collective identity. In the United States, Wolin argues that an emerging authoritarianism appears to take on a very different form.[17] Instead of a charismatic leader, the government is now governed through the anonymous and largely remote hand of corporate power and finance capital. Political sovereignty is largely replaced by economic sovereignty as corporate power takes over the reins of governance. The dire consequence, as David Harvey points out, is that “raw money power wielded by the few undermines all semblances of democratic governance. The pharmaceutical companies, health insurance and hospital lobbies, for example, spent more than $133 million in the first three months of 2009 to make sure they got their way on health care reform in the United States.”[18] The more money influences politics the more corrupt the political culture becomes. Under such circumstances, holding office is largely dependent on having huge amounts of capital at one’s disposal, while laws and policies at all levels of government are mostly fashioned by lobbyists representing big business corporations and commanding financial institutions. Moreover, as the politics of health care reform indicate, such lobbying, as corrupt and unethical as it may be, is not carried out in the open and displayed by insurance and drug companies as a badge of honor—a kind of open testimonial to the disrespect for democratic governance and a celebration of their power. The subversion of democratic governance in the United States by corporate interests is captured succinctly by Chris Hedges in his observation that Corporations have 35,000 lobbyists in Washington and thousands more in state capitals that dole out corporate money to shape and write legislation. They use their political action committees to solicit employees and shareholders for donations to fund pliable candidates. The financial sector, for example, spent more than $5 billion on political campaigns, influenc[e] peddling and lobbying during the past decade, which resulted in sweeping deregulation, the gouging of consumers, our global financial meltdown and the subsequent looting of the U.S. Treasury. The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America spent $26 million last year and drug companies such as Pfizer, Amgen and Eli Lilly kicked in tens of millions more to buy off the two parties. These corporations have made sure our so-called health reform bill will force us to buy their predatory and defective products. The oil and gas industry, the coal industry, defense contractors and telecommunications companies have thwarted the drive for sustainable energy and orchestrated the steady erosion of civil liberties. Politicians do corporate bidding and stage hollow acts of political theater to keep the fiction of the democratic state alive.[19] Rather than being forced to adhere to a particular state ideology, the general public in the United States is largely depoliticized through the influence of corporations over schools, higher education, and other cultural apparatuses. The deadening of public values, civic consciousness, and critical citizenship is also the result of the work of anti-public intellectuals representing right-wing ideological and financial interests,[20] dominant media that are largely center-right, and a market-driven public pedagogy that reduces the obligations of citizenship to the endless consumption and discarding of commodities. In addition, a pedagogy of social and political amnesia works through celebrity culture and its counterpart in corporate-driven news, television, radio, and entertainment to produce a culture of stupidity, censorship, and diversionary spectacles. Depoliticizing Freedom and Agency Agency is now defined by a neoliberal concept of freedom, a notion that is largely organized according to the narrow notions of individual self-interest and limited to the freedom from constraints. Central to this concept is the freedom to pursue one’s self-interests independently of larger social concerns. For individuals in a consumer society, this often means the freedom to shop, own guns, and define rights without regard to the consequences for others or the larger social order. When applied to economic institutions, this notion of freedom often translates into a call for removing government regulation over the market and economic institutions. This notion of a deregulated and privatized freedom is decoupled from the common good and any understanding of individual and social responsibility. It is an unlimited notion of freedom that both refuses to recognize the importance of social costs and social consequences and has no language for an ethic that calls us beyond ourselves, that engages our responsibility to others. Within this discourse of hyper-individualized freedom, individuals are not only “liberated from the constraints imposed by the dense network of social bonds,” but are also “stripped of the protection which had been matter-of-factly offered in the past by that dense network of social bonds.” [21] Freedom exclusively tied to personal and political rights without also enabling access to economic resources becomes morally empty and politically dysfunctional. The much-heralded notion of choice associated with personal and political freedom is hardly assured when individuals lack the economic resources, knowledge, and social supports to make such choices and freedoms operative and meaningful. As Zygmunt Bauman points out, “The right to vote (and so, obliquely and at least in theory, the right to influence the composition of the ruler and the shape of the rules that bind the ruled) could be meaningfully exercised only by those ‘who possess sufficient economic and cultural resources’ to be ‘safe from the voluntary or involuntary servitude that cuts off any possible autonomy of choice (and/or its delegation) at the root....[Choice] stripped of economic resources and political power hardly assure[s] personal freedoms to the dispossessed, who have no claim on the resources without which personal freedom can neither be won nor in practice enjoyed.”