

---

# LONDON CONFERENCE IN CRITICAL THOUGHT 2019 PROGRAMME

---

**5th & 6th July 2019**

**Centre for Invention and Social Process at Goldsmiths,  
University of London**

Long Programme

Richard Hoggart Building  
Goldsmiths, University of London  
8 Lewisham Way  
London SE14 6AF

<http://londoncritical.org/>  
[inquiries@londoncritical.org](mailto:inquiries@londoncritical.org)  
#LCCT2019

---

# CONTENTS

---

Conference Streams	2
Overview	3
Friday 5th July .....	3
Saturday 6th July.....	4
Overview Table .....	5
Friday 5th July	6
Registration — 9:00-9:30.....	6
Parallel Sessions 1 — 9:30-11:00 .....	6
Break — 11:00-11:30 .....	11
Parallel Sessions 2 — 11:30-13:00 .....	12
Lunch — 13:00-14:00 .....	18
Parallel Sessions 3 — 14:00-15:30 .....	19
Break — 15:30-16:00 .....	25
Parallel Sessions 4 — 16:00-17:30 .....	26
Reception & Book Launch — Room 300 at 17:30.....	31
Saturday 6th July	32
Registration — 9:00-9:30.....	32
Parallel Sessions 1 — 9:30-11:00 .....	32
Break — 11:00-11:30 .....	38
Parallel Sessions 2 — 11:30-13:00 .....	38
Lunch — 13:00-14:00 .....	44
Parallel Sessions 3 — 14:00-15:30 .....	44
Break — 15:30-16:00 .....	51
Parallel Sessions 4 — 16:00-17:30 .....	51
Post-Conference Drinks.....	58

---

# CONFERENCE STREAMS

---

Art Manifestos: The Future of  
an Evolving Form

Evangelos Chrysagis  
Panos Kompatsiaris

Automating Inequality: AI,  
Smart Devices and the  
Reproduction of the Social

Juljan Krause  
Matthias Benzer

Cold War Then and Now:  
Theories and Legacies

Maria Christou

Culture/Politics of Trauma

Simon Lee-Price

Difference, Evolution and  
Biology

Niall Sreenan

Gendered Technologies,  
Gender as Technology

Clementine Boucher

Immanence, Conflict and  
Institution: Within and  
Beyond Italian Theory

Laura Cremonesi  
Mattia Di Pierro  
Francesco Marchesi  
Elia Zaru

Multiplying Citizenship:  
Beyond the Subject of  
Rights

Demet Gülçiçek  
Irene Dal Poz

Radical Ventriloquism: Acts  
of Speaking Through and  
Speaking for

Lee Campbell  
Christabel Harley

Rethinking New  
Materialisms: Ethics, Politics  
and Aesthetics

Hannah Richter  
Ignasi Torrent

Thinking Critically with Care

Fay Dennis  
Jade Henry  
Emily Jay Nicholls

---

# OVERVIEW

---

## Friday 5<sup>th</sup> July

Registration	— 9:00-9:30
Parallel Sessions 1	— 9:30-11:00
Culture/Politics of Trauma 1	
Cold War Then and Now 1	
Rethinking New Materialism 1	
Gendered Technologies, Gender as Technology 1	
Break	— 11:00-11:30
Parallel Sessions 2	— 11:30-13:00
Automating Inequality 1	
Cold War Then and Now 2	
Rethinking New Materialism 2	
Immanence, Conflict and Institution 1	
Lunch	— 13:00-14:00
Parallel Sessions 3	— 14:00-15:30
Thinking Critically With Care 1	
Multiplying Citizenship 1	
Art Manifestos 1	
Difference, Evolution and Biology 1	
Break	— 15:30-16:00
Parallel Sessions 4	— 16:00-17:30
Thinking Critically With Care 2	
Multiplying Citizenship 2	
Art Manifestos 2	
Gendered Technologies, Gender as Technology 2	

## Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July

Registration	— 9:00-9:30
Parallel Sessions 1	— 9:30-11:00
Radical Ventriloquism 1	
Difference, Evolution and Biology 2	
Immanence, Conflict and Institution 2	
Thinking Critically With Care 3	
Break	— 11:00-11:30
Parallel Sessions 2	— 11:30-13:00
Radical Ventriloquism 2	
Art Manifestos 3	
Gendered Technologies, Gender as Technology 3	
Automating Inequality 2	
Lunch	— 13:00-14:00
Parallel Sessions 3	— 14:00-15:30
Radical Ventriloquism 3	
Cold War Then and Now 3	
Culture/Politics of Trauma 2	
Rethinking New Materialism 3	
Break	— 15:30-16:00
Parallel Sessions 4	— 16:00-17:30
Multiplying Citizenship 3	
Cold War Then and Now 4	
Culture/Politics of Trauma 3	
Rethinking New Materialism 4	
Post-Conference Drinks	

## Overview Table

FRIDAY	ROOM 356	ROOM 307	ROOM 308	ROOM 309
9:00-9:30	<b>Registration - Room 300</b>			
9:30-11:00	Culture/Politics of Trauma 1	Cold War Then and Now 1	Rethinking New Materialism 1	Gendered Technologies, Gender as Technology 1
11:00-11:30	<b>Break</b>			
11:30-13:00	Automating Inequality 1	Cold War Then and Now 2	Rethinking New Materialism 2	Immanence, Conflict and Institution 1
13:00-14:00	<b>Lunch</b>			
14:00-15:30	Thinking Critically With Care 1	Multiplying Citizenship 1	Art Manifestos 1	Difference, Evolution and Biology 1
15:30-16:00	<b>Break</b>			
16:00-17:30	Thinking Critically With Care 2	Multiplying Citizenship 2	Art Manifestos 2	Gendered Technologies, Gender as Technology 2
17:30 -	<b>Reception and Book Launch - Room 300</b>			

SATURDAY	ROOM 356	ROOM 307	ROOM 308	ROOM 309
9:00-9:30	<b>Registration - Room 300</b>			
9:30-11:00	Radical Ventriloquism 1	Difference, Evolution and Biology 2	Immanence, Conflict and Institution 2	Thinking Critically With Care 3
11:00-11:30	<b>Break</b>			
11:30-13:00	Radical Ventriloquism 2	Art Manifestos 3	Gendered Technologies, Gender as Technology 3	Automating Inequality 2
13:00-14:00	<b>Lunch</b>			
14:00-15:30	Radical Ventriloquism 3	Cold War Then and Now 3	Culture/Politics of Trauma 2	Rethinking New Materialism 3
15:30-16:00	<b>Break</b>			
16:00-17:30	Multiplying Citizenship 3	Cold War Then and Now 4	Culture/Politics of Trauma 3	Rethinking New Materialism 4
17:30 -	<b>Post-Conference Drinks</b>			

---

# FRIDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> JULY

---

**Registration – 9:00-9:30**

**Parallel Sessions 1 – 9:30-11:00**

## Culture/Politics of Trauma 1

### **Indelible in the Hippocampus: Ford/Kavanaugh, Trauma, and Juridical Forms in Crisis**

*Phil Yakushev*

Trauma studies have often been infused with legal considerations—from the pervasive language of “testimony” to Shoshana Felman’s identification of a “key structural relation between law and trauma” (Felman 132), through which cultural understandings of trauma and juridical discourses are reciprocally transformed. Such theories have emphasized the generative power of witnessing and the juridical setting, with their potential to produce unknowable truths of trauma and communal ties of solidarity. Is this “key structural relation between law and trauma” weakened, though, at a time when liberal norms and forms for determining truth and justice are visibly rupturing? This paper will explore this question through a consideration of the September 2018 United States Senate Judiciary Committee hearing of Dr. Christine Blasey Ford and Brett Kavanaugh. This hearing was marked by several features: repeated, failed attempts to appeal to procedural traditions and to find a juridical category for itself, a struggle not over Dr. Ford’s traumatic memory itself but the details around it, deference to Kavanaugh’s pedigree, and intense media spectacle. Through a reading of the hearing’s transcript, video, and coverage, this paper will examine these features in relation to the event’s inability to fully consider the import of Dr. Ford’s trauma. More than a “failure to contain” (Felman 145) trauma in the manner of other proceedings, or a pure result of adversarial, Anglo-American juridical logistics, the hearing points to a broader crisis in ostensibly truth-producing discourses and the ways in which certain bodies and their “indelible” memories can relate to them.

### **From Trauma to Memory Activism: collective interventions in public spaces of violence and ruination**

*Dimitra Gkitsa*

The collapse of communism in Southeast Europe, and the subsequent post-communist trauma was a condition that affected not just the generation that experienced the transition that took place in 1989 and the wars during the 1990s. More crucially, as this collective trauma has not been communicated properly, not fully addressed or understood, it has been inherited, or better, transmitted across generations. From this, we can comprehend two crucial elements of the collective trauma that occurred in the

post-socialist condition: firstly, it appears as a haunting that is embedded and perpetuated throughout the process of generations; secondly, it contains an element of impossibility that does not allow one to speak of or detect its causality in one specific historic, political, or social event. The sudden collapse of communism—a rupture in the canonical progress of time—is a memory which was always difficult to articulate, lingering between amnesia and the nostalgic. Through the civil wars after the collapse of Yugoslavia, the multiple victims and immigrants, the rhetorics of hate and xenophobia between counties that once were united under one social reality, the failures and corruption of democracy, and the cruel neoliberal policies are elements that persist, accumulating and simultaneously creating new traumas in already existing traumatic experiences and memories. What remains to work towards to and with in a social reality that has been defined by its politics of collective trauma?

This paper proposes to explore practices of collective curatorial interventions that take place in public spaces of violence and ruination in the post-socialist reality of Southeast Europe. The paper focuses on more under-represented contemporary art practices from Albania, Serbia, Macedonia, and Kosovo, and it argues that a younger generation of artists and curators have employed infrastructures of collectivity in the arts to reclaim public spaces that were predominantly defined by discourses of trauma, nostalgia, and failure from ideologies of both communist regimes and neoliberalism. In so doing, the paper analyses the activist elements that are inscribed in collective traumatic memories and it seeks to understand the transformative potentialities that exist within the collective inheritance of trauma. In such practices, looking backwards and re-imagining the past, becomes a tool to address the very precarious conditions of the present.

### **Damnation of Memory: Cultural Trauma and the Politics of Forgetting/ Remembering from Antiquity to the Present**

*Hrvoje Cvijanović*

The article discusses the patterns of public memorialization and the ways in which we face the past through examining various examples from the Greco-Roman literal and political tradition in order to understand the origins of memory politics as well as contemporary memory wars in Europe and the US related to the conflicting public memories and the politics of reconciliation. By using the Ancient Greek examples from Homer, Hesiod, Sophocles, Athens after the overthrow of the Tyranny of the Thirty, and the Roman institute of *damnatio memoriae*, among all, as various ways in which cultural trauma, public culture, or memories of the past were confronted. At the same time, these examples show the importance of either the politics of public remembering or public forgetting in promoting new values or restoring dividing political communities. In addition, the article tracks development of memory politics to modernity and contemporaneity in order to compare and contrast how various patterns of public memorialization affect cultural trauma. Finally, the article focuses on the ongoing memory wars in the European context as well as the US confrontation over the Confederate symbols and public monuments removals. In that sense, the article aims to provide a conceptual framework for analyzing public forgetting and remembering as tools either for deepening divisions and sparking conflicts, or promoting peaceful reconciliation and reevaluation of the past.



# Cold War Then and Now 1

## **Waves and Radiation: Contemporary American Television and the Nuclear Uncanny**

*Daniel Grausam*

This paper explores the surprising frequency with which recent American television has envisioned the Cold War, and specifically its nuclear aspects, as setting or key plot device. I argue that there is far more going on in these programs than straightforward nostalgia; instead they collectively help to reveal the comprehensively unfinished nature of the Cold War nuclear state and the ways in which it haunts our present.

## **Posthumanism and Cold War**

*James Purdon*

This paper takes as its starting point the strange absence of serious reflection on nuclear technology and associated forms of Cold War ideology in recent theoretical accounts of the “post-human”, “non-human”, or “post-anthropocentric” turn. Given the consistency with which mid-century writers, across many disciplines and cultural forms, identified the nuclear moment of 1945 as transformational for the human-as-species, and the intensity with which mid-century culture explored both the possible self-extermination of humanity and the possible obsolescence of the intellectual structures of humanism, this lacuna is puzzling. While climate change, digital computing, and genetic modification have all been readily and repeatedly proposed as key contexts for the development of our contemporary “post-human” condition, the startling transition in 1945 from a pre-nuclear to a post-nuclear world has rarely been mentioned. I’ll have three related aims: first, to situate the emergence of one important current of “post-humanist” thought in the context of the early Cold War, with particular reference to the potent strain of nuclear-inflected post-humanist cultural representation which emerged in mid-century British writing. Second, I’ll propose that such cultural representations are involved in a fundamental re-evaluation of the concept of war itself. These works help us to understand “Cold War” not as an event or as a political condition, but as a disposition of material and immaterial components, an irreducible assemblage of human and non-human powers and agencies which come to exert unsustainable pressure on humanism’s categorical distinctions between the human and its others. Finally, I’ll reflect on contemporary post-human theory’s blind-spot with regard to its own mid-century antecedents, suggesting that, if we do indeed live in post-human times, then the successful integration of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons within the structures of contemporary capitalism – to the point where they appear theoretically marginal or absent – has much to do with this condition.

## ***Felo de se: the Munus of Remote Sensing***

*Ryan Bishop*

Polyscaler autonomous remote sensing systems are presently constituting new regimes of teleactivity for real-time surveillance and data gathering. This paper continues several ongoing projects that examine the philosophical, technological, and political ramifications of these systems as they pertain to the constitution of the subject, community, and the imaginaries operative within and through them. Starting in earnest during the Vietnam War and linked to the emergence of geoscience linked to remote sensing (codified in 1963 with the launch of the eponymous journal), these systems continued an important element of Cold War military strategy operative in civilian as well as combat domains: the increasing erasure of the human from complex systems of surveillance and control. Working with the concepts of autos, munus, and nomos to read these systems, exemplified here by two different kinds of remote sensing systems—IT/weapons systems for the new US destroyer, the USS Zumwalt, and the nonprofit Planetary Skin Institute—this paper explores the geopolitical and philosophical stakes of these systems and their intended and unintended consequences. It argues that autonomous remote sensing systems configure a specific kind of self/autos within a munus constituted by a nomos. The autos, munus, and nomos have been remade in and through these telesensing systems that simultaneously repeat, reify, and modify the politics of the self that remains a default mode for thinking geopolitics in the West in its global reach. This remaking works in ways that counterintuitively and counterintentionally might result in the opening to alternatives to this specific yet pervasive kind of politics of the self.

