

CONTROL
AND
QUESTION
/ THINK
OUTSIDE
THE
BUBBLE



01

Manus Nijhoff – GOVT4A
Introduction and Central Research Question

Berlijn, 9 september 2016

PICK YOUR ERA



TEASER

"The Translit reader knows there is a spirituality lacking in the modern world that can only be squeezed out of other, more authentic eras."

– Douglas Coupland

TIME

The term futurism, today, still seems to have largely the same connotations it must have had begin 20th century. It was a fast, brutal, rich movement that sensualized the machinery that man could make. Nowadays 'modern', sci-fi, innovative – 'fast' culture in general – is seen placed along the future axis, as if going fast, being new and scientific brings one closer to the future. See something cool? Future, girl. Of course there is a genuine and important meaning to the word, representing the time to come. But should the future be appointed as much status as it has?

In philosophy and history there is a movement that looks back into the past and looks at history not purely for the historical events that happened, but that took from history lessons that we can use today. Foucault was one philosopher who worked in that way. He looked for instance at the history of punishment and compared with his present day society the things that were happening to form a judgment about

the prison system. In his approach, there was no predetermined idea that the present was the best or the most fair situation. In looking to other eras he could define problems and form opposing views towards the present.

Bruce Sterling gave a speech at the Transmediale in 2010. That edition was titled FUTURITY NOW! Here, he discussed the idea of atemporality. He used the term atemporality to describe an issue philosophy has with history. From an anthropological point of view it can mean the problems we have with the immense new public domain, things like collective knowledge and the loss of a canon and a record. He said this problem is reality, we are living it, and proposed ways to deal with the situation.

TIME-SHIFT

Translit is a literary genre that combines different timeframes and locations. Seemingly disconnected places and times work together in order to form a general narrative. The writer relies on the reader to make his way through time jumps and location-shifts as the book moves on. The name translit was invented in an essay by Douglas Coupland, who praises this approach. He argues even that it's an essential skill. "Genre shifting is as fundamental to working with words as is punctuation and knowing the difference between serifs and sans-serifs."

I like the idea of shifting timeframes / genres. It seems essential to a life lived with, raised by and chock-full of media. We get snippets and flashes of other realities and fantasies than our own. We can be exposed to simulations of other realities with greater and greater detail. The idea of shifting identity seems legitimate as well. Interacting through different channels real-life and sim-life allows us to do that.

In design and art, the idea of atemporality and shifting times offers possible infinite space to play around and investigate.

At the same time, I feel some problems coming up. Clearly, people are strongly rooted in some things. I would say three things are always there for every single human being.

The body. The time. The place.

We can change the body we live in. We can exercise, we can smoke until our lungs are black instead of pink, we can undergo plastic surgery. Surely there are boundaries, but they can be bent to some degree. We can build infrastructure, we can change the nature, we can move to another country. The place we live in we can change. Time moves forward and we go along. We may dream, or imagine other times. And perhaps, in some ethereal-scientific way we can change the time, but I'm talking about 'usual time' here. The time we live in we can't change.

We live daily with the media that play heavily onto the sensual part of the human being, but (first-world) society expects us to be rational and decisive. The contradiction of what we get taught and how media

manipulates us in the opposite direction makes me very curious.

Which problems arise for the atemporal human when confronted with its own media ideals?

Categories:

~~~~~> **Fluid Identity**

~~~~~> **Fluid History**

~~~~~> **Future Work Environments**

~~~~~> **Future Drug Use**

COMMENTS

I would like to see if I could approach this problem with the strategies like looking at history, and speculating towards the future. I also want to split the problem into smaller parts in order to make the thesis easier to approach.

Before this, my central research question was: *Which information strategies are out there and how are they being used as a means to an end?* I feel like this is more of a method than an actual question. The approach of 'use cases' still appeals to me to tackle this problem.

In the past months, I have been reading and seeing very different contexts and sources of information. The things I wrote about them, and drew from them, are unified by me writing them. For now, I have put together a file with a selection of writings. It is not quite a chapter, more a collection.



02  03

Manus Nijhoff – GOVT4A
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Writings

MOST NOTES FROM SUMMER AND ONWARDS

LOUIS THEROUX IN SAN QUENTIN

He walks into the yard with the prisoners. He talks to the inmate who tortured many people. What does it take to do that? (walking into the 'yard') Is it courage? Or more curiosity? He has to be courageous in order to feed his curiosity. He uses the power of the camera. The

authority of the medium. To find out what not many have found. The human aspects of being imprisoned, the things it does to them. The ways people deal with their convictions. And how people keep or maintain, even invent an identity.

NOTES ON DOUGLAS COUPLAND

Future of trash – a temporal double whammy

Ed Ruscha Pink = GODS WITHOUT MEN

The translit reader knows there is a spirituality lacking in the modern world that can only be squeezed out of other, more authentic era's.

"Genre shifting" ↪ as fundamental to working with words as is punctuation and knowing the difference between serifs and sans-serifs

HOW DO YOU EVEN

How do you even make a clear speech these days? How do you talk or write, without a background music, or a background image? Without subtitles? Without shouting? Without elevator-pitching? (Without making a god-damned point)

BARBIER

Iemand vertelde me laatst dat de barbier vroeger aderlatingen deed. De barbier is wat we nu de kapper noemen. Dezelfde persoon die je haar knipt, was dus tegelijkertijd je fysiotherapeut.

Het iconische, draaiende bord voor de kapper is hierom rood. Volgens vertelde iemand me dat het was omdat vroeger, de barbiers het afgenomen bloed in de draaiende cylinder lieten lopen.

Het interessant om de objecten rondom je te begrijpen. Een etymologie van objecten. Objecten zijn niet los te zien van hun oorsprong en huidige context. Het geeft je een idee over wat mensen nodig hebben, hoe ze denken, waar ze van houden.

Uit het geval van de barbiersspiraal valt op te maken dat mensen een erg directe visuele verbinding nodig hebben of misschien hadden. Bloed zien, daar kun je aderlaten. Misschien kun je daarom wel stellen dat zo'n directe representatie in plaats van een abstracte veel indruk maakt. Het beeld van de barbiersspiraal bestaat nog steeds, maar nu uit herhaling en traditie. Ik denk dat het ronddraaien van bloed na een tijd te onhandig werd en dat de barbieren er toen voor gekozen moeten hebben om de rode kleur slechts te verven. In zo'n actie zit de overgang van concreet naar abstract. De cyclus gaat van het origineel naar slechts een representatie van het origineel, of herkenbare abstractie (in de tijd dat mensen nog bij de barbier kwamen om aderen te laten) naar 'abstracte abstractie' op het moment dat barbiers geen aderlatingen meer doen, maar toch het symbool blijven gebruiken.

ULTRA INTERESTING

The new old captivation that sparks real enthusiasm. How are we affected emotionally by media? Which systems in the world are essentially attuned to human needs? ---> can be linked to the piece about the piece: Programmable blockchains in context, where the author explains how humans are always interacting indirectly with databases.

"And so, like, in that point of my life, like. A lot of stuff was like happening like, off screen."

THOUGHTS ON EX MACHINA

'If It ain't broke, don't fix it' , that's what I thought after seeing the movie Ex Machina. It just popped into my head, and only after a couple of minutes did I connect the dots to the movie. It struck me. What would have happened, hadn't the protagonist helped the AI escape from the house? If he would have concluded after his week with the AI that, it works, so I'm going to leave it here and go home. I say it because it is tempting to say she, but she is still a computer. He would have done his job and that would be that. But he fell for the AI. The coldest of deceptions led her out of her glass cage. A little context: Protagonist gets chosen to come to his boss's mansion. Boss is the executive of a massive company comparable to Google and he is in the middle of creating an Artificial Intelligence. The robot shows emotion and can argue, seems to have her own will. She is a humanoid (looks like a human being), though she is mostly shown 'naked' with her stomach area exposed, where the machinery is visible. Protagonist is asked to perform a kind of Turing test to see if the bot is realistic and working. He falls for her, she says she loves him and shows him that she is being abused by her creator, who treats her roughly and doesn't allow her to leave her closed facility. He devises and executes a plan to break her free. When she does, she kills her creator and leaves the facility, in the process locking the protagonist in the cage she was trapped in during her whole existence. In the end we are left with a feeling that is hard to describe. The bot is so humane, we empathize, which is exactly what the protagonist does. The creator however has no empathy for the bot, just wants to improve her for the next generation. He doesn't feel bad about resetting/killing her. Probably because he knows exactly how she is made. The film brings up a question. "When are 'they' (bots, humanoids, cyborgs, AI) going to outsmart us?" Should the Turing test not be if we could beat 'them' in a fight, rather than if we notice that we're interacting with a computer? How are we still worried about 'their' intellect at a point where they are ready to murder us? Isn't that the ultimate proof of a computer's superiority? When an artificial intelligence challenges you to a wrestling match, will it play by the rules? In the end, the story of Ex Machina may not be only about artificial intelligence (yeah I didn't capitalize that!) but also of human clash. The film felt like a proper tragedy. As if the old greeks rose again and made us this movie. It is so sharp, there are so little characters and so much

intrigue. And we are left with an Artificial Femme Fatale, an Artificial Lady of Athens, or a goddess of determination. Everything to raise itself. Or what for? Why is a computer with a brain bothered by the mistreatment of her maker? Just because he treats her badly doesn't mean that he doesn't want to improve her. She knew she would be terminated, so being a smart robot and everything, she must have realized that once she is gone, a better her will replace her. The only explanation for her outburst and her murder that seems obvious would be ego. The robot with an ego, because she will do anything in order to get what she (it?!) wants. The scene right after she leaves the underground facility is wretched. She laughs a little bit. Just a giggle, but a remarkable one. We haven't seen it (/her?) smile like that before. And remarkable because the smile leaves behind the man that built her. Dead. And the man that freed her, left in her position. The creator we see from a human perspective as a brute, a cold hearted one. Which makes us sympathize more with the protagonist, a more vulnerable and 'warm' human being, that acted upon his sentiment. We see him as the good guy. An idea, affirmed by both Ava, the AI and her creator, who calls him a 'good guy' throughout the film. But the AI doesn't feel bad. She smiles, and leaves.