[22] Paul Bigioni has argued that this flawed notion of freedom played a central role in the emerging fascist dictatorships of the early twentieth century. He writes: It was the liberals of that era who clamored for unfettered personal and economic freedom, no matter what the cost to society. Such untrammeled freedom is not suitable to civilized humans. It is the freedom of the jungle. In other words, the strong have more of it than the weak. It is a notion of freedom that is inherently violent, because it is enjoyed at the expense of others. Such a notion of freedom legitimizes each and every increase in the wealth and power of those who are already powerful, regardless of the misery that will be suffered by others as a result. The use of the state to limit such “freedom” was denounced by the laissez-faire liberals of the early 20th century. The use of the state to protect such “freedom” was fascism. Just as monopoly is the ruin of the free market, fascism is the ultimate degradation of liberal capitalism.[23] This stripped-down notion of market-based freedom that now dominates American society cancels out any viable notion of individual and social agency. This market-driven notion of freedom emphasizes choice as an economic function defined largely as the right to buy things while at the same time cancelling out any active understanding of freedom and choice as the right to make rational choices concerning the very structure of power and governance in a society. In embracing a passive attitude toward freedom in which power is viewed as a necessary evil, a conservative notion of freedom reduces politics to the empty ritual of voting and is incapable of understanding freedom as a form of collective, productive power that enables “a notion of political agency and freedom that affirms the equal opportunity of all to exercise political power in order to participate in shaping the most important decisions affecting their lives.”[24] This merging of the market-based understanding of freedom as the freedom to consume and the conservative-based view of freedom as a restriction from all constraints refuses to recognize that the conditions for substantive freedom do not lie in personal and political rights alone; on the contrary, real choices and freedom include the individual and collective ability to actively intervene in and shape both the nature of politics and the myriad forces bearing down on everyday life—a notion of freedom that can only be viable when social rights and economic resources are available to individuals. Of course, this notion of freedom and choice is often dismissed either as a vestige of socialism or simply drowned out in a culture that collapses all social considerations and notions of solidarity into the often cruel and swindle-based discourse of instant gratification and individual gain. Under such conditions, democracy is managed through the empty ritual of elections; citizens are largely rendered passive observers as a result of giving undue influence to corporate power in shaping all of the essential elements of political governance and decision making; and manufactured appeals to fear and personal safety legitimate both the suspension of civil liberties and the expanding powers of an imperial presidency and the policing functions of a militaristic state. I believe that the formative culture necessary to create modes of education, thought, dialogue, critique, and critical agency—the necessary conditions of any aspiring democracy—is largely destroyed through the pacification of intellectuals and the elimination of public spheres capable of creating such a culture. Elements of a depoliticizing and commodifying culture become clear in the shameless propaganda produced by the so-called “embedded” journalists, while a corporate-dominated popular culture largely operates through multiple technologies, screen cultures, and video games that trade endlessly in images of violence, spectacles of consumption, and stultifying modes of (il)literacy. Funded by right-wing ideological, corporate, and militaristic interests, an army of anti-public intellectuals groomed in right-wing think tanks and foundations, such as the American Enterprise Institute and Manhattan Institute, dominate the traditional media, police the universities for any vestige of critical thought and dissent, and endlessly spread their message of privatization, deregulation, and commercialization, exercising a powerful influence in the dismantling of all public spheres not dominated by private and commodifying interests. These “experts in legitimation,” to use Antonio Gramsci’s prescient phrase, peddle civic ignorance just as they renounce any vestige of public accountability for big business, giant media conglomerates, and financial mega corporations. How else to explain that nearly twenty percent of the American people believe incorrectly that Obama is a Muslim! Under the new authoritarianism, the corporate state and the punishing state merge as economics drives politics, and repression is increasingly used to contain all those individuals and groups caught in an expanding web of destabilizing inequality and powerlessness that touches everything from the need for basic health care, food, and shelter to the promise of a decent education. As the social state is hollowed out under pressure from free-market advocates, right-wing politicians, and conservative ideologues, the United States has increasingly turned its back on any semblance of social justice, civic responsibility, and democracy itself. This might explain the influential journalist Thomas Friedman’s shameless endorsement of military adventurism in the New York Times article in which he argues that “The hidden hand of the market will never work without a hidden fist—McDonald’s cannot flourish without McDonnell Douglas, the designer of the U.S. Air Force F-15. And the hidden fist that keeps the world safe for Silicon Valley’s technologies to flourish is called the U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps.”[25] Freedom in this discourse is inextricably wedded to state and military violence and is a far cry from any semblance of a claim to democracy.