## **Rethinking New Materialism 1**

### **Vitruvian Mantology: Architecture and Posthuman Politics**

*Debra Shaw*

Vitruvian Man, Leonardo's perfectly proportioned human based on the recommendations of a Roman architect who thought that strong and stable (and beautiful) buildings would guarantee a strong and stable state, still provides the template for architectural design. What this suggests is not only that the built environment is designed to privilege able bodied white males but that architecture is, in itself, inherently political. This paper will address the politics and aesthetics of space from the position of critical posthumanism in which Vitruvian Man stands for the exemplary human that no body can approximate. Mantology is an obscure term that refers to divining or occult predictions about the future. I am using it here to suggest the assumption of an enduring ontology in urban design and the reification of processes which this mandates. If we entertain the idea that we have never been human, then new possibilities emerge for thinking the politics of the social as it is constructed in urban space.

## **Re-thinking the performative and the archive in New Materialism through the art museum and the natural history museum**

*Hélia Marçal and Bergit Arends*

This joint presentation explores the performative in performance art and within field work in the natural sciences, both as seen through New Materialism. We compare the archiving of the remains of performance in the socio-technological archives of the art museum and the natural history museum. Through this comparison we re-consider the relations between nature, science, technology and society Latour (1993; 2011; 2014) and argue for assemblages of ideas, people and things that are constantly undergoing change. Through these 'rich multispecies assemblages' we explore the new ontology Haraway (2015) calls for, while arguing for new modes of participation that answer to an onto-ethico-epistemo-logical perspective on how artworks are archived, conserved, and activated through human and nonhuman bodies and in the public sphere.

By looking at how performance, conservation practices, and the museum co-constitute each other through its multiple intra-actions, we will argue that performance art's transformative potential as well as performative in fieldwork can bring to fore new modes of participation of human and non-human actors. At the example of case studies from both disciplinary museum spaces we interrogate the co-becoming of material existence to evolve post-anthropocentrism, non-human-exceptionalism and post-individualism through the performative and through an expanded notion of archives and conservation.

## Gendered Technologies, Gender as Technology 1

### **Digital and arts production: escaping alienation and the deviation available through post-studio making"**

*Paul Stewart*

This paper compiles a series of perspectives on how the digital effects society and functions as a material for art making and a space for divergence in terms of reproductions of labour. It is the amalgamation of collaboration and art practice as well as digital making and also how the digital is an asset in the making and production of art and society. It brings together the thoughts and words of such a variety of strong and needed voices including Helen Hester, Sabine Himmelsbach and Dorothee Richter. The paper considers media artworks that are process-oriented or immaterial (for example, only software), or networked systems and how they can be considered in terms of de-gendering art production. This is framed by a conversation or a narrative around digital communities through an interview with Helen Hester around arts production and the *Xenofeminist Manifesto* towards post-work and domestic labour. The aim is to link between social effects of the digital into creative practices.

The thematic of the paper across digital communities is whether URL (Uniform Resource Locator, colloquially used to represent the web) and IRL (In Real Life) have something to do with the reproduction of labour. “there's no porn without the cum shot” does the immaterial exist because it's an obsession with the material; an uber material? The aim is to consider definitions of gender as a tool to think through the alienating effects of arts production through patriarchal norms and look to the digital as site for a shift to a commitment to involvement.

## **Gender monstrosities under military dictatorship**

*Patricia Branco Cornish*

In this paper I investigate the role played by technology among female artists in Brazil in the 1970s, a time of military dictatorship, to criticize social and political structures that placed women as second-class citizens. I selected as case studies the videos of Brazilian artists Leticia Parente and Sônia Andrade to explore new relations between female subjectivity, the body and power.

Drawing on theories from the fields of feminist and queer studies, visual culture, and post-colonial studies I analyse these artists' performances – administering self-inflicted punishments to their faces in front of a camera. The close-ups of grotesque female's faces in the videos counter the creation of a system of sexual hierarchy in the film industry that mirrors unequal gender relations found in the social domain.

Secondly, I examine the role of sacrifice through self-inflicted facial disfiguring through the Bataille concepts of sacrificial mutilation and monstrosity. Both artists, by destroying their facial beauty, transform the female face into an object of sacrifice that “is drawn out ‘of the world of utility’ and restored to the realm of the sacred” (Biles 132). Through sacrifice the female body momentarily eliminates its ties of subordination to social demands.

Finally, I investigate the potential for Brazilian feminist politics and aesthetics that do not fully align with the Second Wave Feminism forms of resistance that influenced American female video artists in the 1970s. Parent and Andrade embraced a silent mode of self-masochism to escape their submission to the Symbolic order that is always masculine.

**Break – 11:00-11:30**

## Parallel Sessions 2 – 11:30-13:00

### Automating Inequality 1

#### **A Critical Examination of Artificial Intelligence and Big Data in Computational Social Science**

*Peter Krafft and Karen Huang*

This paper investigates the practices of an emerging field called computational social science---a research area built around modern artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies dedicated “to leveraging the capacity to collect and analyze data at a scale that may reveal patterns of individual and group behaviors” (Lazer et al, 2009). Using a genealogical approach, we discuss how computational science is distinctive among social sciences in the degree to which it has been shaped by contemporary business interests, which have accelerated the field and influenced its knowledge practices. Although computational social scientists aspire to the “view from nowhere,” where they analyze “Big Data” on human subjects from a position of the objective neutral observer, this view is in itself situated in elite power structures that are overwhelmingly white and male (Haraway, 1988). Through a case study of Cambridge Analytica, we examine how computational social scientists draw the boundaries of their expertise, and we uncover sociotechnical imaginaries at play (Jasanoff & Kim, 2015). Based on these analyses, we describe ontological assumptions of computational social science, arguing that the field is premised on abstraction, fundamentally oriented towards social control, and exacerbates existing inequalities.

#### **Remixing the soundtrack of oppression. How to sing back to the machine?**

*Abdelrahman Hassan*

In this project, I make a case for unboxing algorithms using rhythm and using the lense of networked irony. I seek inspiration from Lefebvre’s rhythmanalysis and Shintaro Miyazaki’s work on the power of ‘algorhythms’ to decipher the uses of politicized irony online. More specifically, I launched an investigation on how absence and distortion expose the sincerity behind the irony in Pro-Life meme spaces. The investigation was conducted in the hope of demystifying irony, and to build a methodology which moves beyond linear understandings of online humor and other networked phenomenon. However, the implications of the investigation move beyond humor, as the unboxing of algo-rhythms means the unboxing of power which governs interactions in the cyberspace.

In my work, I acknowledge irony as a 'curious proxy' to the blackboxed interworkings of social algorithms . I synthesise irony as relational, networked and as both a mechanism of relatability and concealment. However, the main question remains, what can online rhythms teach us about cultural phenomenon and they way in which they're governed and proliferated? Based on the characterisation of irony by Henri Bergson and the Chicago Critical Media Theory, we can synthesise that irony, and its underlying sincerity, can be seen as a disruption of rhythm. The work of the Italian Matteo Pasquinelli theorist also stresses on the power and importance of studying anomalies and outliers.

To illustrate the power of studying rhythm online as a revelation mechanism, I carried a series of investigations. I focused on two particular meme pages from a rather bigger habitat of inter-liked pages: a dank meme page called Pro-Life Dank Memes and a parody of the Huffington Post called the Fluffington Host. I then developed a methodology by observing the rhythms, or lack thereof, in each page: the influx of reactions, the flow of posts, the alternating aesthetic of images and Faux-news titles. Using an array of digital methods I was able to plot each of these rhythms, and then visually inspect the outliers. The outliers were often artifacts of sincerity; they often acted as speed bumps or safeguards for ironic usage. I will then highlight the forms in which the disruptive sincerity takes place in each case study. To further expose the rhythms, I will present an audiovisual translation of the rhythms done in collaboration with a visual designer and a musician during the Digital Methods Initiative 2018 in Amsterdam. The explorative investigation was not only insightful and aesthetically rewarding, but also prompted further questions. First, how can we study the collaborations between different rhythms online ( user-induced rhythms vs algorithmic rhythms) and under which of the 4 Lefebvrian rhythms do these collaborations fall? Secondly, how does power-status of the propagator effect the rhythm and use of irony (irony of the oppressed vs irony of the oppressor). Third, how our linear and reductionist approach to the algorithmic detection of irony is contributing mechanisms of algorithmic injustice.

## Cold War Then and Now 2

### **Women in the Network: Cold War Communication and Women's Poetry**

*Alex Goody*

This paper explores the gendered dynamics of networked communication, surveillance and the military-industrial complex of the Cold War with a focus on the poetry of Lorine Niedecker and Sylvia Plath. Writing of the advent of the telephone network at the beginning of the twentieth-century Lisa Gitelman identifies the place of women workers as a paradoxical one in which "telephone representation succeeded amid construction of 'the operator' as both gendered and effaced, able to facilitate transmission but hardly able to transmit (2006, 71). Resituating Gitelman's ideas in a post-1945 context, I will explore the gendered, sexualised but effaced conduit for networked communication in the Cold War, considering Niedecker's examination of the "Switchboard Girl" and responses to the nuclear threat, and modes of oppressive Cold War gendered subjectivation and vocabularies of surveillance in Plath's later poetry. Referring also to the elision of women from the histories of digital computing -- what Marie Hicks describes as the "labor feminization and gendered technocracy" that characterised the development of computers in the Information Age (2017) -- I will argue that the Niedecker and Plath's sense of the exploited and effaced feminine continues to resonate in the gender politics of contemporary of networks and technology.

## **Stranger Things in Strange Times: Surveillance, Nostalgia and Contemporary American politics**

*Antonia Mackay*

In 2016, Netflix aired the first season of its new series, *Stranger Things* (2016 - ). Premised as a science-fiction show, *Stranger Things* takes its inspiration from the 1980s, focusing on the nostalgic teen narratives made famous by Steven Spielberg and John Hughes movies from the era. With self-referential nods to '80s cinematic classics such as *E.T.* (1982), *St Elmo's Fire* (1985), *Ghostbusters* (1984), *The Goonies* (1985), *Sixteen Candles* (1984), *Aliens* (1984) and *The Exorcist* (1973), the Netflix series blurs the boundary between contemporary and nostalgic cultural product. *Stranger Things* is not alone in its '80s pop culture moment – recent film and television have also invested in the nostalgic, from *Summer of 84* (2018), to the remake of King's *It* (2017), and *Atomic Blonde* (2017), the 1980s have never been so popular. Such a cultural visual phenomenon is not unusual – we have long looked back at past decades with rose-tinted spectacles as evidenced by the ongoing fascination with the fifties (in *Mad Men* and *Revolutionary Road* for instance), but the resurgence of such a particular historic nostalgia seems to have deeper resonance within our contemporary moment. Given the tumultuous nature of our current political era and in the wake of Trump's inauguration in 2017, the popular screen turn toward the Regan era is of note, replete with references to the rise of the Christian Coalition, the Cold War and the excess associated with the growing consumerist and capitalist tastes of yuppie culture. It is also of note that the 1980s saw great technological advancement and a strengthening of the 1971 global surveillance network named ECHELON. This paper will close read Season 1 and 2 of *Stranger Things* in light of its use of surveillance systems, drawing parallels between the then emergent technologies and the show's various surveilling structures (such as the Hawkins National Laboratory and the Upside Down). I aim to interrogate these spaces in terms of their political relevance - both in relation to the 1980s American political culture, and that of the contemporary moment. Engaging with the notion of the ideal American family, the (inverted) idyllic past, and the influence of politics on screen culture, this paper views the role of nostalgia as a means to re-evaluate the importance of *Stranger Things* in strange (political) times.

## **Checking Out the Books: Textuality and the Archive in Late Cold War Culture**

*Daniel Cordle*

In Clint McCown's 1984 short story, *Survivalists*, Sheila asks John what he would do if there was a nuclear war. 'I'd go to the library,' he tells her, because with 'a knapsack full of the right books ... I could survive anywhere, indefinitely.' She is not impressed: 'while you're checking out your books, everybody else would be getting guns. You wouldn't stand a chance.'

Yet, in literature set after nuclear war, lots of people head to the library after the Bomb drops. There is, indeed, a fascination in 1980s nuclear literature with books and reading, with the library providing a particularly fraught site for these anxious projections of a nuclear future. In many texts, the preservation or destruction of books and libraries is a central focus.

This paper maps the preoccupation with the revised status of the text in projected post-nuclear worlds depicted by British and American fiction of the late Cold War. Drawing on the concept of the archive formulated in Jacques Derrida's influential article, 'No Apocalypse, Not Now: Seven Missiles, Seven Missives' (1984), it explores the significance of these vulnerable textualities and their intersection with the currents animating postmodern culture. The recurring fixation on reading, it argues, provides a way for writers to engage the existential challenge posed by thermonuclear war.

## Rethinking New Materialism 2

### **Is Matter Ethical? Is Ethics Material? An Enquiry into the Ethical Dimension of Karen Barad's Agential Realism**

*Małgorzata Kowalcze*

The objective of this paper is to consider the practicability of the ethical model implied by Karen Barad's ethico-onto-epistemological theory. I wish to ask the question of whether the idea of individual responsibility, which appears to constitute the backbone of traditional ethics, can be reconciled with the new materialistic idea of the intra-activity of matter, which calls human individualism and independency into question. According to Karen Barad agency is the quality not limited to human actors only. No longer can humans be perceived as independent beings capable of making autonomous choices, because the non-human subjects actively influence their decisions. That said, human behaviour cannot be reduced to a set of mechanical involuntary responses to external factors (or internal ones for that matter, since plethora of different bacteria shape our perception from within our bodies). When scrutinized through the lens of Barad's agential realism, the picture of personal responsibility becomes hazy: if 'blame' cannot be justly attributed to either human or non-human actants, where else should it be placed? Perhaps the validity of the very idea of blame, understood as the immediate result of a free subject's independent activity, should be questioned? Liberatory and somewhat romantic, as the ideas of intra-activity as well as 'intra-material community', where every form of existence matters, are, they do prompt one to ask the question of their applicability to a human being's conduct of everyday life.

### **The Crisis is Real. A Material-Discursive Approach to Corbyn and the NHS Crisis**

*Calvin Duggan*

This paper is concerned with claims to a crisis in/of the NHS made by Jeremy Corbyn at Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) on 14 March 2018. First, this extremely close analysis is an attempt to recapture the political potency of the concept of crisis itself by apprehending the materialisation of any given crisis as—to use Karen Barad's term—a material-discursive practice, rather than as a (solely) discursive description of a static world. At the same time, to test the limits of Barad's framework, this paper asks how we can take account of the particular material-discursive practices that are made to matter within the domain of formal politics, paying specific attention to the role of individual (political) power and authority. Barad dismisses the significance of intentionality, but can—or should—we be so quick to do so? The analysis here interrogates Corbyn's part in the co-constitution of this specific iteration of the NHS crisis, asking to what degree he



can be held responsible and/or accountable for both what is made to matter and what is excluded from mattering. If, as Barad insists, one can intra-act responsibly with/in the world, it would suggest that one can also do so irresponsibly. This paper contends that Corbyn intra-acts irresponsibly, in that he misses opportunities to rework the status quo and does not fully account for the exclusions and foreclosures he helps constitute. Ultimately, this paper aims to provide a tentative example-through-practice of a new materialist evaluation of the responsibility of an individual political actor in the constitution of a crisis.