ON ATEMPORALITY

In 'Atemporality for the Creative Artist', Bruce Sterling describes a problem with network culture. He says we are in a state of chaos, a state of constant emergency when it comes to intellectual labor. He uses the term atemporality to describe an issue we have with the immense new public domain, things like collective knowledge and the loss of a canon and a record. he then explains that this problem is reality, we are living it, and proposes ways to deal with the situation.

ON BENJAMIN BRATTON – THE BLACK STACK

Terms dropped: **computation, anthropocene, globalism, politics, geopolitics, sovereignty** (= the right of an agent to execute the highest command without accounting for it), **platform, proxy, gossamer thread** (= the stuff spider thread is made of), **apocrypha** (works that are of unknown authorship or of doubtful authenticity), stack **computing**, Leviathan** (sovereign power), **"horizontal loop geometry", nomos, the computational totality-to-come, immanent** (with immanence, a god is said to be fully physically present in the physical world), **transcendent** (transcendence refers to the aspect of a god's power and nature which is independent of the material universe / opposite of immanent), **displacement, replacement, "flag-brand loyalties", offshore, extractive social contracts, constitutional social contracts.**

Bratton looks at the world through the model of a Stack. A computational Stack. I quote the footnote: "Software (and hardware)

stacks are technical architectures which assign inter-dependent layers to different specific clusters of technologies, and fix specific protocols for how one layer can send information up or down to adjacent layers."

Benjamin's Stack exists of the following layers:

User Interface Adress City Cloud Earth

In the text he explains the User and Cloud layer. Hard nut to crack, this text. Not sure about it.

GOOD INTENTIONS, APOLOGETICS

Once it has a name, it is not scary anymore

Gerard Reve – Zodra het een naam heeft is het bezworen.

Apologetics is the science of explanation. Meta-alert! It's the science of explaining, that's like, the religion of believing. Anyways, it sounds good to me. I explain a lot. Rather, I apologize a lot.

I heard a quote somewhere recently which I don't remember exactly, but it went something like:

"There are good intentions but they don't help anyone / Better to have bad actions than good intentions."

What I mean to expose here is I have the feeling that I have been banking on the idea of good intentions a lot, and I've given this some thought.

Great work did not come from good intentions. (Do I sound like a motivational speaker yet?)

In programming, it is often considered bad practice to prepare variables (pieces of text or numbers) for later use when you can also create them 'on the go.' It can be faster, or easier to understand for others to read. Now I always prepare for things, and often don't finish them. I like to create stuff, I do not like to deal with the results. This is the lazy, uncaring part of me that is also writing this thesis. This part likes to procrastinate and always finds the next interesting thing. And it does make a lot of nice discoveries. And it is in essence the explorer part of me that got me interested in researching. And when you ask this part a question in a tone that he doesn't like, for example; 'hey, do you have the research question somewhere?' *worried tone*, this part says that it might have it, yes, just let me read one more page. This one finds all the good resources but never registers them. But then again, if it did, I would probably be a hoarder.

One more page was always a joke in my family. I would be reading a book in bed before going to sleep and my parents would come to tell me to go to sleep and I would say 'one more page' and keep reading.

After reading that one page, there was me writing myself deeply into shit, with no ways out but two.

The first: More time. "I'm sorry I didn't make it, I had to water my plants and my shoes were untied so I had to tie them while going to a movie which I really needed to see before I could get to it."

The second: Stop and call it finished. Hey, here is what I made so far. Read it? Someone once told me you can always come back on your statements.

I always have had good intentions towards work, but the intentions fail me. The work needs to be done.

When I apologize, I do so to explain myself. I want to do it once, here, to give some explanation as to why I think I explain things. I explain myself to all of the people that I have had good intentions towards.

Dear person that I had good intentions towards,

I hope we got along well. Not sure where you are when you read this, or how you're feeling. I'm sending you this because something has been on my mind.

Do you ever feel like a plastic bag? No, just kidding, that's Katy Perry speaking. Do you ever feel like you ever really finish something? I think I'm predestined to unfinished work. Can you give me some tips, or maybe some sources, reference material? I could write a book about unfinished business! It will never be finished. Hmm...

No, the truth is, I'm stalling. Just like we all do. Life is not a highway, it is not a dance floor, it is a procrastination.

If we worked together well, good. It was good. If we didn't, I apologize. I was probably a bit preoccupied.

Best,

Manus

ON ULTRA TATANE'S T-SHIRT

A great example of communicative strategy done well is the shirt by Kevin Bráy and Lou Bouche for their party at the Graphic Design festival in Chaumont. They made the decision to print on a black T-shirt all names of the people who set their attendance to 'attending' on Facebook. The text was set in two columns, on the sides of a letter which was torn apart with a cartoon claw. The print was made on the backside of the shirt. This had a couple of positive attributions to the shirt. First of all, one can wear the shirt without always having to have people think that you are making a statement. That statement. Secondly, placing the print on the back is a smart stylistic reference to the time of band shirts. The third thing is a reason which also makes the shirt a

desirable possession. Perhaps the placement of print on the backside is a visual clue that this event has passed. Wearing the shirt therefore makes it stating that you were there and it was great (why else don the shirt?). About the print I can say that it was visually strong, a real kick in the face. The placement of the names aligned neatly to the sides, in two supporting columns that seem to hold up strong. What can I say? I like what they did there.

ON MY WRITING STYLE

I guess I have a thing for writing. I love to do it, like singing, or making love. Reading it back, it seems intimate to me. At the same time I'm sometimes writing almost unconsciously, just making the thoughts in my head appear on the screen or the paper, which is a curious thing. There is always a censorship in the process of writing itself. I'm happy when I can write freely. I am not always content with the distractions that come with it. I feel like my writing style is similar to mumbling, a soft kind of speaking. People who mumble speak a lot, but you don't understand what they're saying. This style doesn't allow a coherent story to emerge.

EXCERPT FROM INTERNSHIP REPORT

Later op de avond keken we naar – omgekeerde – kaarten van de wereld. Het is bizar om je te realiseren hoezeer je eigen kijk naar internationale politiek beïnvloed is door het beeld van de wereldkaart. De schaal waarop landen zich tot elkaar verhouden is een erg ongrijpbaar begrip, maar als je een kaart ziet denk je het antwoord te hebben, terwijl het een bepaalde projectie van een essentieel on-plat-voorwerp (de aardbol) op een essentieel plat voorwerp is (de landkaart).

ON THE INTERFACE AND THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY

Als je kijkt naar de hoeveelheid aan mogelijkheden die iedereen je biedt om overzicht te krijgen wordt je gek. Een voorbeeld; Om mijn gedachten vast te leggen, schrijf ik ze op. Of ik typ ze op. En dat in een boekje, en een schriftje, en in Mac Pages, en in Mac Notities, en in Mac mail door met sommige mensen te mailen, en oh, in Google Docs heb ik nog wat staan, ook nog op een bonnetje hier en in mijn telefoon staan ook notities. Ik heb Youtube-afspeellijsten om mijn videoarchief bij te houden en een paar harde schijven waar mijn eigen gefilmde videos op staan. Schetsboeken voor tekeningen en losse mappen in mijn computer met Photoshop bestanden. Is dat nou overzicht? Weten dat er zo veel verschillende gedachtestromen zijn die je bij houdt? Is het nou overzicht, dat ik erken dat mijn gedachten, dromen, tekeningen en andere uitingen in een draaikolk van digitaal-analoge media terechtkomen? Is het gek dat ik geen overzicht heb? In een wereld waar de kunstenaar multidisciplinair geacht wordt te zijn. Ik heb dat feit altijd erg serieus genomen en heb het ook een mooi gegeven gevonden.

Is dat zo omdat ik mezelf erin herken, dat ik het een excuus kan noemen voor mijn ongeorganiseerdheid? – Hier, een nieuw woord, ongeorganiseerdheid – “Ik ben de multidisciplinaire ontwerper, ik kan met alles een trucje doen.”

Of is het zo dat ik het een mooi ideaal vind, en ben ik al die verschillende dingen gaan doen met dat als motivatie? “Ik vind dat ik alles zou moeten kunnen en doe daarom dat, alles.”

Nota Bene, ik doel hier nog wel binnen de kunsten. Het feit dat er andere wetenschappen bestaan ontgaat me niet, maar als er een keus is die ik zonder twijfel gemaakt heb, is het die voor de kunst. (niet gesponsord door #voordekunst)

ON 'GHOST DOG'

In de film Ghost Dog van Jim Jarmusch wordt een Samurai-les geciteerd:

“Decisiveness is important. A true Samurai makes his decision within seven breaths ...”