#### The call for strict, USFG-based switch-side debate for decision-making skills mirrors the technique of the far-right – it occludes mass extinction of life

Kahn 10 (Richard Kahn, Assistant Professor of Educational Foundations and Research at the University of North Dakota, *Critical Pedagogy, Ecoliteracy, & Planetary Crisis: The Ecopedagogy Movement*, 2010, pp. 9-11)

Worse still, though, is that here environmental literacy has not only been co-opted by corporate state forces and morphed into a progressively-styled, touchy-feely method for achieving higher scores on standardized tests like the ACT and SAT, but in an Orwellian turn it has come to stand in actuality for a real illiteracy about the nature of ecological catastrophe, its causes, and possible solutions. As I will argue in this book, our current course for social and environmental disaster (though highly complex and not easily boiled down to a few simple causes or strategies for action) must be traced to the evolution of: an anthropocentric worldview grounded in what the sociologist Patricia Hill Collins (1993) refers to as a matrix of domination (see chapter 1); a global technocapitalist infrastructure that relies upon market-based and functionalist versions of technoliteracy to instantiate and augment its socioeconomic and cultural control (see chapters 2 and 3); an unsustainable, reductionistic, and antidemocratic model of institutional science (see chapter 4); and the wrongful marginalization and repression of pro-ecological resistance through the claim that it represents a “terrorist” force that is counter to the morals of a democratic society rooted in tolerance, educational change, and civic debate (see chapter 5). By contrast, the environmental literacy standards now showcased at places like the Zoo School as “Hallmarks of Quality” (Archie, 2003, p. 11) are those that consciously fail to develop the type of radical and partisan subjectivity in students, that might be capable of deconstructing their socially and environmentally deleterious hyper-individualism or their obviously socialized identities that tend toward state-sanctioned norms of competition, hedonism, consumption, marketization, and forms of quasi-fascistic patriotism. Just as Stapp (1969) theorized environmental literacy as a form of political moderation that could pacify the types of civic upheaval, that occurred during the Civil Rights era, now too during the tendentious political atmosphere that has arisen as the legacy of the George W. Bush presidency, being environmentally literate quite suspiciously means learning how to turn the other cheek and listen to “both sides” of an issue—even when the issue is the unprecedented mass extinction of life taking place on the planet. In a manner that accords more with Fox News than Greenpeace, a leading environmental literacy pamphlet (Archie, 2003) emphasizes that “Teaching and learning about the environment can bring up controversies that must be handled in a fair and balanced manner in the classroom” (p. 11). Later in the document a teacher from Lincoln High School in Wisconsin is highlighted in order to provide expert advice in a similar fashion: “I’d say the most important aspect of teaching about the environment is to look at all aspects involved with an issue or problem. Teach from an unbiased position no matter how strong your ideas are about the topic. Let the kids make decisions for themselves” (p. 12), she implores. This opinion is mirrored by the Environmental Education Division of the Environmental Protection Agency (a federal office, created by the Bush administration, dedicated to furthering environmental literacy), which on its own website underscores as “Basic Information” that “Environmental education does not advocate a particular viewpoint or course of action. Rather, it is claimed that environmental education teaches individuals how to weigh various sides of an issue through critical thinking and it enhances their own problem-solving and decision-making skills.”10 Yet, this definition was authored by an administration trumping for a wider right-wing movement that attempts to use ideas of “fair and balanced” and “critical thinking” to occlude obvious social and ecological injustices, as well as the advantage it gains in either causing or sustaining them. This same logic defending the universal value of nonpartisan debate has been used for well over a decade by the right to prevent significant action on global warming. Despite overwhelming scientific acceptance of its existence and threat, as well as of its primarily anthropogenic cause, those on the right have routinely trotted out their own pseudo-science on global warming and thereby demanded that more research is necessary to help settle a debate on the issue that only they are interested in continuing to facilitate. Likewise, within academic circles themselves, powerful conservatives like David Horowitz have the support of many in government who are seeking to target progressive scholars and viewpoints on university and college campuses as biased evidence of a leftist conspiracy at work in higher education (Nocella, Best & McLaren, Forthcoming). In order to combat such alleged bias, “academic freedom” is asserted as a goal in which “both sides” of academic issues must be represented in classrooms, departments, and educational events. The result of this form of repressive tolerance (see chapter 5) is simply to impede action on matters worth acting on and to gain further ideological space for right-wing, corporate and other conservative-value agendas.11 It is clear, then, that despite the effects and growth of environmental education over the last few decades, it is a field that is ripe for a radical reconstruction of its literacy agenda. Again, while something like environmental education (conceived broadly) should be commended for the role it has played in helping to articulate many of the dangers and pitfalls that modern life now affords, it is also clear that it has thus far inadequately surmised the larger structural challenges now at hand and has thus tended to intervene in a manner far too facile to demand or necessitate a rupture of the status quo. What has thereby resulted is a sort of crisis of environmental education generally and, as a result, the prevailing trends in the field have recently been widely critiqued by a number of theorists and educators who have sought to highlight their limitations.