## **For a Modest Human Exceptionalism: Simone de Beauvoir and the “New Materialisms”**

*Sonia Kruks*

This paper engages critically with the “new materialisms” by bringing them into conversation with Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex*. The new materialisms offer an important challenge to “human exceptionalism” in Western thought, calling attention to the materiality of the human and effectively criticizing still-pervasive conceptions of “man” as an autonomous “sovereign subject.” However, they overstate their claims, tending to ignore what still remains distinctive to human life, namely the potential for freedom. As such, they offer few resources for a critical politics.

Like the new materialists, Beauvoir also dwells on the materiality of human life. She too explores the inextricably embodied qualities that human beings share with other sentient life-forms. There is a “transcendence” in all living phenomena, she writes in *The Second Sex*, and “a project swells from every function.” However, she insists, although it is inextricably material, always embodied, human freedom is also qualitatively distinct from the “agency” that new materialists attribute to material phenomena writ large. It follows that oppression, the blocking or suppression of freedom, is also a uniquely human phenomenon, and it is one for which we may attribute human responsibility alone. Although one may, for example, attribute “agency” to a flood, as Latour does, we cannot say it oppresses us. We can, however, rightly assert this of human practices, such as those that Beauvoir shows perpetuate the oppression of women and other subordinated groups. While sharing important affinities with the new materialisms Beauvoir’s more modest “human exceptionalism” offers better groundings for a critical politics.

# Immanence, Conflict and Institution 1

## Rereading Rancière beyond immanence? Cartographies of the possible and registers of experimentation

Anders Fjeld

Jacques Rancière's idea of politics is often understood in terms of horizontal, social relations that only exist in interruptions of the social order, based on a conception of power as essentially hierarchical. As Žižek suggests, this amounts to a "marginal politics" limited to brief explosions of political subversion that exclude any aspiration of transforming existing power structures. However, instead of reading Rancière in terms of such a binary opposition between politics and police, which is certainly characteristic of his most famous political work *La Mésentente* (1995), I propose to draw on other works in order to redefine his concept of politics as well as his analysis of the social field. In this perspective, the social space is not divided between two logics, but fragmented by multiple gaps. Rather than thinking in terms of contradictory relations of forces, one would rather analyze a political situation in terms of a fluid and strategic field of relations between different registers of experimentation. Politics, thus, is not an ever-renewed resistance against generic domination, but a strategic experimentation related to the treatment of situated problems. In this presentation, I would like to develop this rereading of Rancière as a way of answering the problem of "immanence" and also present some hypotheses on the abovementioned "registers of experimentation".

## From social inquiry to political subjectivation. Romano Alquati in the heretical marxism

Matteo Polleri

The inquiry on the material living conditions in its different forms constitutes one of the main instruments in the social sciences and critical theory of society. From an anthropological, psychological and sociological perspective, by studying the perceptions and the effects of the social structure one can theoretically define the research questions and practically understand how to intervene in the reality. Due to these features, the inquiry has an undoubted critical function, which has been highlighted by several authors. Marx and heterodox Marxism influenced the transformation of social inquiry in a critical way, imposing a theoretical and a political change. During the Fifties, the *Johnson Forest Tendency* in the U.S. and the French review *Socialism ou Barbarie* started to reflect upon the issue of the workers' politicization. Few years later, the Italian "workerism" deeply dealt with this problem. The figure of Romano Alquati – a sociologist who has been active in the reviews *Quaderni Rossi* and *Classe Operaia* during the Sixties – well illustrates the complex twist between political activism and sociological and philosophical reflections through a Marxist perspective. The aim of my paper is precisely to retrace the role played by Alquati within the heterodox European Marxism in relation to the concept of "co-research". First, I will deal with Alquati's philosophical and political heritage, focusing on the influences he received from Lukàcs, Italian anthropology and French phenomenology. Secondly, I will show some possible connections between Alquati's methodological insights and Foucault's works with the *Groupe d'Information sur les Prisons*.

## **Savage democracy with and beyond Lefort and Abensour**

*Arthur Guichoux*

By contrast with Italian theory, political philosophy's landscape in general is also marked by a French critical theory which aims at rethinking democracy, power and politics. In this marginal stream, it is up to Claude Lefort to have founded the concept of savage democracy, in which democracy is based on conflict and can not be mastered by any institution or theory. This machiavellian understanding refers to the experiences of councils' democracy but also to right's struggles and transversal conflictuality that divides a whole society without seeking or trying to seize the power. It was reformulated by Miguel Abensour as insurgent democracy which stands against the State, which leads to a politics of resistance without any possibility of lasting in time. This theoretical stalemate raises the question of the relationship, the link between order and disorder, conflict and institution? The question is even more acute if we consider that wild democracy refers to the extra-institutional side of democracy that completes and subverts its institutional side. This leads to the central matter of for contemporary social movements (for example concerning Spanish municipalism in the wake of squares movements): how to ensavage institutions without being domesticated?

**Lunch – 13:00-14:00**

## Parallel Sessions 3 – 14:00-15:30

### Thinking Critically With Care 1

#### **Feminist para-ethnographies: De-medicalising interdisciplinary in (health)care**

*Andrea Núñez Casal*

In this paper, I ask: is it possible to develop a ‘critical friendship’ (Rose, 2013) between the social sciences and humanities and the life sciences in order to find alternative solutions to antimicrobial resistance (AMR)? In response to this question, I engage with decolonial literature on *Buen Vivir* (De La Cadena, 2010; Gonzalez and Macias Vazquez, 2015; Gudynas, 2011; Harding, 2016; Lanza, 2012; Leon, 2012; Walsh, 2010) and feminist debates on care and care practices (Bellacasa, 2011, 2012; Martin, Myers, Viseu, 2015; Mol, 2008). I develop what I call ‘feminist para-ethnographies,’ an intersectional method that entangles embodied experiences of AMR and antibiotic use with ethnography and ‘fugitive’ qualitative data in technoscientific claims (Nading, 2016). I propose feminist para-ethnographies as an interdisciplinary and biosocial method to tackle both antibiotic overuse and AMR through the realisation of what Denise Riley calls ‘socialised biology’ (Riley, 1983), which refers to biology “lived within particular lives” (ibid: 40).

Feminist para-ethnographies is a critical method that records, documents and provides situated accounts of embodied biological experience. It complements what ‘evidence-based biomedicine’ fails to register and see. I argue that feminist para-ethnographies figures as a theoretical and methodological proposition for a future of interdisciplinary knowledge practices of co-existence, care and decoloniality.

#### **Care relations in the cystic fibrosis clinic: distancing, proximities and convergences**

*Christina Buse, et al*

This paper examines relations of care in the cystic fibrosis clinic, revisiting debates around proximity, closeness and distance (Milligan and Wiles 2010) in a context where care delivery involves segregation of patients to prevent cross-infection. We use the concept of ‘hot spots’, analysing sites where material proximities and convergences can create risk of cross infection (Brown and Kelly 2014), which is mitigated through practices of ‘distancing’. Previous research has discussed ‘distancing’ as an affective strategy for managing emotion, or as something that diminishes care (Maguire 1985, Reeves and Decker 2012). We discuss ‘distancing’ as a practice of care, that involves using material and spatial strategies to separate patients. We explore these issues drawing on data from *Pathways, Practices and Architectures* (PARC), an AHRC funded study of three cystic fibrosis clinics using qualitative methods including visual mapping, walking interviews, ethnography and sketch reportage.

Analysis of particular hotspots – lifts, corridors, waiting areas, clinic rooms – reveals the often invisible labour involved keeping patients separated, entangling a diverse range of actors and materials. The vigilance of staff in maintaining spatial and temporal distance between patients was often regarded as care-full, reducing patient concerns about potential cross infection. Yet findings also highlight tensions, divisions and hierarchies between the practices of different actors, and between issues of: safety versus sociability; ‘warm’ versus ‘cold’ care; and personalisation versus segregation.

## **Choreography of care**

*Keely Macarow*

Like many, I have navigated illness and health care settings as care giver and patient. As a creative practice researcher, I have also explored health and wellbeing through interdisciplinary research with medical practitioners and social scientists who engage with data and evidence, and with artists who respond creatively to lived experience. While researchers enter interdisciplinary research from a range of perspectives, it is the intersection and entanglement of observation, evidence, creativity and lived experience that allows new dialogues and possibilities for critical and creative care scholarship and practices to emerge.

For this paper, I will discuss research conducted by an interdisciplinary team of art, design, elder care and nursing researchers from the Karolinska Institutet, University of Arts Stockholm, Konstfack and RMIT University who have investigated space and place in Swedish end of life care settings (2017-2019). For this research, the choreography of residents, staff and visitors of two Stockholm elder care residences were observed to make sense of the relationship, gestures and movements of a myriad of bodies within these settings. Gestures and bodily encounters were focused on during fieldwork on site and through a Hand Festival at the Malarbaken elder care residence (Stockholm, 2018).

Our research illuminated the hand as a key site for encounters, language, gestures, touch, intimacy and communication for elders, family and care givers and researchers alike, just as my own hand became deformed through severe osteoarthritis. Here, life and research revealed the critical and creative function of our hands and the choreography of care in health settings.

# Multiplying Citizenship 1

## **Fuck-ability: Intimating Sovereignty and Sexual Citizenship in Benjamin and Bataille**

*Chrys Papaioannou*

This paper responds to the stream's expanded conception of citizenship by interrogating the libidinal and political economies of inter-war thinkers Walter Benjamin and Georges Bataille, foregrounding the left-libertarian common ground underpinning their intellectual apparatus, and placing them in dialogue with contemporary queer-feminist debates on sexual citizenship. Although the discursive category of sexual citizenship was originally developed through positing the sexual citizen as a subject of civic rights (Evans, 1993), more recent engagements have allowed for a re-conceptualisation of the term that foregrounds queer kinship, sovereignty and temporal self-determination (Duggan, 1994; Eng, 2010; Rifkin, 2017). As this paper suggests, the sovereign sexual subject articulated by Benjamin and Bataille has the potential to be read in such queer terms, whether in Bataille's transgressive Catholicism and his non-reproductive fucking of/in excess, or in Benjamin's latent cosmo-politics articulated through his theory of language and philosophy of historical time, the latter unmistakably resonating with contemporary critiques of chrono-normativity (Freeman, 2010). Whilst acknowledging the limitations of anachronistically reclaiming Benjamin and Bataille as thinkers of queer kinship (their evocation of the whore remains wedded to the hetero-patriarchal conjugality of their time, for instance), I propose 'fuck-ability' as a conceptual tool which can be utilised alongside the other '-abilities' highlighted by Benjamin scholar Samuel Weber (2010), and which points to a formulation of the 'capacity to act/speak' that successfully divests the political imaginary of a community of sexual subjects from its indelible tie to the rights, privileges and forms of belonging afforded to it by the nation-state.

## **Surveying the Landscape of the Social Contract: The Insufficiency of Being as a Juridical Subject**

*Elizabeth Pimentel*

Feminisms, despite differing philosophies and agendas for action, would find at least one point of commonality in coming to terms with the juridical subject as a gendered entity: agency under the violent discordances of a rights-based citizenry. Within this system of inclusion, exist machineries of exclusionary practices that hinder the ability of women, as well as other marginalised communities who are relatively new ingresses to citizenship, to exercise rights beyond the theoretical abstractions of the neutral subject. The nature of empowerment is premised, though not exclusively, on the ontological implications of sexual difference. Individuals enter the world in a body that acts as their medium of representation in the world. Whether I feel myself to be a woman at all times; whether I am supposed to know I am a woman; or am conditioned to act accordingly and accept certain arbitrary realities in my experience of the lived world, these considerations are predisposed by the near-inevitability of inhabiting a biologically coded body. Childcare and household management, and any work undertaken in the domestic setting, is unremunerated and unaccounted for in the national GDP. In paid employment, my salary and position are contingent upon the potentialities and

actualities of a menstruating and reproductive body. If I were to experience physical violence it would most likely be in the form of sexual crime. These phenomena abound despite formalised gender equality. The fact that this equality must be codified in law suggests an implicit and established hierarchy that regulates the complex mechanisms of substantive rights across a swathe of human conditions.

### **The ‘Tragedy’ of Residency: local citizenship in Italy between emancipation and social control**

*Enrico Gargiulo*

Residency is an important legal status in Italy: it is a sort of local membership, regulated by central authorities, granted by each municipality to the people who ‘legally’ (if non-citizens) and habitually live within its territory.

Within the Italian legal system, residency is a right that gives access to many rights. Without it, these rights only exist on paper. Therefore, municipal registration occupies a strategic position. It is a status that, at least in part, levels the differences between citizens and (‘legal’) non-citizens, functioning as a sort of local – or urban – citizenship embracing nationals and non-nationals.

Besides being a right, residency is also a duty. Every person who lives in a legal (if non-citizen) and stable way within the territory of a municipality is obliged to declare their presence and apply to be registered. Residency is a duty because enrolment at the registry office strives to have the *de jure* population correspond exactly to the *de facto* population. This way, registration is a strategic tool for controlling the local population by acquiring information about its composition, its characteristics, and its movements.

For these reasons, residency challenges the idea of a universal and unitarian subject of rights and, at the same time, the inclusionary view of citizenship. On the one hand, since it is often used by local authorities as a selective tool – by illegally tightening the requirements provided for by national laws for obtaining municipal registration or introducing new requirements – it shows how the recognition of a certain status does not automatically mean that the rights linked to it can be concretely exercised. On the other hand, residency, as it is a tool for monitoring the territory, unveils how the historical process of legal construction of the subject of right lies on harsh forms of social control.

# Art Manifestos 1

## Introduction

*Evangelos Chrysagis and Panos Kompatsiaris*

### **Never-ending Empire roadwork: towards a theory of what is and has been - and perhaps will continue to be – a mediated and artistic lacuna in academic and public institutions**

*Helly Chahal*

Three distinct but connectable positions are sketched here. Firstly an outline of a theory - noticed as a lacuna in academic and public institutions alike - is explicated around narrative constructs variously found in artistic sound-art 'manifestos'. Those relate specifically to categories of various elite class formations and how these interact with race, ethnicity, religion and economic, social and military power. Recent public-political events indicate the pressing need to address such issues even when they have appeared so fundamentally interminable. Secondly the possibility of changing ontological reality in public culture is evidenced through innovative and experimental artistic movements and the influence they have variously had. This is important, for the art manifesto – if indeed that is what it is – cannot and must not exist in a vacuum. For the requisite traction to gain currency, it must interfere with – and enhance - the world. Thirdly a complex theoretical format for understanding and developing larger subtractive activity - within compounds of moral and social progression - is elaborated. This takes the form of a cluster concept which seeks to envelope activity and rubric within teleological formats designed to withstand invasive and deleterious impulses through object augmented reasoning and development. Artistic manifestos detailed here variously define the need to construct genuinely democratic, plural and egalitarian institutions and cultures which actively reflect the publics they serve. A variety of audio and visual material will be used alongside this paper.