Ik ben voorstander voor snelle beslissingen, en dat beslissingen gemaakt worden vanuit jezelf. Dat is een mooi onderdeel van mentale vrijheid. Ik sta echter ook voor honderd procent achter dwellen. Wanneer de twee elkaar ontmoeten, zul je zien hoe je zelf in elkaar zit, lijkt me.

ON MY WAYS OF WORKING

Het voornemen is altijd groter dan de realiteit bij mij. Ik plan iets en het komt laat tot bloei. En ik lul er altijd omheen.

ON FAST BOOKS

De naam video komt van het Latijnse woord voor 'ik zie', videre. In een parallel universum, echter, waar het Romeinse Rijk minder invloed heeft, of waar mensen anders nadenken, noemen ze videos fast books.

ON THE SPEECH OF DAVID BENNEWITH AT A DESIGN CONFERENCE IN PRISTINA, KOSOVO

David Bennewith's speech was a good example of the information overload tactic which is also being used in Graphic Design. His use of the word 'like' was so incredible that we didn't hear it anymore. It became part of his identity in such a way that it made him memorable. It must be a risky strategy, though. The amount of people in the audience visibly affected by his speech was apparent. One classmate even counted his likes on her notepad, flashing me the page between likes. Then it comes to the importance of memory. The more memorable one is, is how likely

one is to be recognized. And I suspect that Bennewith's talk has made me remember his face, his appearance, his presentation - and of course his voice - more then I would have, had he spoken normally.

RANDOM QUOTE I FOUND IN MY NOTES

When a man is tempted he is entirely alone

ON SMOKING, A RANT AFTERWARDS

Wat is roken voor mij?

Roken is een ontsnapping aan de verantwoordelijkheid die ik heb voor mijn eigen lichaam, mijn sociale contacten, en wat er verder voor handen is. Eigenlijk is roken een symptoom van een groter ding in het (/ mijn) leven. Het voor de gek houden. Ik word graag voor de gek gehouden en ik houd mezelf en anderen ook voor de gek.

Ik beloof dingen, ik zeg dingen die niet waar zijn. Dus is roken eigenlijk wel logisch. En kunst, zingen, tekenen, ontwerpen zelfs. Daarmee valt de realiteit goed aan te sturen, terwijl je die vervult. En hoe beter het bedrog, des te groter het effect en het succes. Want ik ben niet de enige die om deze reden rookt, drugs neemt of naar comedy kijkt. Al deze 'onnuttige' dingen zijn toch erg invloedrijk.

Met voor de gek houden kun je ook achter meer dingen komen dan normaliter aan het oppervlakte ligt. Het loont godverdomme meer om afgeleid productief te zijn dan geconcentreerd actief. Afgeleid productief, of onbewust productief, is creatieve arbeid.

Of ontwerp altijd creatieve arbeid moet zijn is nog maar de vraag. Is het niet waar, dat bij alle vlakken, vakken en mensen in het leven een creatieve arbeid nodig is om iets te maken? Ik stel voor dat we dat allemaal iets duidelijker maken. Wij als posterboys, avatars, van onze generatie, hebben de kans en goede verantwoordelijkheid om creatie te onthullen en te ontdoen van het mythische en mystieke. Dat loont niet. En de creatie is niet zo ver te zoeken. FIVER is best bekend en daar zijn mensen hun kleine creatieve aandeel aan het leveren vaak zonder opsmuk of onduidelijkheid. Of veel zelfgemaakte hobbyistische websites.

Religie is trouwens een nutteloze bezigheid waarmee mensen proberen het leven onder controle te krijgen en kunst is dat ei ook.

DINGES. DADA heeft zich met nul bezig gehouden. Die toonden ook al aan dat het leven onnavolgbaar kan zijn. ZO een kant van de mensheid zie je verder ook bij de patafysica en in de Spork. En al deze theorieën over de menselijke gedachte.

HEDONISME HEDONISME HEIDEN HEXDEN JE BENT EEN KETTER
EEN ECHTE HEDEN!

ON JACO

Ik was onder de indruk van Jaco Pastorius. Hij was een grensverleggende bassist die dingen op dat instrument deed die nooit eerder gehoord waren. Hij toerde erg veel en heeft altijd, op elke toer, dagelijks kaarten naar zijn dochters thuis gestuurd. Geen enkele dag sloeg hij over. Hoe bar het ook was, hij stuurde zijn kaartje. Dat is levensdrang. Energie, die zo mooi is. Die te prijzen valt. Consistentie, onverzettelijkheid, het is speciaal. Ga eens na hoe simpel het is om een ding niet te doen.

NOTES ON COLLABORATIVE READING / WRITING

The way I set this up is according to the Wikipedia definition of Strategy, which consists of the three parts Diagnose, Guiding Policy and Actions.

Diagnose: You know that I know that you exist. You the reader, me the writer, we the correspondence. Guiding Policy: My words, translated in your brain, should be tried from both sides. Meaning: your word is as valuable as mine, and it should get the same authority in this text. Actions: Therefore, it will be necessary to discuss if it is right what I say, and we should enable discussion by setting up a connection between us, where we edit the text.

The act of correction is not that I make something, and you strike it through and replace it with your words. That is not what I would call a fair game. Instead, wouldn't it be much better if we had a direct resistance from persons, not machines or bots, when we write what we write. Which technologies enable a fair platform for discussion and correction, without becoming the all seeing eye that manipulates? What I'm trying to say is how can a human being maintain control over their own intellect, and have meaningful, educational, fun and young interactions through discussion?

Reddit is based on the idea that the most votes count, and that is a perfectly sound approach that seems to be working. The most interesting, smart, fun, or popular opinions come to the top of the feed, allowing people to join in into the discussion.

Pad.ma is a quite interesting video platform. The footage on there is explicitly unfinished and raw, but as complete with metadata as possible. The project is set up somewhere in India.

ABOUT FUNDAMENTALS

The question is how we are using different information strategies. And by that I mean the different ways of dealing with the knowledge we have; how we distribute and compose with the things that are out there. How do we deal with exorbitant amounts of facts, factoids, stories,

accounts, directions?

Is it possible to be all-inclusive? (in a hotel? yes)

Is it possible to go with instincts? (vague, but yes?)

Is it possible to limit oneself to an audience? (yes)

Mapping the communicative strategies of Graphic Design, the vernacular of information theory, the aesthetic language, the honesty and boldness of it all. The lies, and the negative strategies and patterns that are so overpresent in the world.

What can a person do to choose? It seems to be funest to divide good and bad, happy and sad, and also unrealistic. Who is right, who is wrong. Where from did we learn to be so selective? How unavoidable is it to make assumptions? How easy is it really to choose?

How can we justify following our sensations as life choices?

ON FLUSSER

rembrandt example: the process of interest is not the printing or rendering of the model, it is the creative 'engineering by the human overseeing the process of making. to understand means to manipulate

ON WORK

where We Work how We Work When We Work dystopia: no jobs in Service (automated) no jobs in construction and physical jobs (robotized) no jobs in factories (auto and robotized) nostalgia towards times with lots of factory work food and drink is disconnected from human taste (overly tasteful / purely functional, Soylent on steroids) friendship is based on places of interest. Where you browse defines you. browsing history / browsing future

GELIJK GEDICHT (HET GAT)

Laten we debatteren Ik heb er wat van te leren Want ik kan het nog niet verteren Dat een ander gelijk me zou keren

Ik sta er open voor Maar de ander dringt niet tot me door Als ik weet wat ik weet Geloof Wat ik weet Hoe kan je me dan bereiken

Raar hoe het is met raad en advies Gelijk is er niet en toch Maak ik me hard en hou ik mijn kiezen Stijf op elkaar tot het knarst en de kies Breekt Zonder even te wijken

SMOKE

Na het eten wil ik een sigaret roken. Kut. Ik heb peuken meegenomen

maar geen aansteker. "Om mensen te ontmoeten." Ja, leuk. Maar ik wil dus een peuk opsteken. Ik zit op een kalm terrasje in het welgestelde Mitte en kijk om me heen. Er zit daar een Amerikaans koppel met de ruggen naar me toe waarvan de man rookwolken produceert. Ik loop eropaf. "Hello sir, could I use your light?" Sir reaches. Grabs from khaki pockets. "Be careful", he states. Would I have been careful I wouldn't have smoked in the first place, I think to myself. He presents the lighter. A triple-barrel, lime-colored, wind-proof machine. The cigar stubb wedged in between his lips. I inhale. Thanks. "You betcha"

ON TIME

It's funny with our perception of time. While we seem so much more precise now in predicting and planning time, this can also be a farce. We plan, but immediately fail to fulfill the planned time, so we plan again, or communicate our exact delay to the people we would meet. I would meet Richard at 14:00 at the museum. He messaged me at 13:06 if our meeting could be pushed back to 14:30, 15:00 even. I agreed with that at 13:31, stating I would be there from 14:00 until 16:30 anyways. I arrived at the museum at 14:58 where I had a small talk With a former colleague. At 15:03, I walked into the restaurant to miss Richard there. He texted me exactly then that he would be here at 15:10. Time of writing now is 15:11. Waiting for Richard's call.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ESSENCE OF BEING A DESIGNER

Draag ik als ontwerper bij aan de verheerlijking van technologie? Hoe dragen ontwerpers bij aan de verspreiding van kennis? Hoe brengen ontwerpers een eigen visie binnen het kader van culturele instellingen? Wat is de positie van de alleskunner of generalist in een wereld die globaal verbonden is?