### Condo Bad

#### The 1nc’s performative multitasking was contrary to their intent—over acceleration of cognitive labor debilitates information processing, overexcites our cognitive systems, and submits the radical potential of underlabor in the name of productivity

Bifo 11. Franco “Bifo” Berardi, Professor of Social History of Communication at the Accademia di Belle Arti of Milan, After the Future, pg. 47

The object of study is the panic-depressive cycle. The message of the Intel corporation, like the whole flux of advertising stimuli, mobilizes a competitive aggression, the violent transgression of rules, the impulsive affirmation of one’s own expressivity. The multitasking staged by Intel is the most powerful factor in the intensification of productivity typical of cognitive labor. But multitasking is also a de-structuring factor in our faculty to process information rationally, and it overexcites our emotional system in a pathological manner. In the new speech of semiocapitalist hyper-neoliberalism the expression “Multiply your freedom” actually means “Multiply your productivity”. It should be no surprise that the exposure to the informational- advertising-productive stimulating flux produces panic-like, neurasthenic effects, and a pathological irritability. But the succession from mobilizing stimulation of nervous energy to violent action is not linear, because if that were the case all workers undergoing an intense nervous exploitation would become murderers, and this is still not happening. The circuit is more complicated than that. The constant mobilization of nervous energies can lead to a depressive reaction: the frustration of our attempts to act and compete leads the subject to withdraw his or her libidinal energy from the social arena. Our frustrated narcissism retreats and the energy just shuts itself off.

### T

#### Resolved is to reduce by mental analysis, Random House 11

**Should is desirability OED 11- Fiat is extra topical and allows for absurd solvency arguments**

(http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/resolve)

Should indicates desirability, OED 11 (http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/should?region=us)

#### We are the USFG

**Raney 10** [Gary Raney – Ada County Sherriff, “ Ada County Sheriff Gary Raney Response to Inquiry regarding Oathkeepers”, October 25th, 2010, <http://wearechangeidaho.org/CategoryArticles.php?id=1>]

First premise: “They” – the federal government – are not a distant body beyond our control. We are a republic and **we are the federal government** by the power of our vote. It is disingenuous for people to talk about the government as something foreign, like an enemy. In my opinion, it is our general apathy as voters that, by an omission of a vote, allow our government to do things we don’t want them to do.

### Framework

#### Education itself is slavery. The basis of how debate decides curriculums must be hacked. None of their ballot as currency arguments presume our alternative—such a framing of the ballot maintains the ruling class’s grip on the SCARCITY of information—the curriculum MUST BE FREE

Wark 04. McKenzie Wark, scholar, activist, hacker based in Australia, A Hacker Manifesto, https://www.academia.edu/182789/A\_Hacker\_Manifesto

Education is slavery. Education enchains the mind and makes it a resource for class power. The nature of the enslavement will reflect the current state of the class struggle for knowledge, within the apparatus of education.