### **No title**

*Jacobus Koster*

The art manifesto specifically poses the question of the relation between politics and art. Always and necessarily derivative of *The Communist Manifesto*, the art manifesto embraces an explicit ideological position which it strives to actualize or make efficacious. In producing manifestos, therefore, art conceives of itself as critique. The art manifesto denounces and obstreperates, flatters and cajoles; but most of all it tries to revolutionize the consciousness of its recipient, to make him or her amenable to the new. That this "new" has a decidedly political charge is perhaps best illustrated by the historical circumstances in which most manifestos were written, what Mary Ann Caws refers to as "the great manifesto moment" (2001, xxii). The period from the launch of the first Futurist manifesto in 1909 to Lyubov Popova's statement on Suprematism in 1919 coincides with the revolutionary high point and subsequent splintering of the international workers' movement. The politics of the times was informed by a keen sense of the historicity of the present and the possibility of transcending it. In appropriating the manifesto format, artists tapped into the radical politics which existed



independently of them but created the conditions for the politicization and contestation of aesthetic values. The art manifesto, understood as an historically-grounded phenomenon, thus offers a way of thinking about the relation between art and politics. It establishes an hierarchy (politics comes before art) which might offer a salutary alternative to today's uncritical endorsements of the politics of art and aesthetics. It also points the way for a discussion of what it might mean to make political art today.

## Difference, Evolution and Biology 1

### **Why There is No Sexual Relationship: On the Coming Materialism of Eros**

*Oleg Gelikman*

Fragment 55 of Adorno's *Minima Moralia* contains the following stark excursion into the natural history of sexuality: "Pleasure is a late achievement, scarcely older than consciousness. If one observes how animals compulsively copulate, as if under a spell, then one sees through the proverb 'Bliss was given even to the worm' as a piece of idealistic lying, at least where females are concerned, who encounter love in unfreedom, and who are recognized only as objects of violence." Is "sexuality" then a work of collective mystification, and a malevolent one at that? More radically: Is there sex on Earth?

To begin approaching these questions, my paper will interrogate Adorno's fragment, and argue that it presents a version of the thesis of the impossibility of sexual relationship, albeit with a definitively materialist twist. While Marcuse's sexuality was "repressive" and Foucault's a "disciplinary positivity," Adorno proposes that "sexuality" is fundamentally mnemonic. While not subject to liberation or re-invention, the phenomenon of sex remains salvageable because of its ambivalence. To supply a contrast to Adorno's redemptive reading of the resistance to the sexual, I point to Wyndham Lewis' hyper-investment into this resistance, and the negative utopia of sexual extinction elaborated in his early prose.

In the wake of Alenka Zupančič's *What is Sex?*, the juxtaposition of Adorno's redemption and Lewis' abjection assumes a sharper urgency than before. Have we reached the point of "either/or," Adorno or Lewis? Or does critical theory fail altogether when it comes to registering the renewed *resistance to the sexual*?

### **The difference affective neurobiology makes**

*Andrew Bevan*

This paper examines the concept of difference as it functions within the turn to affect in neuroscience and philosophy. Both fields thematized emotional aspects of the body; a rapprochement between natural sciences and humanities; and a rethinking of causality, intentionality and identity. Yet the field remains contentiously divided. Disputes arise from differences in understanding of key terms (notably between affect and emotion) and the place of the intentional subject within expanded, flattened conceptions of agency, causality and the animate/inanimate.

I clarify the terminological confusion by uncovering the over-determination of affect by the active/passive that originated with the Latin translation of the Greek *pathos*. I therefore uncover a broader sense of *pathos* as bindings of implicit differences prior to any explicit separation of agent and patient. Meanwhile, in contemporary neuroscience, action is being redefined through ‘prediction processing’ theories where error as the difference between world and organisms’ implicit models of that world motivates action. Affective neurobiology then describes this radical contingency of expectation and actuality, the organism in its self-difference, in specifically affective terms.

Difference therefore functions in biology to manifest biological organisms as bindings of contingent, implicit differences with a making explicit of those differences through felt errors arising from the organism’s necessary difference and togetherness with world. Finally, through a discussion of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, I discuss how such an approach could overcome the interminable constructionist/essentialist debate without risking biological essentialisms and continuing critiques of power, discourse and sexual, racial and class differences.

### **Spaltungstetigkeit: ‘schizophrenia’ across the great divide**

*Michael Flexer*

The psychotic break, the rupture with the previous or other self is a commonplace in clinical, pathographic and pop cultural accounts of ‘schizophrenia’. For Freud this rupture within the self creates a doubled rupture: that between the analysable neurotic and the unanalysable (unreachable over the break) paraphrenic. Yet the status of this double rupture is profoundly uncertain. Biographer Sylvia Nasar describes mathematician John Nash’s psychotic break as a ‘strange and horrible metamorphosis.’ The metaphoric clash between break and metamorphosis is instructive. The drama, and crisis of ipseity, in psychosis both nourishes and is borne from an attempt to reconcile some form of continuity (*Stetigkeit*) over some form of split (*Spaltung*). This tension strikes to the very heart of two mutually entwined though different questions: what is trauma and what is psychosis?

This paper will map the centrifugal forces constitutive of these narratives of psychosis – specifically diagnostic, epidemiological and aetiological, as well as pathographic – in order to understand the differing or shared characteristics between the modes of discontinuous unity and enduring, repetitive trauma, both of which are held within the Deleuzian conceptualisation of the Event: ‘the Event alone, *Eventum tantum* for all contraries, which communicates with itself through its own distance and resonates across all of its disjuncts.’ It will then put these delineated lines of meaning into productive discursive play with the neuroanatomical and genetic models of ‘schizophrenic’ difference and continuity, tracing how the existentially shattering yet binding Deleuzian trauma of the psychotic break resonates through the disjuncts of these differing, competing conceptualisations of psychosis.

**Break — 15:30-16:00**

## Parallel Sessions 4 – 16:00-17:30

### Thinking Critically With Care 2

#### Opening the medicine cabinet and finding black boxes

*Adam Christianson and Franziska Sörgel*

Technology is ambivalent. Often technology represents a materialization of our needs, deep-seated wishes and hopes. Yet, technologies frequently center in dystopian visions, exceeding human abilities and making us obsolete. A double character becomes apparent: What we project on technologies and what affect they evoke is opaque. To date this phenomenon is explained in STS as the displacement or ‘black-boxing’ of historical relations in technologies. Unfortunately, this perspective often reproduces this ambivalence, seemingly unproblematically. How do we avoid ‘opening a black-box’, only to find it empty? Does it matter that we forget, or relations become obsolete? While technologies are indeed black-boxed, we argue some ‘black-boxes’ have greater implications for enacting care than others. Drawing on the works of Derrida, Stengers and Puig de la Bellacassa, we examine parallels between the ‘black-boxing’ of social-technological relations and the *pharmakon*, an animating force which simulates and replaces relationships. We analyze two technologies: Self-driving cars and HIV-Prophylaxis, to outline how the concept further clarifies the obfuscation of care and social relations into technology. This speculative experiment asks us to imagine how care is facilitated through both technologies. Though one might reasonably assume the pharmaceutical technology as pure *pharmakon* and the AI as pure *techne*, a more complete reading of the term flips these notions on their heads. Not all technologies are equally ambivalent, and understanding this distinction can speak to careful engineering. We therefore contend that the *pharmakon* is a conceptually powerful analytical tool for discerning how humans relate to themselves, each other and their environment.

#### Ayahuasca and the mental health care of prison inmates in Brazil

*Marcelo Mercante*

The mental health care of inmates has been an issue since the creation of modern prison system. The “Acuda” association was created in 2001, following an extremely violent rebellion at the “Urso Branco” prison in Porto Velho, Rondônia state, Brasil. Acuda’s main objective is to help the re-socialization of inmates through alternative techniques, such as yoga, meditation, ayurvedic massage and psychotherapy, but also ayahuasca sessions. Ayahuasca is a psychoactive brew used by many original Amazonian people, but also used as the main sacrament in several Brazilian religious institutions. Inmates go through life-transforming experience during ayahuasca sessions, helping them to assume a non-criminal life once they are outside jail, but also improving the quality of their lives while they are undertaking their sentence.

During ayahuasca sessions inmates experience intense revival of their crimes, helping them to change perspective concerning the facts that led them to incarceration. They enter in a deep process of regret, helping them to develop the desire for assuming a new way of life. The author developed fieldwork at Acuda and also at the “Lar de Frei Manoel”, the religious institution responsible for ayahuasca sessions, taking interviews with inmates.

### **Compelled by an emotional economy of care: exploring the ‘career’ of ‘widening participation’ graduates**

*Ricky Gee*

Informed via Derridean notions of radical hospitality, this paper highlights ‘findings’ from a longitudinal research project exploring the ‘career’ articulations of a small group of widening participation students, through to 3 years post-graduation, that now work in ‘care’ settings. Utilising innovative methodology, sensitive to context – as indicated by Gee (2017) – the paper outlines how ‘career’ articulations can be read via the motif of ‘paradox’. It is argued that the longitudinal aspect of the research indicates how ‘career’ articulation becomes connected via a diachronic enduring sense of paradoxical articulation, where those that find themselves in ‘caring’ professions are compelled to enact an emotional economy of care; where the overcoming of turbulent life events occurred due to the help of others that now requires an emotional return. The paper also highlights that such ‘findings’ are aided by participants embracing sociological notions of ‘career’ - via a form of critical pedagogy that challenges ‘employability’ - which allows for a prominent lens upon subjectivity and a multitude of strands enacted by the participants. The paper thus reflects upon how notions of ‘care’ provide an unacknowledged motivational pull to ‘career’ enactment so as to inform future policy, pedagogy and research to challenge the hegemonic paradigm of employability found in most HE institutions.

## Multiplying Citizenship 2

### **Agency Beyond Crossing: Re-Thinking the Politics of Migration Through the ‘Political’**

*Antonella Patteri*

Moving away from the integrationist method of representative democracies where refusal, escape and dissent can only signify disagreement within citizens’ own expectation of role, this paper looks at the (in)visible politics of migration. It argues that in order to recognise migrants’ political engagements we need to look at the *unexceptional politics* (Apter 2017) and the *imperceptible politics* (Papadopoulos et al. 2008) of their ‘silenced movement’. The only way to see these excesses of sociability beyond their shaped existence is that of moving from the edge of politics to the core of their reinvention within a politics of necessity, that is the political.

As Badiou (1999) remarks, the political can only be thought outside the institutions that make formal politics. As such, this is not the space of exception (Schmitt 2005; Agamben 1998) as the space/time of the political now moves beyond the lawful unlawful to an everywhere locus of *necessity*. When ‘migrants’ avoid relating to the State for the

time necessary to their political and visible re-assessment are, in fact, producing alternative ways of experiencing conditions of exteriority to given politics. In so doing, 'migrants' re-assert their 'political' presence by un-settling widely shared assumptions about mainstream politics, especially in terms of what signifies political action and agency. While Squire (2011) links 'politics of control' and 'politics of migration' to show how the former structurally exceeds re-bordering practices, the production of these excesses goes beyond that of irregularity and 'acts of (non) citizenship'. *The political is more than in surplus.*

## **Immigrant Religion in American Literature: A Transdisciplinary Study in Borderland Identities, Neighborhood-Creation, and Post-Nationalism**

*Jeanne-Arli Crocker Hammer*

This dissertation promotes a post-nationalist agenda through the transdisciplinary discussion of six novels that serve as case studies for my focus on transnational religiosity in first- and second-generation American literature. My discussion of religion in Ana Castillo's *So Far From God*, Sandra Cisneros' *House on Mango Street*, Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior*, Gish Jen's *Mona in the Promised Land*, Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West*, and Mohja Kahf's *The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf* challenges the dominant, unified, Protestant narrative of the nation-state, revealing instead myriad mestiza narratives that communicate the reality of our (to use Jose David Saldivar's purposeful pronoun) diverse, interstitial, transnational lives and locations, and thus exemplifies and champions the post-nationalist agenda. These novels demonstrate the prominent and stabilizing effect of religion for immigrants cultivating imaginaries and neighborhoods - as they engage in the production of their localities - as well as the hardships many experience as their own religions and imaginaries edge that of the dominant narrative, turning their hybrid identities and neighborhoods into borderlands. I also deconstruct harmful binaries - non-Protestant versus Protestant, Islam versus the West, the nation versus the neighborhood - as I analyze novels that challenge the exclusionary construct of the modernist genre itself, and that describe all the complex and valid ways there are to practice our American religions, to write our American literature, and to be and become American in "Nuestra America."

## **The Individual and Polity of Post-Global Civil Society**

*Genevieve Costello*

I investigate potential concepts of post-nation-state citizenship and post-globalisation civil society by critiquing the case of American architect Keller Easterling's project "MANY," a heavy information system in the form of an application, initially presented at the Venice Architecture Biennale in 2018.

MANY aims to buttress migration logistics and infrastructure with the same vigor and capabilities that successfully lubricate global trade. It disregards the equating of migration and effected individuals with crisis, with judgment, or pity. It disregards the assumption of the desire for permanent placement elsewhere as a citizen, long term resident, or asylum seeker. Individuals are referred to as mobile people and travellers,

terms that reflect MANY's inquiry into effecting "another kind of cosmopolitan mobility...organiz[ed] around intervals of time or seasons of a life."

In order to situate the conditions of the individual refuting the traditional legal subjecthood, I probe MANY as a lever that could imagine new relations of *exchange as agency* and *belonging as responsibility* - individual and polity, movement and impermanence, yet situated, place.

To do so, I provide a critical historical context to the citizen and social organizations, from the tribe, institution, market, and network (David Rondefeldt) and modalities of exchange (Kojin Karatani), with interjections by way of Silvia Federici. I juxtapose the relationship between recent globalization and post/denationalisation and membership types (Saskia Sassen, Yasemin Nohuglu Soysal), logics of exclusion (Engin Isin), and analyze the implications of the commons, neo-nomadism, cosmo-localism of Peer to Peer theory, (Michel Bouwens, Vasilis Kostakis, Alex Pazaitis, among others).

## Art Manifestos 2

### Language games with "Manifesto"

*Nana Ariel*

One of the things that makes the manifesto genre "notoriously so difficult to define" as Luca Somigli (2003) states, is the variations on the meaning of the word "manifesto" itself in popular discourse.

What happens when "manifesto", as the emblem of a committed artistic or political action, is used as the title of consumer products such as perfume? What do literary critics mean when they say that a certain work is "a manifesto" rather than art? When does this label appear as a superlative, and when, in contrast, is it a form of denunciation? What does J. L. Austin mean when he hopes, in the conclusion of "Doing things with Words" (1962), that his work is **not** seen as "an individual manifesto"?