DESCRIBE YOUR WORK

pubescent design
conditions for thought
Visual Courage
experiment, noise and clarity
clarity through noise

Manuel Bürger -> lost in connotation, driven by the fascination of the incomprehensible

A SCENE WITH BOOKS

Hypothetical situation where all the books in the world were like these kiddie books with fat pages made from (light) cardboard or flappy colorful fabric pages. In this universe all existing knowledge is of course still very real and serious. People use books with the same intensity and

regard intellect with the same vigour as we do in our own. Ordering books for a year of college becomes an exercise involving forklifts and containers. We visit a well known scientist in his summerhouse. Together we walk through his book closets, discussing politics, entertainment and of course physics. Occasionally he, she pulls a book off of the shelves.

A QUESTION

How do we unite our personal worlds with the outside world?

No,

How do we identify with the world?

we -> people of the earth, working, surviving, thinking, loving people.

the world -> the media landscape, the constructed human world, infrastructure

In his piece "" Robert Rapoport describes the Remembrancer of London, a man that used to play a truly important economical part in the daily life of London's City – the financial district. The remembrancer today serves a purely ceremonial function, even though this is n't. What's interesting here is how this new system that allows for huge sums of money to be traded illegally, gets compared to the old man

The Office was set up to act as the corporate memory and this is reflected today in his role of advising the City Corporation on constitutional issues

The Unicorn Myth is

Enigmatic work, what purpose does it serve?

Weird work, why is it there?

Mapping the communicative strategies of Graphic Design, the vernacular of information theory, the aesthetic language, the honesty and boldness of it all. The lies, and the negative strategies and patterns that are so overpresent in the world.

Douglas Coupland describes in his essay "essay name", the genre 'translit'.

The translit reader knows there is a spirituality lacking in the modern world that can only be squeezed out of other, more authentic era's.

In the television series Mr. Robot, the sense of human disconnection is all apparent. The people are disillusioned, disappointed and lonely. Creator Sam Esmail explained that the show explores how loneliness looks in today's world.

"Genre shifting" ↪ as fundamental to working with words as is

punctuation and knowing the difference between serifs and sans-serifs

WORDS

Internet, global, user, existence, passion, chaos, hype, serenity, peace, war, language, border, perspective, information, channeling, gathering, preserving, organizing, authority, power, network, ideology, dream, song, stop.

Internet, cable, wire, less, more, secure, proxy, update, downgrade, backwards, open, compatible, operator, agent, list, protocol, format, social, flexible, url, click, mouse, enter, escape, stop.

Global, village, house, news.

WILDING OUT

Creativity in the age of mechanical reproduction. The painter and the thief: A musing on the randomness of existence. Cryptographically readable, manually illegible, what does meaning mean today?

What is artistic importance today? – Where do artists find their inspiration in today's global society? – Which artists are occupied with their own fascinations that have to do with globalization?

POLITICAL SENTIMENT VOCALIZED BY JOHN MAYER

Me and all my friends
We're all misunderstood
They say we stand for nothing and
There's no way we ever could
Now we see everything that's going wrong
With the world and those who lead it
We just feel like we don't have the means
To rise above and beat it

[Chorus]
So we keep waiting
Waiting on the world to change
We keep on waiting
Waiting on the world to change
It's hard to beat the system
When we're standing at a distance
So we keep waiting
Waiting on the world to change

POLITICS

What is political influence today?

What political influence does a regular citizen have?

How do civilians influence the government?

What degree of influence do regular people express and where is it located? – What kind of influence does one person have on the environment? – What influence does a person exert on their family? – What influence do artists and designers have on their society? – Which platforms rule public opinion?

How far does your voice carry your opinion?

PUBLIC CRITIQUE IN THE AGE OF FLUID IDENTITY

What influence has identity on mainstream culture? Where are places that need more attention? Which things are overlooked in the news?

Maybe it is better to talk from my authority as an artist designer.

"Manus Nijhoff is an artist designer. No dashes or slashes. Say it how you think it is true, but this is how he feels about his position. He chooses this double function as an indicator that he uses both art (gut) and design (head) in his approach towards work. Work is a very important part of life. Because work gives occupation, and occupation is means to live. Art is occupation that does not guarantee means to live. But so is design, may it be to a lesser extent. Art and design make great allies for they lay in the other's extension. He uses imagination and appropriation as a catalyst for finding the hidden emotions and motives of the human condition. According to Nijhoff, design should be taken as lightly as it can be taken gravely. For rules are here to be stretched. The same goes for art. Nijhoff: ' My father once told me that if I wanted to become a great artist I never should smile in my videos. I considered my father an authority about art since his occupation is in the arts industry, but I couldn't agree. For art should encourage happiness and play as much as it should encourage graveness and fight, for these elements are all part of human life.' "

HUMAN JOY AND SADNESS IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL EMOTION

I address myself:

Please pepper your writing with many examples of 1) human life, for instance an anecdote about a man dressed as a woman shouting in the street in the hooker neighborhood of Berlin and 2) animal life, which has a great deal to do with the structures we as humans make and which

signal the human hand such as the jellification of the seas and 3) Musings on the ways we create, because that's relatable for everyone who tries to understand the world, for example the power of small words in a computer, and the closeness of the human to that machine, when she only needs to type the beginning of a word to trigger the autocompletion of the command. And 4) The relationships of humans and humans and other beings. For example, a subtle smile from the other side of the tram which can be interpreted as a 'move'.

A QUOTE FROM A MOVIE CALLED *THE PRINCESS BRIDE*

"We are men of action, lies do not become us"

THE DÉRIVE

Psychogeography is a great concept since it's all about the moment and the experience. They walk around in city. They like to get lost. They gather together and talk about their experience. They take it seriously, and enjoy deriving.

Can psychogeography be applied on the internet?



03

04

This used to be a place for sources, but now it has run dry.



04

05

OUT OF TOUCH

the digital existential crisis

TOUCH

Keep in touch, I'm out of touch, I'm out of time, strangely disconnected, you can't touch this,

SCREEN

On-screen, smoke screen, screen grab, screening screen-size, full screen,

TALKING TO WALLS, IGNORING CALLS

touch like a gust of wind, or a heavy fire, touch is the element of my desire.

screen sounds sharp and unforgiving. Screens get sharper by time and charm their way into yours.

The touch screen for me symbolizes digital melancholia, or that state you get into from taking too long to realize the screen is bothering you.

By no means should it be over-romanticized because it can be quite sad, but there is some beauty in it. Just like there can be beauty in a line of reasoning.

COUNTER PROPOSAL

Collecting is not the preferred action in the case of digital melancholia. It will only lead to frustration because the subject matter is a feeling.

Recording is another action that could be undertaken. Maybe the confrontation with hard facts about our own behavior can give us something to push away from. But surely everyone that has a habit knows how hard it is to get rid of one.

Acting out would be something that I could see do something. It should be the climax that comes from this. To release the complex emotions aroused by the (touch) screen and test them with other people.

Consider the *dérive*, which was an act of getting act of getting lost for the purpose of getting lost. Now, in the time of digital existential crisis, we were disillusioned by the wanderings we have online. Bored after the big promise. We expect a lot, but end up chasing the dragon. Where the *derive* IRL is a pastime that makes for unexpected discoveries, surely. Surely human beings are random?! The on-screen version of this – randomly browsing the web – with a little disregard of what the *derive* is supposed to be, a psychogeographical exploration – does not offer the same randomness.

Feeling like I should get to a point here, I propose using the *fata morgana* as fuel on the fire. There is an illusion of order, which we should expose. Like the Situationists, lift up and follow your passions, and use the mega surroundings that are given by

modern modern society,

How do we even call society today? Does modern still fit? Are we at the apex of modernity? Should we call it fogdernity? Should we call it optimization and autocorrectity? The Decades of Political Autocorrectness? No. It does not seem to me that the media live the great power they've been asserted. No, don't mistake me, I mean that even with all of our sophisticated-not-so-sophisticated-because-we-are-still-bleeping-the-fucks-on-television technology there is so much of political stupidity, racism, and hate.

Take yourself out when the screen has been fully saturated. Go past it and over it. Go outside or do something with the new-found feelings you discovered by going into the pit of internet. I guess this would be different for everyone how you would deal with it. There is not one right answer. But this is the method I propose:

Catch yourself in the spiral

Leave, if you want.

Go with it, but be aware of your own feelings.

When a border has been reached (You are panicking, unrest,)

Now, take action.

Coming back on this after a couple of weeks: In his book *Nostalgia for the Absolute*, George Steiner touches on this idea. There is a certain bow of stress, (spanningsboog) that gets stressed under inactivity. Inactivity is the catalyst for action. When a problem is not addressed for a while, it grows worse. It starts to be noticed again when it gets really bad, and this is when people step in and try to fix it. I notice this, personally, in procrastination. A task that is left alone for long enough, grows more painful or powerful, the closer you get to an actual deadline or critical point in development. The spiral of browsing and procrastinating fuels the need to address it. So maybe I am insensitive, when I procrastinate for a long time, because the pain of not doing the task comes usually quite late. But this analogy might be too confusing. In the body, this phenomenon manifests itself in muscles. An unused muscle will gather actual toxic fluids in its fibers, if it is not used for a longer period of time. The pain caused by the toxic stimulates the body to get going, get up and running again.