The pastoralist class resists education, other than as indoctrination in obedience. It’s interest in education stops short at the pastors who police the sheeplike morals it would instil in the human flock that tends its grain—and sheep.

When capital requires “hands” to do its dirty work, education merely trains useful hands to tend machines, and docile bodies meant to accept as natural the social order in which they find themselves. When capital requires brains, both to run its increasingly complex operations and to apply themselves to the work of consuming its products, more time spent in the prison house of education is required for admission to the ranks of the paid working class. When capital discovers that many tasks can be performed by casual employees with little training, education splits into a minimal system meant to teach servility to the poorest workers and a competitive system offering the brighter workers a way up the slippery slope to security and consumption. When the ruling class preaches the necessity of an education it invariably means an education in necessity.

[051] The so-called middle class achieve their privileged access to consumption and security through education, in which they are obliged to invest a substantial part of their income, acquiring as their property a degree which represents the sorry fact that “the candidate can tolerate boredom and knows how to follow rules.”\* But most remain workers, even though they grep information rather than pick cotton or bend metal. They work in factories, but are trained to think of them as offices. They take home wages, but are trained to think of it as a salary. They wear a uniform, but are trained to think of it as a suit. The only difference is that education has taught them to give different names to the in- struments of exploitation, and to despise those of their own class who name them differently.

[052]  Education is organised as a prestige market, in which a few scarce qualifications provide entree to the highest paid work, and everything else arranges itself in a pyramid of prestige and price below. Scarcity infects the subject with de- sire for education as a thing, and a thing that confers a magic ability to gain a “salary” with which to acquire still more things. Through the instrument of scarcity and the hierar- chical rationing of education, workers are persuaded to see education much as the ruling class would have them see it— as a privilege.

#### Cyber activism is comparatively MORE IMPORTANT to creating the possibility of peace online than judicial reform

Deibert 2k3(Ronald, “Black Code: Censorship, Surveillance, and the Militarisation of Cyberspace” Millennium - Journal of International Studies 2003 32: 501)