Following Ludwig Wittgenstein's concept of "language game" (1953), and Galia Yanoshevsky's assertion that manifesto is a highly fluid genre (2009), this paper offers a reflection on "manifesto" as a multilayered, performative concept. Rather than exploring a corpus of manifestos, I will discuss the discursive status of "manifesto" as a word that enables multiple culture agents to perform various discursive actions.

The paper will ultimately show that even when the concept of "manifesto" is borrowed, transformed, and used in vague forms, it still builds upon the history and the aura of the genre in its historical meaning. At the same time, examining its various appearances in discourse may help us understand not so much what manifesto is or isn't, but what is its contemporary pragmatic meaning, and how this concept is actually conceived and practiced.

### Exegesis as manifesto

*Paul Williams*

There is an increasing need for creative practitioners in higher education to justify, situate and contextualise their creative works as measurable research outputs. The impact, worth, relevance and contribution to new knowledge of such works is evaluated

by tools such as the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in the UK, or the Excellence in Research Australia (ERA), and each creative work, or Non Traditional Research Output (NTRO) is to be accompanied by a REF or ERA research statement in order to be counted as research. Similarly, any creative work (or artefact) presented for a Higher Degree in the UK and Australia, New Zealand, Canada) needs an accompanying exegesis, a contextual declaration that justifies and grounds the work in a theoretical, historical context of artistic practice.

These ERA/ REF statements, and especially the exegesis, can be seen as a form of manifesto, a declaration of the artist's intention and outcome, a 'speaking out' in order to centre the work and to affirm the value and place of the creative work as legitimate research. Equating the exegesis (or REF/ERA statement) as manifesto frees the creative practitioner from a prescriptive, mechanistic account of the work's impact and towards a more performative declaration of artistic endeavour. A manifesto performs itself in the same way as the artefact is performative and is itself an art form which employs the rhetorical and artistic strategies of the art work itself in order to affirm the artist's visions, and subverts and disrupts traditional academic discourse. The exegesis as manifesto not only transforms the manifesto into a practical tool for measuring creative outputs as research, but allows artists in the academy to declare themselves, create presence and subvert traditional discourse binaries of academic/ creative.

## **A Brand (new?) Manifesto**

*Danai Tselenti*

'Brand manifestos' are the most recently advanced and ever so popular guise of the manifesto form. Various branding types ranging from retail, product, corporate to even personal brands are being marketed as brand manifestos. Despite the growing research interest in brands and managerially and marketing-oriented branding practices, brand culture remains under-researched within social sciences and the humanities in general, frequently being dismissed as a central facet of commercialism and consumerism. Particularly, the body of empirical work that explores the use of the manifesto form within the context of brand culture is notably scarce. In an attempt to fill the aforementioned gap in the extant literature, this paper presents a pilot study -largely exploratory in nature-, which aims at shedding new light into marketing discourse on brand manifestos. It is based on content and discourse analysis of textual data drawn from a sizeable corpus of randomly selected web pages, web log entries and downloadable material. Preliminary results suggest that the appropriation of the main features of the manifesto form within a marketing strategy context aims at adding "bonding value" around shared identity, expectations and value frames and performs the "cultural work" of transforming "commercial exchanges" into "gift exchanges". In this respect, it is argued that while brands are "core values of capitalism", closely related to the main paradigm of consumption, the discourse on brand manifestos is based upon conceptual premises largely derived from the well-documented "paradigm of the gift".

## Bringing Metaphor Home

*Tom White*

Metaphors We Live By heralded an interest in metaphor as central to how we think and act in everyday life. There has been no shortage of research since which seeks to apply theoretical tools from metaphor theory to a range of disciplines. Semino's MELC project, for example, seeks to detail metaphor use in end-of-life care, but also to suggest better ways of communicating with patients and healthcare professionals.

As Metaphors We Live By's opening sentence admits, metaphor is regarded, by most, as merely a literary phenomenon, a 'device of the poetic imagination' (1980, p.3). It is natural, then, that contemporary metaphor theory has been applied, through cognitive poetics, with a view to enriching poetic analysis.

In contrast, there has been very little work done on how contemporary metaphor research can be applied when writing creatively. This is an incongruity, given how metaphor research in other fields has become more descriptive and applied.

In this manifesto I argue that, given the depth and breadth of metaphor theory's insights, this incongruity should be redressed, and offer potential frameworks in which this could happen.

I will draw on two theoretical models:

- The discourse dynamics approach to metaphor, which analyses metaphor use at the level of real-world discourse, engaging in a search for metaphoric systematicity that reveals the ideas, attitudes and values of speakers.
- Forceville's work on metaphor use in advertising, which saw him use a modified version of Fouconnier and Turner's blending theory to devise a creativity template for the production of multimodal metaphors.

In combining and modifying these two models, I will show that contemporary metaphor theory and creative writing have much to offer each other—that the act of 'bringing metaphor home' has both an aesthetic and an instrumental value.

## Gendered Technologies, Gender as Technology 2

### The International Council of University Microreparations

*Tyler Denmead*

## Reception & Book Launch — Room 300 at 17:30



---

# SATURDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> JULY

---

**Registration – 9:00-9:30**

**Parallel Sessions 1 – 9:30-11:00**

## Radical Ventriloquism 1

**AutoInterruption: Abstraction and disembodiment of the performed voice**

*Gemma Marmalade*

My current doctoral research concerns regard the process of abstraction and disembodiment of the performed voice. Taking direction from Mladen Dolar's observations on the object voice as an amorphous entity that 'goes up in smoke' (2006: 15) where the voice does not exist as either utterance or meaning exclusively; I am interested in how this aligns with the relationship between our outward and inward dialogues in conventional pedagogical contexts, and the anxieties of imposterhood in the quest of academic validation.

I propose to deliver a paper-read and seemingly conventional research presentation with visual slides which summarises the third of four research chapters from my draft Ph.D. thesis. This chapter specifically navigates theoretic concepts of the abstracted voice. However, throughout the dry, theory-laden paper, pre-recorded audio interruptions will gradually emanate from an invisible speaker. This will demonstrate my own inner-dialogue and abstracted 'voice' critiquing the paper being delivered, speaking an internal rollercoaster narrative of subtle passive aggressive undermining, to self-coaching affirmations, to existential damnation. My outward voice will attempt to ignore and stifle its subversive counterpart, gradually descending into aggressive vocal exchange and dual interrogation with an aurally omnipotent and entirely disembodied source.

This performance lecture responds to the concept of 'schizoid voice' described by psychologist Louis Sass and Gilles Deleuze in Beckett's use of voice as the incessant internal narrative presenting the sense of distorted perceptions and potential psychiatric presentations. This is particularly poignant in context to the institution, intellectual posturing and the researcher's crises in pursuit of the academic unicorn – the elusive contribution to knowledge.

## **Writing from diaspora as an act of radical ventriloquism**

*Ting J. Yiu and Nadja Schaetz*

Transnational writers and theorists increasingly seek to remedy the predominantly Eurocentric literary sphere. It interrogates creative disciplines that traditionally revolve around English language readership, audience, and critical theory. By deconstructing dominant narratives of how we perceive the world, how and where narratives of the self and others are constructed, transnational theory dislocates the center of knowledge production from a Eurocentric sphere and shifts the focal point firmly to the margins where the “other” traditionally resides. In an increasingly hybridised world, the diasporic writer occupies the disjuncture between an increasing necessity for “diverse” literary narratives and the re-examination of authoritative voices. Their narratives critique social location and belonging by recalibrating cultural identities in a post-colonial sphere.

The point of departure for this paper is a dialogue between the two authors and their disciplines — one grounded in artistic creation and one grounded in critical theory. It interrogates how differences are bridged and creates a framework for discussing meaning making in a complex post-diaspora world. In doing so, the paper reflects on contemporary discourse on transnational/transcultural writing and attempts to superimpose critical theory as a facet of the debate on voice, power and hybridity. Drawing on diaspora theory and Arendt’s concept of ‘visiting’, the paper investigates the multiplicity of body politics acting upon speech that establishes writing from the diaspora as an act of radical ventriloquism. It radically questions our constructed selves, and the culture(s) we represent and speak of, from, or about.

## **Desktop films: the act of seeing with someone else’s eyes**

*Gala Hernandez*

With the massification of digital technologies of image recording and video-sharing platforms, more and more artists are re-appropriating in their films vernacular video found online. Besides, during the Arab Spring, for the first time, popular practices of self-documentation of political uprisings with personal transportable devices recorded important history-making processes, and vernacular video became not only a way of recording the revolution but a way of producing it: these images were capable of making new political scenarios emerge (Zabunyan). Filmmakers like Peter Snowdon or Matthias Krepp, by editing vernacular video in their films, are performing a ventriloquist gesture which restores the revolutionary possibility of these events (Agamben).

Archiving not only records the event but produces it (Derrida). By archiving these images charged with history, these filmmakers generate an event that makes the uprising possible anew. According to Rancière’s division of the sensitive, they are actually repeating the uprising. The dialectic montage of these anonymous digital memories creates a panoptic constellation of the revolts. These filmmakers, not being direct witnesses, remotely rebuild their personal experience of them, referring to other’s memories as theirs, and thinking of themselves as the Other. Their subjectivity orchestrates a rewriting of the real in order to speak through someone else’s images and to see with someone else’s eyes. The I is not an Other anymore: it is to be found in the Other. This lecture will try to theorize the radical ventriloquism of these films and to explore the ethical issues that these “privileged” artists’ practises arise.

# Difference, Evolution and Biology 2

## **The Problem with Games: Towards a Deleuzian State of Nature Political Theory**

*Jeffrey Bell*

In this essay I will argue that a Deleuzian metaphysics of problems poses a serious challenge to traditional game-theoretic approaches to both political theory and evolutionary theory. The challenge this metaphysics poses, I shall argue, is in accounting for a ranking or maximization of preferences and outcomes when conditions are problematic and hence incapable of being reduced to a delimited and determinate set of knowable outcomes that are capable of being ranked, a ranking that then provides the explanatory power behind rational choice theory. A metaphysics of problems, by contrast, will account for the determinate preferences that are central to rational choice theory while also detailing the manner in which these determinate preferences presuppose a problematic condition that assures the emergence of preferences that one cannot yet qualitatively assess, and by assessing thus place in relationship to established preferences. By relating these arguments to John Dupré's processual philosophy of biology, we can begin to sketch a Deleuzian State of Nature political theory, a theory that attempts to account for the emergence of values in contexts of radical indeterminacy, and hence a political theory that prompts a rethinking of traditional state of nature theories and the rational choice variants that draw inspiration from them.

### **Evolution as selection of differences**

*Jernej Kaluza*

Discourse about evolution today often seems appropriated by the least progressive social forces, especially in the context of the imagination of the possibilities of the future of human and society. That is why are argumentations that are based in "evolutionary laws" are, in the context of critical theory, often a priori perceived as invalid.

However, in the proposed paper, I will argue that referencing to evolution does not necessarily imply a defense of unchanging identities of the past. Quite the opposite: understanding of (evolutionary) difference, derived from the specific reading of Darwin, Derrida and Deleuze, could offer a convincing background for the argumentations, that are not trying to argue for the return of the same (national, cultural, gender, etc.) identity back to its (past) self. On the opposite, evolution could also be seen as a constant production of different, new, and unrepresentable. As Derrida argues, difference differs: its materialization is a process of its differentiation. A similar understanding of the concept of difference leads Deleuze to a far-reaching thesis: what returns in (evolutionary) eternal return are differences (and not identities).

In such reading, evolutionary history does not reveal to us everything impossible, but more everything possible. However, this doesn't imply that everything possible is materialized in evolution. That is why the question of selection in evolution is so crucial. As I will argue, principles of evolutionary selection (natural selection, survival of the fittest, etc.), cannot be predicted, at least from the perspective of the finite being in evolution.

## **(Re)Thinking New Materialism with Whitehead: From Ontology to ‘Process Relation’**

*David Chandler*

New materialist, speculative and object-oriented thinking are becoming increasingly dominant across the social sciences and humanities. Hailed as a shift away from epistemology (seen to be too subject- or human-centred), new materialist approaches are often framed as overcoming the modernist bifurcation of culture/nature. This presentation will argue that the privileging of matter/ontology over thought/epistemology inverses and thereby reproduces the divide, rather than overcoming it. It thereby adds to recent debate by taking forward an understanding of relationality as a method or approach rather than as ontological statement. Drawing upon the work of Alfred North Whitehead, it will argue that a process relational approach can move beyond the privileging of ontology to enable a rethinking of new materialism through (perhaps counter-intuitively) restoring the vital agency of the human subject.

## Immanence, Conflict and Institution 2

### ***Parrhesia* between institution and *communitas*: re-reading Foucault with the Italian Thought**

*Andrea Di Gesu*

As is well known, in his last two courses at Collège de France Foucault has devoted himself to an in-depth study of *parrhesia*, i.e., the courageous truth-telling addressed to the representatives of power. In them, Foucault highlights how *parrhesia* and democracy form a contradictory bond: while the latter guarantees, through its institutions, the possibility of a free speech, the former refers to the actual, agonistic fight of the opinions through which a decision is eventually taken by the one who has been the most persuasive. This process, though, necessarily perturbs the egalitarian structure of democracy itself. Starting from these observations, Foucault explains how *parrhesia* has been, in Greek political thought, the privileged field of reflexion about the problems of the effective exercise of power, «the root of a problematic of a society’s immanent power relations», as opposed to the classic reflexions about the nature of the constitution. In other words, *parrhesia* pertains to the domain of *dynasteia* (actual exercise of power), and not to the domain of *politeia* (constitutional form of a society). In our talk, we would like to re-read this Foucauldian reflexions using the conceptual tools elaborated within so-called Italian thought, drawing especially from the philosophy of Roberto Esposito. We will use, in particular, the concepts of *immunitas* and *communitas* in order to interpret the relation between *parrhesia* and the various institutional fields within which it has taken place, thus returning, from an innovative point of view, on the debate around the relationships between constituent and constituted power.

## Agamben's Hobbes, Hobbes's commonwealth and the fragility of law

Luke Collison

'Hobbes: analyst of power and peace', wrote Macpherson in his 1968 introduction to *Leviathan* and Hobbes remains the pre-eminent Modern theorist of power, conflict, peace and institutions. In contemporary Italian political philosophy, this is evident in the extensive engagement with Hobbes by Agamben, Esposito and Negri. Largely ignored in the secondary literature, in this paper I uncover one aspect of this engagement by offering an analysis and critique of Hobbes's significance to Agamben's *Homo Sacer*.