In the short story *The Machine Stops*, by E.M. Forster, republished in the *Whole Earth Review* edition called *Computers As Poison* after it had been written in 1909, the author describes the feeling I write about closely.

I always want to try things myself, instead of having somebody tell me the steps.

Paradoxically, I am very interested in motivational speakers and self-help gurus, how-to's.

A paradox about free will or willy: Is that my own decision? Then I will see how everybody else has done it before me.

An annoyance that bothers: I have the idea that I could do that better but I did not do it because I was occupied with X, and X was not something I wanted to do.

ART RAGE

Acupunctures, pressure cookers, boiler rooms, singing lobsters.

Are we all just singing lobsters in the boiling pot of GAFAM?

The lobster screams its pain underwater. Though I and you are not sure if the lobster is in actual pain, we are sure that it is dying in miserable circumstances and we also know that it is involuntarily put in this boiling water and we also know that it is for the eater's pleasure.

Which are the sensibilities of the networked human life?

I mean, looking at the social network gives off a very complicated vision of humanity, right? It has pain, joy, suffering, hate, love, cuteness in unusual quantities and intensities. It's absurd, and yet it works. I wonder how you could look at those networks with a disinterested view and take some real meaning, some abstracted ideas from it, that actually makes an interesting read. Cause that's what I would like to achieve. I would like to learn something out of this maniacal and chaotic crazy thing that I've been feeding off of, I've been contributing to, I've felt at home in for a long time.

In a documentary about X, I saw this woman, Patty Smith, who was deeply intrigued by the way people on the street acted in New York City. She notices people that walk around and look at the previews of movies in Macey's shop windows. She has the outsider view, the overview. An overview much more interesting than the one from the top of the sky scraper. A view much more complex as well.

I complex good? Is chaos good? Is enigma good?

"Men seldom moved their bodies; all unrest was concentrated in the soul."

In this story, human civilization has come to live underground. All interactions go through the "Machine".

Troy Hunt, an entrepreneur, most famous for the site Have I Been Pwned? on which you can find out if your data has been disclosed wrongfully, wrote a blog entry about the ways he optimized his life.

"I'm also very aware of when I'm becoming unproductive. For example, when a tweet or a notification distracts me. There's something that triggers and says "Hey, you're going off track, this is keeping you from what's important" and I try to adjust

accordingly. Doesn't always happen of course, but at least I'm conscious of inefficiency."

This man is very aware of his own shortcomings and weaknesses and, while he admits to also letting go sometimes, is in control of the situation. He is the role model of the modern worker. Independent, self-sufficient, optimizing and adjusting his every move along the way. He is the embodiment of performance. The slick, well-running computer, et cetera.

I realized while I was reading the post, that Hunt has an inner drive which is left undiscussed. He is a man that enjoys life. He gets kicks out of his own work. The way he works is enviable, the energy uplifting.

Surely, he is not the only one that works in this way. People that love their job and their life have probably been around forever. His example just reflects the ideals of today's society the most.

It's easy to *not* take subjects as loneliness and subliminal influences seriously. Nothing is easy to take seriously.

But with the situation of screens we have and with the saturation of internet and because of a feeling, I will try to take this seriously.

The concept of "chasing the dragon" applies also here.

The concept of setting goals not setting goals

The idea of ideals not ideals

Disillusion turned into a productivity boost.

Found a way to channel my anger not to embark in.

Frustration / anger turned into creativity.

Catharsis by noise, getting cleaned by all emotions passing through.

I've turned on Self-Control. What is it? It's an app, designed to keep you from visiting certain websites you over-frequent. You can set the sites and the time limit yourself. As any addict, I have tried this and, as all addicts, I have also found a way to turn off the program. It helped that I know a tiny bit how to handle a computer, for someone without any experience it would have been a bit more difficult since it involves some code. However, I am sure that people would find ways to circumvent the Self-Control, as is usual in addicted behavior.

We are humans and unpredictable and subject to passions and we are with machines and algorithms that are predictable (?) not subject to their own passions.

I recently heard a radio show which commented on the way code nowadays gets made. It grows much more biologically, the bigger it gets.

Cyclical time? Yeah, there was a guy who recently wrote an article about the state of politics nowadays. He argues that we can read from history that a new bad time is coming towards us.

In "The coming revolution", Ted Kaczynski outlined what he saw as changes we are going to have to make in order to make society functional, "new values that will free them from the yoke of the present technoindustrial system", including: 1. Rejection of all modern technology – "This is logically necessary, because modern technology is a whole in which all parts are interconnected; you can't get rid of the bad parts without also giving up those parts that seem good." 2. Rejection of civilization itself 3. Rejection of materialism and its replacement with a conception of life that values moderation and self-sufficiency while deprecating the acquisition of property or of status. 4. Love and reverence toward nature or even worship of nature 5. Exaltation of freedom 6. Punishment of those responsible for the present situation. "Scientists, engineers, corporation executives, politicians, and so forth to make the cost of improving technology too great for anyone to try"

From an interview with Chelsea Manning:

Herndon & Dyhurst: How might we, or others, use art to ensure that the things that you and others expose are not in vain?

Read everything. Absorb everything that is out there and act as your own filter. Hunt down your own answers to questions. This is the only advice that is actually worth anything. If you don't read these things yourself, then you can't say that you truly understand what humanity has done, and where we are going. We can't spend our lives getting spoon-fed all of our information every day and then expect to understand our world. Only then will you understand that people are still hurting and dying in the world around us.

This song by Art Department and Seth Troxler takes on the subject of purpose in a very smooth and relatively slow-strolling track. I admire their view, just asking a very personal question!

LIVING THE LIFE – ART DEPARTMENT & SETH TROXLER

Are you living the life you've always wanted to live?

**You've got to do what's right, tryna live the life I know
the times are hard, tryna do what's right now I know the
times get hard, you have to stand the tide It's a sad, sad
world, tryna live the life**

Are you living the lives?
Are you living the lie?

Are you living the life you've always wanted to live?

Do you come home from working at night or in the day
Satisfied, with a sense of accomplishment
Having something meaningful done to your day?

If so, good for you
Keep doing what you're doing

But if you're like a growing number of people in this world
The answer is no.

Are you living the life you've always wanted to live?
Is your life worth the day?

We can go on killing ourselves
Or create a brighter day

Are you living the life you've always wanted to live?
Are you living a life you've always wanted to live?

Do you come home at night or in the morning feeling satisfied
With a sense of accomplishment, of having done something
meaningful to your day

If so, good for you.
Keep doing what you're doing
I'll be sure to read the book if it comes out

But if you're like a growing number of Canadians,
Chances are,
No.

Are you living the life you've always wanted to live?
We can go on killing ourselves

Ki, killing ourselves

Or create a brighter day

Are you living the life you've always wanted to live?

Is your life worth living?
Is your life worth the day?

PEOPLE

Chelsea Manning, Edward Snowden, Julian Assange, Ross Ulbricht (Dread Pirate Roberts), **Troy Hunt, Elon Musk, Holly Herndon, Matthew Dryhurst, Glenn Greenwald, Laura Poitras, Aaron Swartz, Jacob Applebaum, William Binney**

APPS

SelfControl, Keybase, **Saga**, **F.B. Purity**

tweakers NL



05

06

Sensual

Crippling Pleasure



06

07

NOTES FRIDAY 23 SEPTEMBER

It's about time I'd get with the facts. I thought I'd found the Holy Grail of working methods and the solution to distraction. It turned out it was just a Plastic Cup and a fata morgana. I have dragged myself out of distraction more than once today. But it's never totally gone. What once was explained to me by the singer of the band Vulfpeck in their track Guided Smile Meditation were the teachings of an old meditation practitioner. He spoke about the noise, the quiet chatter in the background, the grainy sound that, according to him, is, always there.

To me, there seems to be no life without distraction. So what could be ways of embracing this and moving through the distractions, rather than submerging into the streams. How to ride the waves and which waves to look out for?

The idea of platform labor is new and exciting.

In a skit from John Cleese's training videos called *Why do people work?* he portrays a typical sixties factory worker in the UK. As he stands there in his wife-beater he complains about an occurrence that happened to him that morning. He got approached by a man that asked him questions about job satisfaction. As an answer, he reminds the suit that all he does the entire day is a repetitive task. Push the button, pull the lever, check the reading. After 200 years of industrial innovation, he says, this is what he does. He goes on about motivation. The only motivation is the pay-check, that allows him to do spend money on things he loves. The entire time the camera is panned in on his face and

upper body against a monotone background. All the while talking, he has been pushing the button, pulling the lever and checking the reading, but by the time he has finished his rant, the camera pans out and we realize that the button and lever belong to a slot machine.

I think this is very interesting because the man has the idea that his work is a drag, but he unknowingly lives the same routine in his spare time, which is exactly the same drag his work is supposed to be.

I think this is a phenomenon that still happens. People seem to never really admit to be satisfied by their work but rather define themselves by what they do on their 'free' time.

Employees complain for instance that they spend too much time in front of a computer. When they are free however, the laptops awake from slumber, Facebook is on, Netflix is on, screens are on, emails are written. In short, the screens never mattered in the first place. What is the problem with work then? I wonder. Why do we have so much trouble to find this so called satisfaction from jobs? Do we get paid poorly? Are bosses terrible? Or are the tasks not challenging? Who is happy with their work? Do we need to be satisfied with work or is it always a burden?