Accompanying electronic surveillance has been the largely undebated militarisation of cyberspace. A great deal of attention has focused on the question of cyberterrorism, particularly in the wake of 9/11 and fears of potential terrorist use of electronic networks.55 While some see the possibility of an ‘electronic Pearl Harbour’ being unleashed by terrorists, skilled individuals and non-state actors, many others believe these fears are largely overdrawn and ignore the redundancies built into the architecture of the Internet as well as the relatively low pay-off for groups whose ultimate aim is violence.56 In spite of the alarm, there are no empirical examples of cyber-terrorism to date, unless the term is used so broadly as to encompass politically motivated hacks on websites and occasional inconveniences caused by denial of service attacks. Rather than tools of mass destruction, threats from terrorist actors employing the Internet appear to bode little more than periodic disruptions to Internet traffic.57 Whatever the ultimate nature of the threat, the debate has largely obscured a potentially more serious development: the quiet expansion and adoption of offensive information warfare capabilities by states. The military use of cyberspace operates on a new terrain, presenting many thorny legal and moral questions concerning the targeting of civilian infrastructures, and the boundaries between an armed assault, a probe, the collection of information, and the dissemination of propaganda.58 Theory has definitely trailed behind practice in this case.59 As in most areas of military capabilities, the United States leads the cyber arms race. The development of cyber-war tools can be seen as a natural evolution of the so-called Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), the latter defined as a major change in the nature of warfare brought about by the innovative use of new technologies and organisational structures related to them; from advanced computing and communications technologies to remote sensors.60 Going back further, its roots can be found in the use of propaganda and psychological warfare techniques and electronic jamming that date to the Second World War: electromagnetic pulse bombs (EMPs), and the insertion of malicious codes and secret back doors in software for intelligence purposes during the Cold War. While much of these techniques were kept clandestine, the United States has recently acknowledged that offensive cyber-war is an official element of strategic doctrine.61 The United States’ military now openly employs computer hackers, develops advanced Trojan horses, viruses, and worms, and has used techniques of cyber-propaganda and other sophisticated ‘psychological operations’ leading up the conflict in Iraq.62 It is not alone. Dozens of countries around the world have either debated or adopted offensive cyber-war capabilities, including China, Russia, Taiwan, Israel, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada. The number of documented state cyber-war has risen in recent years as well. In spite of the greater penetration of these technologies in advanced industrialised countries, many of the more prominent examples of information warfare have occurred in the developing world.63 It is, of course, well known that radio networks were employed by Tutsi militia to incite genocidal violence against Hutus in Rwanda. Later, the Rwandan military regularly eavesdropped on insecure United Nations and humanitarian NGOs’ communications networks, and in at least one case used the intelligence to hunt down and kill Hutu refugees.64 During the Russian campaign against Chechnya in the mid-1990s, Chechen commanders made efficient use of mobile phone networks and eavesdropped on insecure Russian radio networks to organise devastatingly successful military strikes. In 2000, an ‘inter-fada’ erupted between Israeli and Lebanese hackers as each bombarded the other’s networks in distributed denial of service attacks. In the 2002 reoccupation of Palestine by the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF), the IDF systematically targeted the communications and information infrastructure of the Palestinian Authority and other civil society groups in tactics ranging from removing hard drives to disabling telephone switchboards.65 What are the concerns for global civic networks of the militarisation of cyberspace? In some respects, the threats may be exaggerated. Just as networked redundancies and distributed security practices constrain the potential ramifications of cyber-terrorism, there may be natural limits to the type of havoc states can wreak on the global communications infrastructure. There are also rational, as well as technological, constraints. Much like the deterrent effect of nuclear weapons, states that are home to private corporations with assets spread transnationally throughout the world face strong financial incentives to preserve the security and seamless functioning of global communications networks that are the sinews of hyper-capitalism. These constraints should not be overdrawn, however. Rational choice models of costs and benefits do not always translate neatly into the equations drawn for the use of force internationally. And even targeted attacks on infrastructures can cause enormous disruptions to the flows of information worldwide, as several recent worms and viruses have demonstrated. More broadly for global democratic governance, however, is a theoretical question about the proper constitutive relationship between military and civilian spheres in liberal democratic polities; particularly as these bear on questions concerning the design of the public sphere. The Internet is much more than a simple appendage to other sectors of world politics — it is the forum or commons within which civic communications will take place. Preserving this commons from militarisation **is** as essential to global democratic governance **as is** the judicial restraint on force **in domestic political spheres**. Given the race by states to develop offensive information warfare capabilities, and its potentially destructive and unforeseeable consequences, has the time come for a kind of cyberspace ‘arms control’? If so, what might that look like and how might it emerge?66 Though not described in terms of arms control per se, the following section offers a survey of the prospects.

#### Absent recognizing the importance of the figure of the hacker, their policy is doomed to failure—this evidence is from a policy expert

Rosenzweig, 12 [ Copyright (c) 2012 I/S: A Journal of Law & Policy for the Information Society I/S: A Journal of Law and Policy for the Information Society Fall, 2012 I/S: A Journal of Law and Policy for the Information Society 8 ISJLP 393 LENGTH: 7722 words NAME: Paul \* BIO: \* Principal, Red Branch Consulting PLLC; Carnegie Fellow in National Security Journalism, Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University (2011); Professorial Lecturer in Law, George Washington University. The author served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy in the Department of Homeland Security from 2005-09. Portions of this article will appear in the forthcoming book Cyberwarfare: How Conflicts in Cyberspace are Challenging American and Changing the World (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2012, p. lexis]

IV. Conclusion If the question about cyberspace is: "What is our policy making apparatus most likely to misunderstand or get wrong?" the answer, I fear, is quite a lot. Not because policy makers in Washington are ill-meaning, or venal, or even unintelligent. But rather, I fear, because they are confronting a new reality to which they have yet to adapt. The sausage making process of policy development inside sovereign governments is slow and encrusted with hierarchical restrictions. It lacks the pace and capacity to keep up with the ever-changing environment of the Internet. Worse, policy makers continue to think of the Internet as just another tool-sort of like a telephone, but quicker. But the things that "everybody knows" are changing every day. Until we come to grips with the ubiquity and rapidity of the Internet and the fundamental way in which the Internet creates asymmetries that empower the individual to the disadvantage of the nation-state, we won't really build good cyber policy.