The key to Agamben's appropriation of the Hobbesian state of nature as a Benjaminian 'real state of exception' is Hobbes's account of punishment. Of the sovereign's right to punish, Hobbes writes, 'it was not given, but *left* to him'. It is a remnant of the state of nature, the state of war. For Agamben, this moment, the 'negative foundation' of the commonwealth, is key to his claim that at the heart of sovereignty and law [*nomos*] is a space of lawlessness or *anomie*. Prozorov writes that this moment 'renders impossible the complete self-immanence of the *nomos* of the Commonwealth and its reduction to a positive normative structure.' Agamben's critique of Hobbes thus consists of an unveiling of the secret that the 'juridical order' of the modern state is simply based on force and violence. But underlying this unveiling is a questionable assumption; that Hobbes's commonwealth is essentially a 'juridical order'. Is the role of violence and force, (of *potentia* rather than *potestas*) such a unmentionable secret in Hobbes political theory?

In this paper, I will firstly demonstrate that even for Hobbes, the institution of the commonwealth is not in its *actuality* a wholly 'juridical order', but rather a fragile legal artifice or fiction, entirely dependent on the physical support of the multitude. Secondly, I will explore the significance and repercussions for Agamben's aims in *Homo Sacer*.

## The politics and the living: normativity and negation in Canguilhem's thought

Raffaele Grandoni

Georges Canguilhem is one of the main thinkers who brought vitalism back on the philosophical stage. Basing his reflection on the scientific activity, he finally gave to vitalism a rational foundation.

Canguilhem conceived life as a creative force: not as an endless power, but one that is essentially crossed by its radical negation: death. Illness, that in *The Normal and the pathological* is recognized as a different pace of the living in its relation with the *milieu*, is indeed the evidence of this deathly tension with which life always has to struggle.

But it is not just life's normative force that is bound. So it is society's effort to impose norms on its members – an effort that is meant to fail in front of the living's irreducible power of posing its own norms.

Then, a strife can be detected between the normative power of the living and that of society: a peculiar one, because the latter is an extension of the former, resulting from the encounter of a plurality of human livings in their struggling relation with the environment.

This exact conflict, I think, represents the field of political action, if we can mean with “politics” the human activity at the crossroad of living normativity and social normativity in their tension with living environment. But by which values is this activity informed? Does it stand for living’s pure force or for society’s effort to keep its members together? The answer, in Canguilhem’s terms, will show the necessity of balancing these dimensions.

## Thinking Critically With Care 3

### **Mobilising for more liveable lives: affective tensions in gynae cancer patient activism**

*Lisa Lindén*

Patient groups work intensely to influence research and healthcare. They engage themselves in knowledge production and mobilization, with the aim to achieve better care and treatments. In this presentation, I draw upon an ongoing ethnographic study of gynae cancer patient activism in Sweden and the UK to analyse the importance of embodiment and affect in such knowledge practices. I attune to “evidence-based activism” (Rabeharisoa et al. 2014) as an affective and embodied engagement with science and knowledge. It can be understood as a “choreography of affect” (Kerr & Garforth 2016). This conceptualisation makes a rethinking of healthcare treatment and policy possible; it stages medicine as situated, intimate and personal, and patient activism as a politics of creating more liveable lives and futures. By mobilising to make gynae cancer less marginalised in healthcare, research and society, patient activists care for concerned women, patients and relatives. Yet, by highlighting affective tensions within such practices, I hold on to the multi-layered possibilities, troubles and politics involved. For example, cancer patient activism enacts timescales often in tension with each other. Focusing on future treatments and hopes for better care can clash with existing realities of living with cancer, with all the pain, vulnerability and mourning this might include. Here, mobilising around hopes for better futures might make current “darker sides of care” (Martin et al. 2015) marginalised. Focusing on tensions like these, I explore the generative possibilities of holding on to differences within cancer patient activist practices.

### **Caring for Beirut: Neighborhood Activism in Lebanon**

*Sophie Chamas*

This paper draws on two years of ethnographic fieldwork with urban activists in Beirut, Lebanon, who attempted to mobilize the residents of a heavily gentrified neighborhood to collectively fight the colonization of their streets by bars and restaurants. I argue that the volunteers responsible for this initiative were engaged in a form of activism grounded in an ethics of care: in demonstrating what could become of Beirut if its residents looked out for and defended each other and their city instead of simply trying to cope with the

day-to-day chaos of Lebanon on their own (Bellacasa, 2017, p. 17). I follow scholar Joan Tronto in thinking about care as a broad umbrella term that can include “everything that we do to maintain, continue and repair ‘our world’ so that we can live in it as well as possible” (1994, p. 2). I trace the work of a handful of activists as they try to cultivate community and the foundations for its reproduction.

I argue, however, that while these urban activists were invested in care as a practice of ‘kinning’, a mode of “performing belonging through care” (Drotbohm & Albe, 2015, p. 7), they were pressured both by the community they worked with and by the wider activist umbrella structure they belonged to, to produce immediate, material results, which meant that the survival of neighbourhood lobby groups hinged on recognition by and responses from the state, forcing kinship to take a back seat. Without affective social ties grounded in a shared theory of justice, however, there was nothing to guarantee the survival of these groups for 30 or 40 years, as the activists had hoped, making them instruments in the service of an immediate goal, rather than new forms of collective being.

## Break – 11:00-11:30

## Parallel Sessions 2 – 11:30-13:00

### Radical Ventriloquism 2

#### **Using Alternative forms of Communication to Interview Adults with Deafblindness**

*Atul Jaiswal*

People with communication or multi-sensory disabilities such as deafblindness are often excluded from mainstream research due to challenges involved in data collection. Majority of research in the field of deafblindness often involves collection of data from proxies (parents, caregivers, or professionals) to understand the experiences, needs and concerns of people with deafblindness. This use of proxies places people with deafblindness on the fringes of the mainstream research. The presentation, based on the experiences of qualitative interviewing with 16 adults with deafblindness, demonstrates challenges associated in researching with this population and how those could be overcome using alternative forms of communication. Presentation would discuss methodological challenges in data collection that ranges from taking informed consent process to the member checking process at the end of qualitative interviews. The presentation also uses evidence to suggest the possible strategies for data collection while conducting a deafblind research. Research directly with this population is much needed to ensure their human rights are met and their voices are heard in formulating policies and designing services for them.

## **Nothing About us Without Us: The Challenges of Participatory Autism Research**

*Lisa Quadt*

The scientific process traditionally starts with a hypothesis or research question determined by a researcher's interest and focus of study. In clinical research, this often means that participant and patient involvement only enters the picture once the focus of a given research project is already specified, giving the population in question little to no say in steering the direction of research. Especially in the autistic community, this raised concerns and brought forth the call for "nothing about us without us". In this paper, I aim to reflect on the scientific process by describing and then questioning the status quo of clinical research in NHS settings with a focus on autism research. Working with a population whose members range from highly articulate to having communication difficulties to being non-verbal poses unique and important challenges that have long been neglected by the scientific community. I aim to highlight these challenges and suggest ways to navigate them, weighing the ideal of "nothing about us without us" against practical constraints and realities in research settings.

## **Normative sightedness, non-normative blindness: how museums represent 'Blindness' through access provision**

*Marinella Tomasello*

Originally intended as places destined to aesthetic, distanced, and visual contemplation of fine art works, museums are now required to be fully accessible for people with visual impairments. In order to answer this request, tactile and/or auditory facilities have been introduced as main elements of museums' access provision. Breaking some fundamental rules of contemplative mode of perception – namely, the religious silence and the prohibition to touch – those facilities are usually accepted as effective means for an actual inclusion. Nonetheless, several studies show that touch and hearing are often assumed as 'compensatory senses' for people with visual impairments to access an aesthetic realm which is still dominated by the hegemony of vision.

Based on Bourdieu's definition of museums as institutions intended to establish the legitimate culture, this contribution aims to understand access programs as part of an institutional discourse that reproduce and reinforce dichotomies, epistemological myths and power relationships founded on the supremacy of sight(ed). Furthermore, this paper sustains that people with visual impairments are represented as un-sighted by museums' access programs, as non-normative subjects whose abilities and existence must be interpreted as marked by a *lack*. Among other case-studies, this contribution analyzes the representation of blindness provided by Anteros museum (Bologna, Italy) through its access program, in which Panofsky's tripartite iconological method is used to translate pictorial artworks into perspective reliefs.



## Art Manifestos 3

### **Manifesta without a Manifesto? Artistic Statements in Times of Political Turbulence**

*Margarita Kuleva*

This paper seeks to explore an evolving form of art manifesto through the case of European Biennale Manifesta 10, held in St. Petersburg in 2014. This event was both the easternmost venue for the travelling Manifesta biennale and the first exhibition of global scale held in St. Petersburg and in Russia as well. As the organizers of Manifesta 10 confessed publicly, the political conditions for bringing Manifesta to St Petersburg in 2014 couldn't be worse. The recent approval of the anti-gay law by Russian Parliament and the midst of the Ukrainian crisis including Annexation of Crimea put the biennial into a very vulnerable position. An international petition to ban Manifesta and boycott by several artists, whose participation was already announced, heated up the existing tensions. When despite the negative outlook, Manifesta has opened for the public view, it came with no theme or a clear statement. The absence of a manifesto was explained simply: the curator Kaspar König is primarily an artist and therefore his approach is different. Although Manifesta 10 didn't produced a single declaration which could be clearly identified as a manifesto, König and the biennale team made a series of tactical visual and written statements for different audiences that helped Manifesta 10 to overcome many of existing conflicts. This paper aims to reconstruct the fragmented polyphonic manifesto in order to gain a better understanding of opportunities of an evolving form in hard times of political crises.

### **Hungarofuturism: A Manifesto for the Pan-Periphery**

*Miklósvölgyi Zsolt and Mario Nemes*

Nationalist ideology has occupied and co-opted our national and historical myths, urging contemporary artists, thinkers, and activists to rebuild progressive forms of thinking alternative futurities. Therefore, the proposed conference paper aims to construe aesthetic strategies designed to condition cultural memory departing from the visions laid down in the Hungarofuturist Manifesto (Miklósvölgyi and Nemes, 2017).

Often defined by a pan-peripheral experience, nationalism is perceived as an inward movement, using negation, the definition of the almighty "Other" as its most common denominator. Instead of succumbing to the paranoid specters haunting our Deep European existence, the authors of the Hungarofuturist Manifesto aim for a creative re-channeling of narratives of origin that restore our hope in future pasts. Similarly to other ethnofuturistic movements (e.g. Afrofuturism, Blaccelebrationism, Sinofuturism, Gulf-Futurism) Hungarofuturism is an experiment in identity-poetical imagination, based on a radically ironic exaggeration of minority identity. As opposed to notions of Hungarianness currently hegemonic in Hungary, this is an alternative concept of what it means to be Hungarian, the discovery of a post-Hungarianism. The key to this Hungarofuturist mutational identity is the notion of metamorphosis as a destination. However, the reprogramming of the hegemonic "nation-machine" does not create organic knowledge and narratives, but anachronisms, phantom-like events in which the incompatibility of the various elements hybridizes history and the cosmos until the very moment of "overidentification" (Žižek, 1993).

Accordingly, the primary aim of the proposed paper is to decipher the Hungarofuturist Manifesto as emancipatory counter-narrative “beyond any fantasy of ethnographic authenticity” (Avanessian and Moalemi, 2018) as opposed to the contemporary nationalist bio- and terrapolitical agendas (e. g. white supremacists/alt-right eugenics, eco-fascism, “Blut und Boden”, Lebensraum).

### **Artur Żmijewski's *The Applied Social Arts* (2007) as an art manifesto**

*Wiktoria Koziol*

I have been concentrating on the topic of Polish critical art, one of the most popular art streams in the country in the 90s, claimed to be inspired by critical theory, especially the reception of Michel Foucault thought. Critical artists' works were compared the activity of American artists associated with resistance postmodernism (Jenny Holzer, Hans Haacke or Barbara Kruger). In 2007 one of the artists regarded as critical, Artur Żmijewski, published *The Applied Social Arts*, seen as one of the last art manifestoes. Żmijewski claimed that visual arts avoid political and social engagement, because 'engaged art' was told to be compromised. The artist strived to make art engaged art 'efficient' again, treated seriously as a tool of knowledge production. It seems that a manifesto is an ideal tool of critical theory and practice: it is always opposed, it reveals inequality of social powers (in this case, the weakness of visual arts in Poland, treated by politicians as a scapegoat). However, it also reproduces the deficiency of its reception: no proscriptive attitude. Using David Couzens Hoy's notions, the manifesto of Żmijewski is *resistance to*, not *resistance for*. It is nowadays visible, that the manifesto of the future should be proposing the exact ways of change, not only the strive for it. The new manifesto's thought might come back to affirmative attitude according to Braidotti's concept of 'affirmative'). The typical feature of modern manifesto, its loudness and Bigness (as Mary Ann Caws remarks), seems to be useful in today's communication overloaded with information.

### **Towards Antifascist Futures**

*Antifascist Culture*

Antifascist Culture is a group of cultural workers from Greece initiated in February 2019. The initiative was partly declarative. It sought, that is, to challenge the widespread perception in the country that the fields of art - from literature to visual art and filmmaking to curating to theory to publishing and more - are reluctant to address the rapid ascent of neo-fascism in the public sphere outside of the protected space of singular works. The group made its first public appearance on March 8, 2019, as part of the Women's March in Athens and through a statement of intent in the social media assuming, in part, the tone of a manifesto-in-progress. Antifascist Culture membership is anonymous to deflect the collective's imbrication with art's attention economy. The proposed contribution of Antifascist Culture for the stream 'Art Manifestos: The Future of an Evolving Form' is to perform a reflective manifesto that expands on the ideas and dilemmas introduced in its March 8 manifesto-in-progress.

The text, read out by a small delegation of members, will focus on the left's ambivalence over antifascism, the current need for multi-layered resistance to the practices of the far right, the perceived split between activism and theory/speech, and the question of alliances and transnational antifascism. In short, we propose that any analysis of the 'future of an evolving form' must be tested against a troubling present that asks: what can be learned from the past in the continuum of recognisable forms of oppression, exploitation, and social hatred?

## Gendered Technologies, Gender as Technology 3

### **Emancipated Household in Czechoslovakia: a resource to reinvent the domestic space**

*Tereza Stejskalová*

In her essay *Promethean Labors and Domestic Realism* Helen Hester calls on feminists to develop politics which aims at systemic solutions and visions challenging the status quo and which, at the same time, is anchored in the sphere of the domestic. The essay as well as the Xenofeminist manifesto challenge "domestic realism," our incapacity to imagine home other than a private space occupied by a nuclear family, a space of uneven distribution of labor that prevents women from participating in political sphere, inaccessible to those who do not conform to gender norms, migrants and other oppressed and marginalized groups. In her book *Xenofeminism*, Hester is concerned with the history of grassroots movements of women and LGBTQ+ providing alternative forms of care resisting the oppressive and exclusionary nature of mainstream institutions. However, in spite of xenofeminist ambitions, it remains unclear how these activities could scale up or participate in building global institutions accessible to the broadest spectrum of beings. I would like to contrast these grassroots endeavours by queer activists and second-wave feminists with a particular history of state socialism in Eastern Europe inspired by the tradition of socialist and feminist thought and activism. True, the socialist experiments in social reproduction suffered from state paternalism, heteronormativity, and lack of resources that prevented ambitious visions to be fully implemented. In spite of it, I argue, they can serve as a resource for thinking about feminist technologies and possibilities of scaling. In my paper, I will explore the history of "Emancipated Household" (Osvobozená domácnost), an experiment in social reproduction, a cooperative established by women activists in 1945 in Czechoslovakia, to be later taken over and developed by the Communist Party.