Now repetition is one thing I thought about in the context of work and recreational habits. In neuroscience, repetition is known to be essential to learning, but also detrimental to remembering. Doing something for the first time can require a lot of effort. The second time, things go a bit more easily, and times after that, the skill gets better and better until the learning curve diminishes in speed and settles at a level.

I'd like to compare this to a walk in the woods. Walk into a wild bush. You have to make your way through the wilderness so you make a path. You step on branches, you cut away pieces that bother your movement and at the same time you navigate in the direction you're headed. The way back is already easier, because you will have some sense of where you were before. Your tracks will become more permanent and optimized, the more often you walk the path. Maybe you find shortcuts. Maybe you take detours. By repetition your path forms. The only thing you have to do is use it, and use it again, but not just mindlessly follow it.

Now, I wonder how this translates to daily life in the city. Place and direction seem not to be as important anymore. Devices allow us to be in more than one place at a time. Perhaps the constant moving around in cyberspace adds an extra challenge to the kind of repetitive learning that can be compared with the forest path. ADD is just a person adapting to the state of media around us.

Of course there is no focus. We need a new definition of the state we call focus. And we should work and teach with ever-changing surroundings. It makes sense to me to consider the ever-changing as the only steady.

In my experience a problem with work is that it does not require shifting attention, but rather a very steady, sometimes slow, but most of all consistent pace. I am conditioned to continually adapt and change and customize and modify. But I don't always need that when putting in some real, constructive effort. So, I live. While I divert into less constructive business that satisfies my need for constant distraction. A friend of mine (so naar Rik) told me that his way of working is in short but extremely heavy, concentrated spurts of work. He would be sedentary in a kind of slumber. Resting, but feeding. Power-charging the battery for a long boost of energy after which there is another cooling down period.

I wonder if it makes sense for people to work like this. For lithium-ion batteries it is not recommended to use them until completely empty. When used this way, they don't get as old.

A way I see more often in the way Hanna and Rasmus work is the steady one. They have multiple threads running at the same time and by checking into each project every day they spread their energy and work steadily throughout a longer period of time. Along the longer time scale, they seem to have spent a lot of time optimizing this workflow. Making the work lighter and easier to reuse is not a boring bureaucratic business, although it can become that if it becomes a goal in itself. It's a matter of maintenance. In code, it is a very natural and obvious process. It needs to happen in order to work properly. Minification, concatenation, clarification, they all work for you when writing (code). The pleasure of optimizing is like the pleasure of cleaning. Essentially they achieve the same thing.

Man muss sich zuerst durch meters text kämpfen, bevor man findet, was man sucht.



07



People repeating the slogan that humans will be outraced by computers are just wrong?

Nuclear family Astronaut family



08



Interview with Charlie Stigler, developer of Selfcontrol

In order to understand personal motivation in the 21st century, I think it's key to speak to the people that deal with the mental and perhaps physical problems that exist today.

In the coming weeks, I want to speak to people behind software that does, or is supposed to, help people.

DIGITAL CARETAKERS / DIGITAL SERVICE WORKERS

- ~~~~> The Archivists: *Evernote, the internet archive*
- ~~~~> The Monks: Charlie Stigler (Selfcontrol)
- ~~~~> The Knights: Developers of online games, professional e-sportspeople
- ~~~~> The Traders: *Cryptocurrency miners, people that trade in cryptocurrency, the remembrancer of London*
- ~~~~> The Printers: *Renderstorm Render Farm*
- ~~~~> The Drivers: *Uber, Deliveroo*
- ~~~~> The Quacks: *WebMD*
- ~~~~> The Locksmiths, *Keybase*
- ~~~~> The Factotums, *Fiverr*
- ~~~~> The Jokers, *PewdiePie*

First up is Charlie Stigler, the programmer of a program called Selfcontrol. Selfcontrol is an app for different platforms, that allows the user to block certain domains off the internet.

PREVIOUSLY

Hello Charlie,

Sorry.

I would have sent you a tweet, but I used SelfControl, so it's off-limits for a while.

I've been writing about loneliness in today's society as part of a setup for a thesis I'm working on during my last year of studies at the Royal Academy of Art, The Hague.

I have been trying to find out what kinds of relationships people have with their personal devices. It feels like there's a lot to learn from the ways humans interact with them and the channels offered through them. I'm a user of your app and I think the idea of self-discipline is very interesting. In the context of the internet SelfControl seems to help people with that. Since you came up with this (?) and wrote it, it would be very nice to hear your take on its success, the feedback you've had from users, and the reasons that made you build the app. I would love ask you some in-depth questions and/or have a chat about these subjects. Would you be interested in that?

Thanks in advance and, great work. !

Best,

QUESTIONS

Social network is a 'monkey trap'.

Assuming you use your own application. Do you use a whitelist or a blacklist block? Which URLs are on it? Or: How do you use your application?

Please describe for me your own use of Selfcontrol. How often do you use it? Do you use a white- or blacklist block? Which sites do you block?

Gaming addiction is an official disorder in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. The past years psychologists have been debating whether to add internet addiction to this standard as well. What do you think about classifying excessive internet use as an addiction?

How did you get the idea for this application? Could you describe the circumstances around the creation of it?

What did you want to achieve with the Selfcontrol app?

What kind of feedback did you receive about the app?

If you have any clue about this: Which sites do people block the most?

Do you abstain from other things than parts of the internet (drugs, alcohol, etc.)? If so, can you explain the effects that has had on your life?

Which things that the internet allows you to do, do you enjoy the most?

The idea of perfecting yourself is ubiquitous in our western societies. How do you feel about this ideal of 'self-optimization' and what role does self-control play in this?

How do you feel about the Internet of Things? Will it be necessary to make a blocking service for this as well?

Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft (GAFAM). These companies have an enormous influence on how we use the internet. How do you feel about the state of the internet at the moment, considering the power these giants have?

And finally,

You are in an interesting position as the creator of the software. You know ways to deactivate the blocks. Do you use Selfcontrol? And, what did building this app teach you about your own behaviour?

QUESTIONS TO SELF

How are the internet and procrastination related?

What do you think is most tempting about internet use? What keeps people in?

Wouldn't it be easier to shut off all acces? (Pull the plug)

Is Selfcontrol more a don't look and it does not exist app? —something about the social implications. Are you saying it is harmful or bad to use the internet too much?

When would you say is it 'too much'?

ANSWERS

How did you get the idea for this application? Could you describe the circumstances around the creation of it?

I originally created SelfControl as a project for activist artist Steve Lambert, who was at the time looking for a way to curb his own email addiction. While he originally asked for a simple script to help him with his own problem, I turned it into a larger and more generalizable solution, and we then decided to open source it.

What did you want to achieve with the Selfcontrol app?

SelfControl is a different thing for different people, but I generally hope that it helps people think about their relationship with technology and their own internal self control. And I hope it helps serve as "training wheels" to build that skill inside of people.

What kind of feedback did you receive about the app?

We didn't expect much feedback when we started giving it away for free, but thanks to a few press outlets picking it up, there has been plenty! I get a lot of people sending me emails thanking me for getting them through college, their PhD thesis, or their project - novelist Zadie Smith actually thanked SelfControl in her 2012 novel NW. We also have gotten a few people who are angry, generally when they can't turn it off.

If you have any clue about this: Which sites do people block the most?

I don't have any real stats on which sites people block the most, but anecdotally, it seems like it's what you'd expect: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Reddit, and oftentimes porn sites like RedTube or Pornhub.

Do you abstain from other things than parts of the internet (drugs, alcohol, etc.)? If so, can you explain the effects that has had on your life?

I am not a strict abstainer from much! It's just not what works for me personally - I have very good control over habits like that and don't tend towards addiction, so it doesn't help me to be strict. I certainly go easy on things that aren't good for me - like alcohol, drugs, sugar, phone time, and poisonous people - but I'm fine with most things in moderation.

Which things that the internet allows you to do, do you enjoy the most?

I work and live so much on the Internet that it's hard to answer. I spend most of my day in Inbox (Google's alternative interface in Gmail), and appreciate the communication/organization value of the Internet tremendously. Even fluidly keeping up-to-date work/social calendars is such a privilege - how much effort would it have taken to schedule a full day of meetings with a dozen other people before Google Calendar?

The idea of perfecting yourself is ubiquitous in our western societies. How do you feel about this ideal of 'self-optimization' and what role does self-control play in this?

I'm glad that people are being intentional and thinking about what they want, so in that sense self-optimization is a good thing. But where it gets dangerous is when it leads people to multitasking and losing focus. People start to feel like time spent doing only one thing - appreciating your dinner, walking through a crowded street, listening to music - is wasted. And they start to pull out their phones during all of these things to find more stimuli. But of course, we can only do one thing at a time well! We need to learn to focus more on the things we're doing, not rush to do more and more at the same time.

How do you feel about the Internet of Things? Will it be necessary to make a blocking service for this as well?

I'm certainly no expert on the IoT movement, but I'm hopeful that well-crafted devices will actually reduce our addiction to screens. The more fluid technology is, the more integrated it is in our lives, the less it interferes with our real focuses. But then again, maybe I'm wrong and it will go the other direction!

Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft (GAFAM). These companies have an enormous influence on how we use the internet.