#### Don’t be the gatekeeper – there is a difference between having a plan and having a policy and the negative has obfuscated this

Harney and Moten 13. Stefano Harney, Professor of Strategic Management Education at the Lee Kong Chian School of Business, Singapore Management University and a co-founder of the School for Study and Fred Moten, Helen L. Bevington Professor of Modern Poetry at Duke University, “Politics Surrounded,” The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study, pg. 82

Deputies will lead the way toward concrete changes in the face of cri- sis. Be smart, they say. Believe in change. This is what we have been waiting for. Stop criticising and offer solutions. Set up roadblocks and offer workshops. Check ID’s and give advice. Distinguish between the desire to correct and the desire to plan with others. Ruthlessly seek out and fearfully beware militant preservation, in an undercom- mons of means without ends, of love among things. Now’s the time to declare and, in so doing, correctly fashion yourself as the one who is deputised to correct others. Now’s the time, before its night again. Before you start singing another half-illiterate fantasy. Before you re- sound that ongoing amplification of the bottom, the operations on the edge of normal rhythm’s soft center. Before someone says let’s get together and get some land. But we’re not smart. We plan. We plan to stay, to stick and move. We plan to be communist about com- munism, to be unreconstructed about reconstruction, to be absolute about abolition, here, in that other, undercommon place, as that other, undercommon thing, that we preserve by inhabiting. Policy can’t see it, policy can’t read it, but it’s intelligible if you got a plan.

#### Group the dialogue arguments—their attempt to create a sterilized space for dialogical communion effaces the multiplicity of identities within debate—our radical dissent is a form of reinscribing the terms of communication which is a precondition to true deliberative democracy

**Livingston 12**—Assistant prof of Government @ Cornell [**purple=slow**]

(Alexander, “Avoiding Deliberative Democracy? Micropolitics, Manipulation, and the Public Sphere”, Philosophy & Rhetoric, Vol. 45, No. 3 (2012), pp. 269-294, dml)