## Automating Inequality 2

### **Sophia's place: A Marxist perspective on AI and migration**

*Eman Shehata*

On October 25th 2017, Sophia was granted the Saudi Arabian citizenship, thus making her the first robot to become recognized as a citizen of any country. What does it mean for a robot manufactured in Hong Kong, designed by an American researcher and modeled after Audrey Hepburn to gain Saudi Arabian citizenship? While Hanson, in his book 'Humanizing Robots', had discussed the possibility of humanoids "making us more human" and underlined the horizon of friendship and collaboration between people and 'robotic companions', this piece of research aims to complicate such idealistic expectations of AI by delving into the trouble that the latter stirs. The recognition of Sophia as a Saudi Arabian citizen had already opened up a set of heated debates, some of which are concerned with the projected and enacted identity of this sophisticated machine (e.g. 'can she become Saudi Arabian if she's not Muslim?', 'does she already have more rights than Saudi Arabian women?'). Sophia becoming a Saudi Arabian citizen could be seen as part of the Saudi Arabian government's globalizing project of futuristic cosmopolitanism, but this act and her positionality does more than the enactment of a global flow or capital. As I will show in this presentation, naturalizing Sophia has had the power to produce affects, notably amongst migrant populations who have lived in Saudi Arabia their whole lives yet were never recognized as citizens. Drawing on experiences and accounts from migrants living in Saudi Arabia, I argue that the news about Sophia had amplified a deep-seated sense of alienation from means of attachment and of belonging—through which subjects become citizens. This piece of research draws on Marxist thinkers' theories on automation and the future of capitalism, particularly Graeber and Berardi, to theorize the political implications of granting AI legal personhood. Furthermore, it explores the affective, immaterial complications such as the cultural work and processes of social reproduction that arise at the wake of asymmetrical acts of recognition that favor and humanize machines over people.

### **Your Smartphone is an Atom Bomb – Günther Anders and the rise of Anaesthetic Violence**

*Chris Muller*

In his central work *The Obsolescence of Human Beings Vol 1* (1956), which is only just being discovered in the English speaking world, Günther Anders presents the atom bomb as the machine that exposes the hidden tendencies of all other complex technological objects. Its very complexity makes it impossible for individual producers to comprehend the part they play in its existence and deployment, whilst its very power is automatically anti-democratic, even though its existence connects us all. For Anders, the bomb reveals that complex technological objects harbour 'worlds without us'. As the bomb reveals, new technologies not only create newly conditional worlds, these worlds are also shaped by cumulative actions and networked effects, which individuals struggle to comprehend, grasp and anticipate. As an ever smaller part in an ever bigger and more complex whole, Anders suggests, our feelings, moral impulses and deliberate choices have become obsolete, as our actions are mediated by and entangled with technological

processes too complex and abstract to comprehend. In this paper I map Anders's thought onto the present, to present this growing abstraction as the locus of an 'anaesthetic violence' that mediates our relationship to technological objects and what they do on our behalf. This violence severs the bond between knowledge and feeling to sanitise constellations of power and privilege and make it increasingly difficult to 'care' about present and future effects of machine use and consumerist lifestyles that are maintained by highly complex networks of relations.

## Lunch – 13:00-14:00

## Parallel Sessions 3 – 14:00-15:30

### Radical Ventriloquism 3

#### **Listening to Materials – co-designing in the Anthropocene**

*Jane Norris*

An audio performance / presentation, that critiques our current anthropocentric deafness to the 'voice' of materials and explores how such voices might be presented through digital ventriloquism. Emphasis is placed on the emergent dangers of not listening to materials in both a literal and metaphorical sense and the consequences of our deafness to their intimate performative relationship with us. Considering Stephen Shaviro's writing on Panpsychism; Alfred North Whitehead's concept of inanimate objects 'pre-hending' and Kodwo Eshun's suggestion of sonic fictions as a means by which the subaltern can speak, sound, or unfold their knowledge, together with Pedro Oliveira's proposal to 'design from an ear view' to enable a radical divorce from so-called universal (metropolitan and Eurocentric) theories of sound and cultural studies, is room made for other systems to claim their space? Through hearing 'materials-as-co-performers' of design practice, different facets of 'listening to materials' are explored as decolonial, posthuman approaches to making. How can we guide students in listening to materials and other beings to co-design equitably in the Anthropocene?

Through initiating the presentation with a live recording of the voice of a material; then considering examples of toxic material use critiqued through research on hygiene, the presentation will progress to consider the role of the digital in ventriloquising the presence of the non-human and question whether Robin James critique of the sonic episteme precludes other than neoliberal relations. Can material sonority disrupt a rationale of othering and provide alternative educational approaches and perspectives to material use in design.

## Throwing voices: the commodification of culture, from art Biennials to celebrity

Ian Brown et al

Through their artistic practice, Common Culture redeploy the 'throwing of voices' to investigate the commodification of culture, from the art biennial to celebrity. This approach will be discussed via two specific artworks.

*The New El Dorado* (2010) responded to the context of the art biennial, and in particular, *Manifesta 8*. Exploring the phenomena of cultural consumption, tourism and the tradition of the historical "Grand Tour", the work narrates an encounter between the specific characteristics of a place and the culture of others. It responded to conventions in Biennial practices related to the local and the global, discussing inherent problems with current models of socially engaged practices. The work utilises a script written from an explicitly British context delivered through actors from the regions of Murcia and Valencia. The tensions that arise from this, and the analysis of cultural engagement within it, raise issues around the alienating process of speaking for others.

*Vent* (2014) was formed around a convergence of the contexts of ventriloquism, from the disassociated voice, the political associations of throwing voices (or the mediation of the voice) and the mania of binary extremes within the psychological conditions of late capitalism. The deconstruction of the ventriloquist form is intended to allow a questioning of the broadcast and consumption of talent and celebrity confession shows as a cycle of consumption. The act of speaking through others is deployed via the deconstruction of the ventriloquist routine to discuss the power relationships between the produced commodities (television show, celebrity) and audience.

## Wet Words and Dirty Talk: speaking through ecosex intimacies in the work of Annie Sprinkle and Elizabeth Stephens

Jon Cairns

Annie Sprinkle and Elizabeth Stephens's Ecosexual practice makes an erotic appeal to embrace a new version of environmental politics. This is modelled on taking the Earth as lover, to give something back, rather than as Mother from whom we constantly take. They extend intimate sensual care for their own bodies to that of the Earth, getting down and dirty in a way that re-engages 'the personal is political'. With everything from the feel of feet in mud, skinny-dipping and skygasms to marrying the sea, the snow, and the mountains, their various eco-intimacies enter into a complex dialogue with the non-human that does not so much speak *for*, as speak *with and through*. In an interesting reflection on the nature of these interactions, their latest film, *Water Makes Us Wet* is narrated by the Earth 'herself', as Sprinkle and Stephens conduct their ecosexual researches around the threatened watersheds of California. 'She' criticises how she has been anthropomorphised, but insofar as she is given a voice by them, it is one that speaks back. While lover, mother, and irritable critic are inarguably anthropomorphic, and put human language into non-human 'mouths', maybe trauma and mute paralysis in the face of ecological catastrophe necessitate a proxy speech? Or a more visceral, earthbound language? As Annie and Beth roll naked in soil during numerous performances, they seem to compost themselves, *disaggregating* their subjectivities, their authority, in an entropic and erotic unforming that symbolically lets the earth do the talking. What kind of speech might be composed out of the new aggregate?

## Cold War Then and Now 3

### **The Cold War Did Not Take Place: Philosophy and the Critique of International Relations**

*Neil Turnbull*

In recent years, social critique has commenced with a critique of discourse. Inspired (in the main) by the work of Michel Foucault, it has been driven by a suspicion 'truth' in its exposure to 'genealogy' and other forms of radical unmasking; especially *vis-à-vis* social scientific discourses.

When viewed in these terms, the discipline of International Relations (IR) comes out rather badly, seen as deeply implicated in established forms of governmentality and statecraft - especially that of the US, for whom it has tended to speak for and on behalf of as a 'hegemonic' power. Might we then say that the very conceptuality both of and surrounding the 'cold war' was produced by IR in order engender specific 'truth effects'?

In this paper, this question will be addressed in this paper via the exploration three interrelated questions. Firstly, how should we conceive of the concept of 'truth' in the context of cold war power relations; how does the philosophical debate about realism and constructivism 'map' in relation to the latter? Secondly, the extent to which the cold war presupposed a counter-factual conception of war (that a war *would* have taken place had certain nuclear strategies not been in place) and the question of the location 'the truth conditions' for such a notion. Finally, in the light of this, the question of what the appropriate discursive appellation for this epoch of history might be today.

### **Real Data: Hyperlegibility in Talk and MacNamara's Infodumping**

*Emily Foister*

US Secretary of Defence during the Vietnam War Robert McNamara is often recognised as a pioneer of systems thinking as applied to public policy. He collected unprecedented reams of data around the war in Vietnam, data that ended up being useless for the military's practical purposes and did not suffice to convince those in charge to withdraw from a demonstrably unwinnable conflict. This data was famously leaked in the early 70s as "the Pentagon Papers" by a RAND employee. I want to consider this enormously ambitious and futile endeavour - exploring some of the stakes around when information becomes intelligence, or even intelligible - in parallel with Linda Rosenkrantz's 1968 novel *Talk*, known today as the first "real life novel." She recorded herself and her friends non-stop during a summer holiday spent away from the New York literary scene and then spent a year transcribing all the tapes, eventually whittling the manuscript down to a novel-length book formatted like a play and with little in the way of thematic structure. I will argue that Rosenkrantz's claim to realness presents a kind of hyperlegibility that creates opacity, building voids from its surplus.

The paper will deal with the paratexts of the Cold War: how the totalising impulses implicit in the mass centralisation projects of the US government and the military after the Second World War struggled to conceptualise excess and account for infinities; and how, in turn, this struggle permeated the public discourse more broadly.

### **The Bombgod Wants Maximum Profit, Perpetual Growth: Finding New Narratives Outside of Capitalism's Apocalypse**

*Niall Heffernan*

This paper will argue that the Cold War shaped neoliberalism in two ways that work in tandem. Firstly, the clash of economic ideologies during the Cold War meant a doubling down on capitalist principles and conversely the absolute rejection of all notions of collective economic agency. Secondly, the nuclear stand-off of the Cold War called for a mechanically rational and supposedly 'objective' means of managing the potentially world-destroying weapons. Building upon the radically capitalist notions that had arisen during the conflict, scientists, mathematicians and theorists working in government-funded think tanks settled on Game Theory as a means of doing so.

In this way, 'The Bomb' works as an avatar for neoliberal capitalism and thusly destroys narratives or philosophies that contradict capitalism's supposed scientific objectivity. The destructive power of the Bomb, if not physically utilized, is sublimated through capitalism's seemingly inexorable process of environmental destruction. Its ideology has been internalized to the extent that we cannot imagine the end of capitalism without it being a global apocalypse of some kind.

The Cold War, the Bomb and the numerical management systems that sprang forth from it, work against the idea of cooperation and of binding narratives. Of course, we need not follow and succumb to the apocalyptic myth if we can *imagine* a different way of living and, imagination, as this paper will argue, is the key to our survival.

## Culture/Politics of Trauma 2

### **The cutouts: belaboring unseen, unspeakable**

*Mantas Kvedaravicius*

A cinematic cut, an enigmatic gesture, slices time, body, space. It arguably holds a capacity to open up the gap in a tissue of life, where not only a new meaning but also the appearance of unknowable, affectual, unrepresentable emerge. Asymmetrically, a physical cut onto body, which opens a wound, maims, kills, if cinematically represented, aims to guarantee the ontological effect of "it have happened". The traversing between these registers: "it" of an undoubtable carnal experience and the unrepresentable in "cutout" of cinematic editing, so I will argue, is a part of a complex epistemological and ontological operation that transform unseen into unspeakable, traumatic.

Questioning or rather displacing genealogical critique of traumatic as the unrepresentable (Rancière 2013) or as the forgotten (Lorau 2002) from academic to artistic modality, I seek to inquiry into the traces that traversing between carnal and unseen leave in the aesthetic body of cinema. I draw on series of films I made within distinct if difficult venues: dreaming about the disappeared, waiting in the city about to



be bombed, practicing forgetfulness in a war not yet gone (“Barzka” 2011; “Mariupolis” 2016; “Stásis” 2019). I set to rethink, through these images, the cinematic practices of “cutting” that transform the materialities and affects of life threatening events into the aesthetic representations of traumatic: how does such process of aesthetic transformation expose, veil or question the conceptualization of unspeakable traumas or unrepresentable events themselves?

## **Trauma, Memory and the Politics of Literature**

*Miguel Alirangues Lopez*

Since Cathy Caruth asked in 1996 “what does it mean for History to be the History of Trauma?” an ongoing debate to answer the question has been taking place, halfway between Literary Studies and Historiography in the intersectional fields of Trauma and Memory Studies. My proposal aims to explore the role that literature plays in the constitution of critical memory of past traumas. To this end, I will develop a conceptual link between the different fields through the category of negativity, that has not been sufficiently addressed regarding this issues, and will explore how negativity works both in traumatic experiences and in the memory of those experiences addressing some considerations of both Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno. In a second moment, I will outline the way in which the negativity of traumatic experiences can only be elaborated aesthetically (as opposed to historiography or justice, which undertake its positive element) and for this I will propose as a case study the first part of the novel by Peter Weiss *Die Ästhetik des Widerstands* (1971). In this second course of action I will propose a comparative analysis between the formal strategies employed by Weiss for reinterpreting the Art’s History Western canon from the standpoint of the oppressed (in the context of the defeat of the Revolution in Germany and the consequent access to power of the Nazi party), and the Benjaminian proposal of a materialistic historiography that allows for a practical transformation of society. In consequence, my contribution intends to carry out a claim for the space of literature as a place of political agonism for meanings that has been overshadowed by its progressive neutralization in late capitalism, when it has been relegated to practicing a purely decorative function.

## **Trauma, wit(h)nessing and carriage in Aurora Lubos’ performance *Witajcie / Welcome***

*Anna Chromik*

The paper focuses on the documentation of the performance *Witajcie/Welcome* by the Polish artist Aurora Lubos in which she recovers headless human-shaped dummies from the Baltic sea. Referring to Bracha L. Ettinger’s revision of the uncanny compassion and sublime, as well as her notion of “carriage”, I read the performance in the context of a reformulation of the ethical human subject in the feminine-maternal-matrixial field.