How do you feel about the state of the internet at the moment, considering the power these giants have?

That's a very valid thing to worry about, but it's not really top-of-mind for me. The privacy implications are obviously pretty concerning, but so are concerns about spreading your PII to more and more services. I look at the web today and see it as healthy and thriving - still jam-packed full of innovation, of beautiful and useful applications that do almost everything I want. I'm not too worried.

You are in an interesting position as the creator of the software. You know ways to deactivate the blocks. Do you use Selfcontrol? And, what did building this app teach you about your own behaviour?

I don't really use SelfControl personally. Like you said, I know how to get around the blocks quite easily, but more importantly it just isn't my vibe. I do well without an enforced block - and I kind of like letting my mind wander sometimes.

SELF-CONTROL

Taken from Wikipedia

Also noteworthy is the importance of imagery in desire cognition during a state of deprivation. A study conducted on this topic involved smokers divided into two groups. The control group was instructed to continue smoking as usual until they arrived at the laboratory, where they were then asked to read a multisensory neutral script, meaning it was not related to a craving for nicotine. The experimental group, however, was asked to abstain from smoking before coming to the laboratory in order to induce craving and upon their arrival were told to read a multisensory urge-induction script intended to intensify their nicotine craving.[28][32] Once the participants finished reading the script they rated their craving for cigarettes. Next they formulated visual or auditory images when prompted with verbal cues such as "a game of tennis" or "a telephone ringing." After this task the participants again rated their craving for cigarettes. The study found that the craving experienced by the abstaining smokers was decreased to the control group's level by visual imagery but not by auditory imagery alone.[28][32] That mental imagery served to reduce the level of craving in smokers illustrates that it can be used as a method of self-control during times of deprivation.

One study in particular analyzed the impact of approaching a temptation by defining it in abstract, general terms as opposed to specific, concrete details

The study involved 42 college students who were randomly assigned to either the high-level or low-level construal condition. The participants were then presented with a packet that described five scenarios, each one involving a unique self-control conflict. For those participants in the high-level construal condition the scenarios were described using only general terms and for those in the low-level construal condition the scenarios were described using only specific details. After imagining themselves in each scenario, the participants were asked to indicate how bad they would feel if they indulged in the temptation using a six-point scale ranging from "not at all bad" to "very bad." The data showed that participants in the high-level construal condition reported greater negative evaluations of temptations than did participants in the low-level construal conditions.[28][68] This implies that individuals using high-level construals are better able to place a temptation in context and properly evaluate its long-term impact, and therefore are more likely to

maintain self-control.



09



My Friends Already Have Good Taste So Why Should I mixtape

Recording from social media outlets. Friends' posted songs, Youtube and soundcloud autoplay recommendations..



10



STATEMENT

Topics included are time / current time / history / histology / linguistics / the past / the past is now / lyrics / work / labor / luddism / abstinence / joy / motivation / sacrifice / friendship / loneliness / modernity / appropriation / honesty / simulation / restraint / conditioning

The current day is defined by some spheres and groups, of which most relevant to me as a graphic designer are:

internet / interface / user / producer / provider / transport / trade / party / politics / consumer

PLACES

Silicon Valley / Netherlands / Europe / ante-Brexit UK / Berlin /

Who are we talking to now? Thinking about things such as the Skype / other translation tools, which allow direct communication between users, while they remain speaking in their own language

<https://youtu.be/No7IM-NLvNc> ##Statement

Life is worse after the internet.

There is a very important distinction between the internet and the interface. As he wrote in his opening-of-the-year-open chat with people from the WELL institute ", Bruce Sterling mentions that using the word internet does not make sense.

Stacks. In 2012 it made less and less sense to talk about "the Internet," "the PC business," "telephones," "Silicon Valley," or "the media," and much more sense to just study Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon and Microsoft. These big five American vertically organized silos are re-making the world in their image.

If you're Nokia or HP or a Japanese electronics manufacturer, they stole all your oxygen. There will be a whole lot happening among these five vast entities in 2013. They never compete head-to-head, but they're all fascinated by "disruption."

This statement, written in 2012, is very captivating. We deal more often with these companies than we do with our own governments. If you are a user of the internet, at least (GAFAM). The GAFAM syndicate's grip on daily life is the new political power. It is more established than the chaotic politics all over Europe, or the chaotic politics over in the United States.

The world is lead by technology

The New Will.

People change(d)

Tomorrow I will make up my mind

Cultus of Studied Ignorance

Obscure techno record to go along with the destruction of the planet

Trump 2012: Kony to change the world after the apocalypse 2016

Which problems arise for the atemporal human when confronted with its own media ideals?

People are confronted by internet ideals. They are not working

Internet has made a new working class, a new youth, and a new history. What do they have in common with past generations? What makes them different? How do they see the internet?

Hannah recently showed me a video on youtube of a woman playing with toys. She films her own hands, plays with the children's toys for a while, and makes little baby noises. It was a funny sight, not that strange if you have seen grown-ups play with babies before. They turn into chirping babies themselves. But the interesting part happened right next to the video and that was the view counter. This video had more than 250 million views. Right now as I am writing this it has 263.322.265 views. This is the 'new generation.' Parents that are used to using the internet and its sites. Children that have no problem using a device as easy as the iPad. Of course this video has this many views. Kids love watching something over and over again and parents love it when their children are relaxed and chilled. this number is insanely high, but is also already common.



Nothing to download



Choose Your Accent

Fix Your Accent > Choose Your Accent

Nothing to report > Nothing to download

The people working in service jobs through platforms have a more realistic world view than me.

Everybody else knows more than me.

I know nothing, I write everything

I am become meta, destroyer of worlds.

Appropriations

Ways of seeing in the digital era

Read again (reread)

Slavs and Tatars

Read

Foucault, e-flux Journal 'What is Contemporary Art'

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disruptive_innovation



11  12

New Notes

After the main library was destroyed, scholars used a "daughter library" in a temple known as the Serapeum, located in another part of the city. According to Socrates of Constantinople, Coptic Pope Theophilus destroyed the Serapeum in AD 391, although it is not certain what it contained or if it contained any significant fraction of the documents that were in the main library. The library may have finally been destroyed during the Muslim conquest of Egypt in (or after) AD 642.

How do different nationalities or cultures see the past?

I just read this excerpt of the Wikipedia page on the library of Alexandria and saw in it the concept of a fork, a copy of the original source code, which is less public and under development. Where this analogy fails, is that the library of Alexandria was burned down, and therefore a lot of the original knowledge was lost. In the case of a fork, no information is lost, it just gets copied. But, in the way it is used, you could see a similarity because the fork is a less public version of the original and is no longer connected to the public. Only if everyone agrees that the fork is the new main version, will it be seen as that...

Why should we always look for similarities though? Isn't that what we try to avoid, at least a little bit? We are busy finding originality, but use hopelessly uniform shapes, materials and ideas.

Limitation and contradiction are two things that seem inherent to the process of looking for an answer.

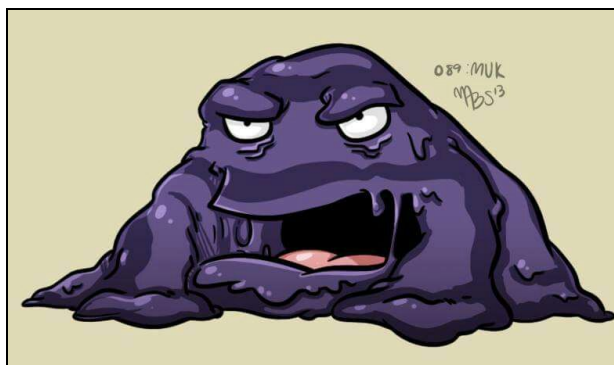
Perhaps it makes more sense to look for ways to deal with these two, instead of an answer to one set question.

Gif spuwen of kennis uitscheiden.

Er zijn een heleboel verschillende manieren van schrijven. Je kunt aanvallend schrijven, verdedigend, omschrijvend, bevredigend, en ga zo

maar door. In mijn geval merk ik dat er een manier van schrijven is die ik hier nog niet eerder tussen zag. Dit is het oefenend schrijven, dat bij mij gekenmerkt lijkt te worden door alles, dat zich opgehoopt heeft in de buurt van de onderwerpen waar ik het over wil hebben. Dit onderdeel is het gif, dat uit mijn vingertoppen gespuugd moet worden, en op de goede plaatsen gebruikt moet worden om de tekst pit te geven.

Dan is er het kennis uitscheiden. Dat is meer het vinden van relevantie binnen de tekst die ik neertyp. Dit komt meestal na het gif spuwen, wat de overblijfselen laat zien, waaruit ik de glimmende restanten en beginselen van een nieuw stuk tekst kan vinden.



We are as gods and might as well get used to it. So far, remotely done power and glory—as via government, big business, formal education, church—has succeeded to the point where gross obscure actual gains. In response to this dilemma and to these gains a realm of intimate, personal power is developing—power of the individual to conduct his own education, find his own inspiration, shape his own environment, and share his adventure with whoever is interested. Tools that aid this process are sought and promoted by the WHOLE EARTH CATALOG.

I had this quote in my Quote folder for a while. I think this is part of

Steward Brand's introduction to the Whole Earth Catalog. I remade the title of the pic now into I guess I do not really agree. The piece of text now leaves me with questions such as: Who is now seeking and promoting tools for the power of the individual? What are the motivations for a personal power as such? With whom are you sharing your adventure? Do you have the power to shape your own environment?