It is important here to stress what a critical theory of deliberative democracy is not.16 It is not the gentlemanly sport of cool, calm, and dispassionate exchange of impartial reasons. It does not depend on the knockdown force of the better argument in a single-round, one-on-one, face-to-face bout of verbal jousting. It is not the reduction of political debate to a matter of logical demonstration. And it is not a clinical exer- cise wherein citizens are extracted from their concrete political world and placed in an artificially domination-free space of the ideal speech situa- tion or deliberative focus group**.** All of these proposals, not to mention others, have been put forward in one form or another under the banner of deliberative democracy.17 If theories of deliberative democracy were limited to these options, Connolly would be right to charge them with an intel- lectualism that ignores the vagaries of lived political praxis. However, a critical theory of deliberative democracy provides both an alternative to this deliberative intellectualism as well as to Connolly’s democratic deficit. The key to this alternative approach to democracy overlooked by both Connolly and these intellectualist theories of deliberation is the complex institution of the public sphere. The public sphere is the decentered network of voluntary associations and media channels that crisscross civil society. It has no center or hub it radiates out of. Rather it is a rhizome in Deleuze and Guattari’s sense of the term: a multiplicity of lively points and intersections that hang together that lacks organization and is not subject to central control. Philippe Mengue makes just this point about the nature of the public sphere when he criticizes Deleuze and Guattari’s antipathy toward the idea of politics as the expression and contestation of public reasons. The public sphere, as he rightly notes, is precisely the kind of deterritorialized plane where movement and becoming can occur.18 Deliberative democracy is a model of democracy that explains how ideas circulate in such a public sphere; that is, how they bump into other ideas, transform them, and become transformed themselves in turn. Key to a critical theory of deliberative democracy is the claim that the exchange of reasons within this rhizomatic public sphere is what Jürgen Habermas calls “subjectless” (1996, 299). A public sphere is always more than the prudential exchange of reasons between two parties, but it is also always less than a self-reflection of a macrosubject capable of action. Rather, it is a complex mediating institution that allows ideas and reasons to become public—that is, it circulates and distributes reasons and ideas beyond the bounds of local conversations, turning them into resources to be drawn on, tested, and sometimes rejected in more local exercises of reason giving. Crucially, the reasons that do all this circulating in the public sphere must be understood in an expansive sense. At the level of democratic the- ory, no one form of discourse has a monopoly on what counts as a reason. Deliberative democracy recognizes diverse forms of communication as reason giving, including storytelling, rhetoric, and greeting. Each has a place in a deliberative politics insofar as it is capable of drawing a connec- tion between a particular claim or experience and a more general and acces- sible norm (Young 2000, 52–80; Dryzek 2000, 57–80). A public reason is always a reason for doing or avoiding doing something. First-person stories like those W. E. B. Du Bois tells in The Souls of Black Folk are vivid depic- tions of the experience of racial oppression, but they function as reasons to a nonblack audience insofar as they aim to open the eyes of white America to the complacency of its commitments to liberty and equality. A public sphere is a site where these sorts of reasons are articulated and take on broader and richer meanings, as they are received by an indefinite audience of strangers.19 The informal and diffuse network of information that spans from labor meetings to church groups to book clubs to blogs to newspapers to PTA meetings and to dissident groups carries our reasons across multiple testing sites where they are subject to uptake, rejection, or transformation, only to be recirculated again. This public exchange of reasons has the important epistemic function of improving the quality of the reasons we use to justify our interests and decisions, but the more crucial function is its critical one. The articulation and contestation of reasons in the public sphere is a motor for self-reflection. It is this function, the self-critical and self-reflection function of exposure to diverse and impersonal reasons in a public sphere, that deliberative democracy values. While the media-saturated public sphere trades in low-involvement advertising and affective manipulation, it also and more importantly can be a means of provoking us to reflect on our received identities and interests.20 These epistemic and critical functions of the public sphere come together to provide a democratic resource for inciting self- and collective transformation in novel and potentially eman- cipatory ways. Seen as a molecular interplay of constantly flowing, shifting, and transforming reasons and self-understandings that provokes new and creative (but reflective) becomings that help us cope with the challenges of political community, the circulation of ordinary talk in the public sphere is Deleuzian. The public sphere is an example of micropolitics par excellence. Once we introduce this institution of the public sphere into the discus- sion, we avail ourselves of a democratic alternative to Connolly’s politics of “cultural-corporeal infusion.” The task of generating resonance for a leftist politics can be divorced from the idea of manipulating visceral responses in favor of a politics that experiments with how reasons resonate in the public sphere, that is, with how they might function to provoke self-reflection. Reasons resonate when they make some claim on the moral and concep- tual imaginary of their audience. That is to say, their resonance is not a feature of their logical structure but rather of the receptivity of the audience to them. A reason resonates when its audience considers it what William James called a “live” hypothesis, “one which appeals as a real possibility to him to whom it is proposed” (1967, 717). Making reasons resonate, however, is the task of activists and social movements who introduce new concerns to the public sphere and rede- scribe acceptable existing practices as oppressive and harmful. To this end, an egalitarian and inclusive public sphere requires the insurgent work of its voluntary associations in the form of “deliberative enclaves” (Mansbridge 1999) or “counterpublics” (Fraser 1992) where dissidents, interests groups, social movements, and the oppressed experiment with novel discourses and redescriptions of the status quo to introduce into the public sphere’s circu- lation. When these experiments in consciousness-raising are successful, as with the feminist movement’s introduction of “date rape,” the queer move- ment’s turn away from civil unions in favor or “gay marriage” and Stephen Colbert’s introduction of “truthiness” into the American political lexicon, the terms of resonance in the public sphere change. Coining terms like “gay marriage” is not the same thing as institutionalizing it, but it does have the effect of redefining the terms of public debate around a now resonant expe- rience of exclusion that had hitherto been simply invisible or erroneously seen as harmless. To put this in the language of Deleuze, deliberative redescription can function as a war machine. The experimenting with resonating reasons in a public on the part of activists is an exercise in “plugging in” a resonance machine into the public sphere. The transformative power of the resonance machine, understood as an inventive redescription of our received practices, has the power to transform the way citizens see their shared world, their own interests, and the suffering of others. The work of counterpublics is to “smooth” the striated space of public political culture so as to displace old prejudices and allow new identities and claims to flourish.