This shows me that we see the past only as a reflection of the current time

The Ludovico Technique applied to the things I don't want. A big Ludovico Room persiflaging big big and smaller problems of society

GLOBAL WARMING * ADDICTION * FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE * FOOLISH BELIEFS (?)

EASY WAY OUT

go to mars, upload your conscience into a future robot, deny that we are living in a real world

Silicon Valley Scientist-Entrepreneurs believe there is a big chance we are already living in a simulation á la Matrix. The brain-in-a-vat theory dates back to renaissance thinker Descartes, who wrote about it in his book




12

 13

Weird Skills

Ambient Design and Speed Design

Playing Piano on the computer 

http://www.dumpert.nl/mediabase/6928947/82508298/gast_speelt_piano_op_zijn_toetsenbord.html

The question remains vague. Should I base my own thesis on a term that I cannot define in my own words/?

Tolerance, addiction

Desillusioned Internet

What did we expect? What did we get? What do we want now?

The internet was a hot topic. From its first setting up until now we have used and abused it, spit on it and worshipped it. Bla bla bla, we are all so connected at this moment and so used to the internet being everywhere

that we don't know better. I think it has become time to see what our first dreams of the network were, and which it has fulfilled. I don't want to consider life without internet as different than life with internet, BUT the difference should become clear from the cases that I will look at.

By this time, people are depending on the network for life. It is the newest layer of infrastructure that became a necessity after the sewer and the roads we use.

The human is submerged into, entangled in the wires. The big companies of the tech industry are banking heavily on Artificial Intelligence and

What happened? Graphic Design and arts started to use the commercial services and softwares to make their results.

What is beautiful in the eyes of people? What do people even still like? Are they actually still interested in digital media at all? It seems to me that there are still some general features beauty is defined by. There is the size / effort aspect. Which could be completed into the tri-definition of size / effort / computing power.

The systems are limited and probably always will be a bit limited.

Graphic Design became interface design. User experience has become a design discipline. The interesting thing about that is that the experience itself is designed.

I will always look for analogies to explain network phenomena and I think I am not the only one in this aspect. But what if we could for once see the network displayed as it is? A great bunch of information displayed onto a screen. Custom-made to fit your own interests combined and fueled with the interests of the makers of the service. You, sharing the spotlight of your own life with the firms that want your money.

And what is the real political impact of using services of GAFAM? Is GAFAM they or is it us? Have we been citizens of GAFAM for long enough to say we belong there and we are proud to be a part of their virtual worlds?

Probing the key assumptions

GLOBAL (is this the right word anymore?)

The word global must have come to be used when we realized the globe is that big round ball we all live on top of. The world is powerful. It stems directly from the globe, a round object representing the earth in total. Globally means generally, roughly, or without details. The globe must have been invented in the time of Erasmus and the renaissance. We are erasmian thinkers but he flattened the earth in a weird, unequal way. If you see the globe you get an idea of the relative distances on Earth. Now, how do we call the thing that makes almost all global communication possible? The internet? The internet does not have a globe in the way

the Earth has one. The internet has a Stack, a vertical tower. Is that the best way of defining the network? Which other ways are there to show the internet in geometric form? And which ways are there to describe the network in language and how are we using that language?

The global village

We need better myths. And we need to control ourselves to let go. LET ME GO MAMA MIA LET ME GO

Procrastination / postponance

CONTROL AND QUESTION The behaviors and addictions of communication

How to use the internet?

What are the controls of virtual communication and who gets to play?

Stratergiqz of the tera-first century.

Keep it clean. Everything is a template, do NOT get specific, it does nothing!!!!

NO CABLES ATTACHED



13



TITLES

CONTROL AND QUESTION The behaviors and addictions of communication



14



OLD STRUCTURE

Introduction Acknowledging that it will take some effort to read this thesis. Not apologizing but explaining chaotic structure but still structure. Reminding reader to 'stay multi' how not to get stuck.

Chapter 1: Wild, savage What are motivations to create? Time to sketch an overview of the context and used source material. As the chapter title says, a stormy start into the Thesis. Conscious and unconscious problems overlap in society so unconsciousness as well as consciousness should be considered. The positive appeal and effect of enigma and self-contradiction. Invitation to read critically since if anything, I am no expert, but a generalist. Why look at art?

Chapter 2: Control and Ego, Suffering Questioning the role of self in current western society. Looking at the ways this manifests in design and media. Focus on the subliminal / hidden manifestations. Addiction, discipline, surrender and suffering. Compression and minimization for efficiency. Procrastination. Use case: Self Control (app).

Chapter 3: Strategies for history Looks at modes of approaching, changing and representing history. Examples in art and design. What is the current state? How does it show in design strategies? Aim to look back in time. Use Case: Slavs and Tatars (for lack of another).

Chapter 4: Maakbaarheid en Mythe Man/Womankind is not doomed just yet. Debunking or confirming ways of working and career. Homo Universalis to Flexwerkplekken to the Unicorn Myth. Connected to Ch. 2: why optimize? Use case: Troy Hunt.

Chapter 5: Fleeting Time, Caps Lock Shift Commands Language Is language still the most important expression? Who's time are we spending? How does the design of debt look?

Chapter 6: Boring Internet. Cool interface Did the internet fail to live up to its hype? Who's in charge and how do we use it? Finally seeing that these systems are not the answer. Sketching doom? Well, of course in many ways, freedom of expression is the answer to problems. We know too much and yet too little, geographic limits and governments. How do you allow and not unconsciously repress these? Why look at interfaces?

Conclusion Summarizing the answers of the many questions. Global conclusion that incentivizes people as well as designers.



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Introduction (again)

There is a time, a place and a technology for all of us.

As much as I love structure and clarity in text, I also love chaos and opacity. I am just not sure yet how to deal with it. And even though this is a thesis, I don't want to claim that I am a very thorough researcher. In

my opinion, this thesis should work as a kind of patchwork. Mixing topics, overlapping notions. Why? Because since a while I am starting to see that this is how it is in the world.

About my view on the relation of this text to 'graphic design': I think it is very important to study the surfaces and forms of design in the world, as well as study the world itself. It is this crossing, where the screen meets the person – the interface the user – where I will be hanging out mostly.

Time In time, there are a couple of things I am interested in. The ideas of spending time valuably or wasting time, the weird relationship we have with history, and the idea of timelessness.

Place In our society it is not uncommon to be placeless for amounts of time. We like to displace our physical sense of space for a place online. We can be in different places at the same time. On the contrary, the internet is now a very diverse place where geolocation gets customized or limited for people. China China, China.

Technology Tech is the part where we use our machines a lot. Technology itself is unassuming, uninterested.

The absolute It seems that science and others provide an absolute

These aspects of our society have

There are a couple of things I want to discuss in this thesis / essay.

The disinterested gaze:

The look of knowing but not caring, or not acting. Knowingly observing from a distance and watching with sore eyes. No, not with sore eyes. Eyes without judgement behind them. A clean retina. Light falls in, images form, but the retina is only the sieve through which the shapes enter the head.

Laughter does not occur in the vitreous humour.

The disinterested look. Glamorous.

Patti Smith in New York

Desensitized by overexposure. In addiction

I'm interested to find out what the apathic side of society is, and how design fuels that movement. In politics, is apathy not voting. In work, is apathy not working? What is apathy in design ? Are we making apathic designs?

Connected to apathy is the rule of systems, and more importantly the subconscious influence of systems on daily life. Freedom of expression is filtered through the internet's giant's services. Though this is a reality we are facing, I wonder if there really is no freedom to revolt and shake

things up.

In this train of thought I remember writing about how sitting still, and being lost in the internet for a long time, has motivated me. In a way, it seems that you have to go too far, before you really understand the impact of the media that surround you. I imagine a kind of Gonzo-approach to social media or internet culture in general. And I imagine that I am not the only one.

Gonzo was the journalistic approach of writer Hunter S. Thompson to his stories. He immersed himself into the hedonistic worlds he was reporting on. This resulted in a writing style which left some room for the reader to interpret what was real and what was not. But, as is pointed out, it is not that difference which defines 'gonzo'. Rather it is the impossibility to see the author as disconnected from the topic they are writing on. It is a journalistic style that does not claim objectivity.

Paradox of filter bubble: On one side it is super bad if the filter bubble is happening (semi-)unconsciously but it can also be a very useful feature (reddit.com) once it is wielded by the actual users and not the giant service providers. Comparing the algorithms of Facebook and Reddit would be an interesting experiment.



16

17

Michel

Pulling myself and others out of the drag. By focusing on other people's problems and stories.

Andreas Yamuna



17

3D models of the 21st century people

Leonardo da Vinci working for Google

Leonardo diCaprio as a pope

An angry Trump supporter that didn't actually believe in his election.

A Mad Max of the World Wide Web, running the deserts of 403
Forbidden wastelands.

An opposite Facebook feed, only showing the things that I would never
want to see and with friends that I never would be friends with.

What is the Dutch local alt-right?

Life outside of the bubble

Bubbles, the soapbox, think outside of the box.

The waving hands of the Occupy Movement

NEW STRUCTURE

1. Writings per chapter
 1. Actual file
 2. Practice file?
2. Style file for creative writing
3. Sources



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Notes Thu Nov 17 13:52:38 2016

Auto-piracy for academics.

Dread Publisher Robberts