Carrying the dead body of the Other through water is an image haunting the Middle European memory and resonating with the traces and strings of trauma, personal and historical, that can only be traced and worked through affectively, that is, through a transformative work of art. I believe that Lubos' performance bears a potential of mobilising this kind of sublime in the viewer, because in its artworking sensorium it evokes the matrixial dimension by using maternal gestures and traces, that is, the physical effort of the artist's body, the very act of carrying, and the way the artist works with the water element

## Rethinking New Materialism 3

### **Mistrust Self-Loathing and the Platonic Throne. A Brief Account of Metaphysical Abjection**

*Jonathan Morgan*

In this paper I will demonstrate how key Western thinkers have inadvertently perpetuated the Platonic promotion of Pure Form. While many of their philosophical contributions appear to focus on the Other or Otherness in its various forms, it is only superficially so. From the Idealism—Materialism debate found within Plato and Aristotle's works to Johann Winckelmann and Friedrich Nietzsche's radically different assessments of Classical art, the tension between the hybridity of the material and the purity of the ideal resurfaces frequently in Western thought. Even Martin Heidegger's notion of *dasein*, often praised as a new sort of ontological materialist approach to philosophy, is revealed by applying Jacques Derrida's concept of arche-writing as a critical lense to contain inescapable traces of Platonic Idealist thinking. This sort of tacit continuation of ancient metaphysical assumptions is both dangerous and inaccurate to the heterogenous reality of human existence. This analysis hinges on the use of Julia Kristeva's notion of abjection being extended from the realm of the body to that of the conceptual where the entirety of materiality becomes the target of said abjection via fear. Without a clear awareness of our own tendency towards abjection and our epistemic conditioning to fear Otherness and the hybridity of existence, genuinely new insights and meaningful connection with the world we live in remains an impossible dream.

### **Fluid Resistance: The Literary Politics of Water**

*Katharina Donn*

How can the fluid materiality of water inspire a new literary politics of resistance?

The fluid materiality of water interconnects material and cultural spaces in ways that are at once ecological and erotic. Inspired by Edouard Glissant' poetics of relation, this paper thus offers a literary perspective on current concepts developed in new materialism. Stacy Alaimo suggests a "marine trans-corporeality" (Exposed, 2016), while Astrida Neimanis (2017) has argued for a posthuman feminism based on watery materialities.

Flux and fluidity here become the shifting new ground for a more resilient imagination of resistance, which is necessary when one acknowledges the subtle ways in which different forms of natural exploitation and cultural subjugation are interrelated. In popular culture, this has recently been taken up by Guillermo del Toro in *The Shape of Water*, but the link between political resistance and watery realities is equally present in Paolo Bacigalupi's science fiction, Amitav Gosh's *The Hungry Tide*, Tayeb Salih *Season of Migration to the North* or Lutz Seiler's *Kruso*. The agency of water in each of these texts subverts the alleged power of a dominant nation or narrative, whether this relates to (post)colonial, national, or cultural mastery. It questions notions of authority through its ephemeral and shifting shapes, which communicate its continuous and irrevocable, life-giving energy. Yet the fluidity of water not only informs the narrative structure of these texts, engendering a textuality of flux; it is also linked to notions of eros when understood in Freya Mathew's sense, as not a necessarily sexual experience but a sensation of interconnection, of friction and tenderness between human and non-human bodies. The fierce vulnerability of these desirous and ecological writings shows how a more manifold language can come into being to topple, once and for all, the brutality of the Anthropocene.

### **Multispecies (hi)stories in the context of HIV prevention: reflections on the practical, ethical and symbiopolitical implications of imagining a future with HIV**

*Bryan Lim*

HIV infection is often taken as negative in Public Health, motivating action within a paradigm of elimination which takes the extermination of the virus to be a self-evident goal. Narratives of HIV as a scourge, crisis, and disaster have been instrumental in mobilising resources in the 'global battle' to eliminate HIV, but these (hi)stories also tell and enact a future where HIV is imagined to be non-existent. But, if the zero-sum game that previously defined human-HIV relations has now been flipped by recent technological advances in HIV-related medicine, should we and can we relate to HIV in a way that goes beyond a paradigm of elimination? To this end, this paper will explore how an attention to process and temporality can help sensitise us to different articulations of human-technology-microbe so that HIV may be (re)conceptualised in a way that eschews essentialism. If the imagination of a future without HIV fosters a neglect and delegitimization of the myriad of ways in which we may want to or are always already co-creating our lives with in/non/human others in new and surprising ways, then what practical and ethical difference does imagining a future with HIV make? Relatedly, could approaching HIV in terms of interspecies familiarity, rather than alterity, act as a lure through which we might (re)think the aims and organisation of Public Health? Drawing on my research with men who have sex with men (MSM) to tell multispecies stories about human-technology-microbe, this paper is a speculative foray into symbiopolitics and an attempt to bring into being a Public Health which might be different, but is not.

## Inside an attachment

*Harshavardhan Bhat*

Drawing from a fieldwork event, I extrapolate in this paper a materialism of detachment, a concept I think with from Haraway (2018) who speaks to the importance of “unblocking attachment sites”. Attachments seem to inform bodies, politics, forms and forming(s) and the very practice of research. Materialist thinking I argue, can’t afford to exist as a simultaneous figure of detachment. In Winter 2018, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change explored a proposal to cloud seed New Delhi’s toxic (to breathers) skies, attempting to inspire rain and bring down pollution. The foggy winter airs however disclosed to the Ministry a refusal to be-cloud in order for clouds to be made, offering a detachment as a response. Cloud-seeding practices after-all need clouds to salt clouds, for them to rain. The air inherently as the cloud within which monsoon attachments are made possible becomes then, the grand materialist space of all attachment. Drawing from and thinking with Bremner (2019), Haraway (2018), Da Cunha and Mathur (2017) and Barad (2018) I think of the monsoonal attachment as a figure of materialist transformation - that informs theory by performing it - requiring simultaneous and constant attention to the attachments it offers ‘us’ - being inside its air.

## Break – 15:30-16:00

## Parallel Sessions 4 – 16:00-17:30

### Multiplying Citizenship 3

#### **Liminal citizenships: Repression, Prison Literature and Citizenship in post-Soviet Cuba**

*Desiree Diaz*

This paper analyses the representation of repressed subjects/bodies and topographies of confinement as alternative agents/spaces of citizenship in post-Soviet Cuba. The paper focuses on Tania Bruguera’s performances and short stories by Angel Santiesteban. In response to the prevalent Foucauldian view that sees the prison and other institutions as places for repression and social hygienization, I argue that these confined subjects and communities can actually be agents of alternative modes of social change and citizenship participation.

Angel Santiesteban’s stories are chronicles of prison life, a microcosm originally designed for the reeducation and production of ideal citizens and, in Cuba’s case, ideal revolutionaries. In this context, the ironic re-appropriation of revolutionary symbols and rituals produces a critique of the official discourse and highlights conflicting values within that discourse, particularly in terms of gender and race relations in revolutionary Cuba. Performance artist Tania Bruguera –who has been detained, interrogated, and put under house arrest on several occasions because of the political implications of her work– displays a similar strategy. Through the critical representation of symbols and

spaces associated with the Revolution's history and rhetoric (i.e. the Revolution Square or the Communist Party newspaper), Bruguera produces a counter-narrative that discusses civil rights violations and social justice failures within the utopian project of the Cuban revolution.

The paper concludes that these artists' works critique the restrictive norms of belonging to the national community established by the official discourse, re-imagine the notions of citizenship participation, and expand the concept of the body politic in contemporary Cuba.

## **Reclaiming Agency – Defying ontologies**

*Jenny Angheliekie Papassotiriou*

“Obedientia Civium Urbis Felicitas”. This is the motto of the city of Dublin, for the few who have taken a close look at its mediaeval coat of arms and the even fewer who have decoded the alien (and alienating) latin: “Obedient citizens [make a] happy city”. Dublin Castle, that has been described as a city within a city, has tried to create its own symbols, identity and border markers and has witnessed a lot of obedience, disobedience, suffering and civic celebration within its architecture of exclusion and through acts of place making, value making and citizenship making.

The proposed intervention will look at expressions of obedience and order (as Agamben (2017) pointed out we cannot have the one without the other), moving from verbal formulations (E.Benveniste, J.L.Austin), as they appear in policies and state documents, to visual, spacial and embodied expressions of order, obedience, citizenship, exclusion and resistance. It will engage the participants (if time allows) in an active definitional game that will interrogate processes of citizenship-making and meaning-making.

It will draw on concepts and methods employed in recent art projects engaging with Dublin Castle (These Immovable Walls, 2014 [www.michellebrowne.net/pdf/TheseImmovableWalls.pdf](http://www.michellebrowne.net/pdf/TheseImmovableWalls.pdf), Alibi, 2017 and 2019), and other heritage sites (<https://michelledoyle.eu/Obedient-City> / <https://imma.ie/magazine/obedient-city-smart-city-jessica-foley/>) while taking a broader comparative look at the ‘banality of evil’ (H. Arendt) perpetuated by institutions of ‘care’ built into the social, spacial, cultural and linguistic fabric of our cities and citizenries through the ages, from C19 workhouses to C20 children’s courts (like the one in Dublin Castle), industrial schools and C21 ‘direct provision centres’ for asylum seekers.

## **Displacement, Film, and the Future: Seeking Refuge in Contemporary USA**

*Yehuda Sharim*

One central question will be entertained in my presentation: What is the role of the artist/intellectual/filmmaker in turbulent times of mass displacement, racial oppression, and an overall state of moral crisis? How can we imagine social change? Drawing on filmed interviews that I have conducted with migrant and refugee families in Houston as well as footage from my recent films, *we are in it* (2016), *Lessons In Seeing* (2017), and *Seeds of All Things* (July, 2018), I will explore communal and individual visions of hope and social change. While migrant and refugee narratives have long been dominated by excessive victimization interlaced with a heightened sense of decontextualized hyper- sensational

heavily mediated image of hysteria and terror, I ask how film (and thus art) can initiate a conversation in spaces that are often dominated by apathy and fear. Moreover, I am interested in extending Walter Benjamin's noted injunction that "history breaks down into images, not into histories" [or stories, or narratives] and I would like to question the role of the image in shaping of collective imagination of asylum seeking, belonging, home, and movement across and within borders. Last, I argue that an alternative form of representation and knowledge distribution is central to the remaking of the transitory and fragile archives of marginalized communities, opening a window onto unrecorded feelings and creativity: both radical seeds in catalyzing social change.

## **No title**

*Claudia Garcia-Rojas*

In 2015, The Guardian newspaper published an investigative series revealing how the Chicago police is operating a "Guantanamo-like torture warehouse" known as Homan Square. The report shows that the police have "disappeared" more than 7,000 residents by taking them through Homan Square. In this paper, I enlist the work of Giorgio Agamben and Ida B. Wells to understand how the U.S. uses the state of exception (SOE) in domestic policy to justify the militarization of police and police practices like those taking place at Homan Square. By asking, how would we understand the SOE in the present if we started not with Agamben but with Wells, I show how Agamben's SOE is limiting since it ignores race and a settler-colonial history. Wells' take on the SOE substantiates how the spectacularly performative nature of violent acts committed by police obscure the routinization of everyday acts of violence, including those acts that do not end in death but in the criminalization and harassment of non-white people. Reporting on the trend of lynching during the Post-Reconstruction era, Wells' revealed that the SOE is a governing paradigm improved through the ritual of policing, surveilling, and lynching of black people, methods carried out by police officers and unauthorized citizens to ensure the democratic, economic, and political security of whites. By turning to Wells, I demonstrate how the SOE emerges out of a settler-colonial history and coalesces in the Post-Reconstruction U.S. South with lynching and, more importantly, how it's intrinsic to U.S. democracy.

## Cold War Then and Now 4

### Non-Narrative Future Tenses and the “Problem” Children of Nuclear Fiction

Francis Parr

In concert with Richard Klein’s belief that nuclear criticism’s relevance hinges on its imagining of ‘an altered model of anticipation, perhaps a new, non-narrative future tense’, I argue that Cold War research would do well to examine the future tense par excellence: the figure of the child, in Cold War literature as an icon of the future. Inasmuch that the Cold War’s psychic life was dominated by the nuclear threat against the future, so we should expect this preoccupation to trickle into the counter-histories presented in my subjects: manga fiction like *Akira*, films like *Threads* and video games like *Fallout 4*. These attempts to figure a nuclear future do so through children who subvert, invert and occlude the possibility of a future pinned to the child as a politico-rhetorical figure. In destabilising the child’s claim to the future, these works express the Cold War’s nuclear and political legacy, legacies invested in the advanced technological warfare between nations and against the planet that continue to threaten the possibility of a sincere futural statement.

Therefore, by interpreting these ‘problem’ children of nuclear fiction: Tetsuo, Shaun and Jane specifically, I experiment with recovering the possibility of a future that survives the Cold War’s continuing threat against tomorrow by decoupling the image of the child from its parentage of the future. Once unburdened from this parentage, the image of the child transforms into a theoretical tool for combating conservative political futures, precisely those futures that the image of the child was/is used to justify.

### Trans\* and Cold War legacies of socialism: Reading queer postsocialism in Tangerine

Bogdan Popa

In this paper I show that the imagination of a global queer politics has to enter in conversation with a legacy of anti-socialist Cold War politics. In reading historically and contextually a 1950s North-American sci-fi, *It came from outer space*, and an 2015 indie production focused on the experiences of trans\* black people in LA, *Tangerine*, I argue that that trans\* politics and a legacy of socialism emerge together as a common danger to US racialized capitalism. I deploy a concept such as queer postsocialism to underscore the connections between trans\*/queer politics and histories of anti-socialism. What does the term queer post-socialism do for a reader interested queer studies, psychoanalysis, and post-socialist studies? It firstly displaces the narrative that socialism is relevant “only” to those parts of the world who have lived under the so-called Iron Curtain. Secondly, it shows that part of the anti-communist rhetoric in the US is to deploy *both* a refusal of labor resistance and gender anti-normativity. The payoff of proposing queer postsocialism is to show that a trans\* socialist coalition is threatening not only because it imagines a larger front of opposition to racialized capitalism but also because it gestures towards the potential of allying sexual pleasure with a utopian imagination about work.

## Apocalyptic Masculinity in the Novels of Kurt Vonnegut

Sanna Melin

This paper will look at the novels of Kurt Vonnegut as cultural products of the Cold War, seen a prolonged crisis. The books give voice to the anxiety that arise from such a crisis: a state of emergency that cannot be taken fully seriously because of its seeming endlessness. These texts ask, if this was the apocalypse, shouldn't we all be dead by now?

Apocalyptic masculinities are masculinities that respond to a perceived crisis that demands sacrifice. The works studied primarily portray the futility of aggression, physical violence, and authoritative behaviour as a response to fear, and instead examines masculinity in conjunction with sadness, helplessness, inaction, and inadequacy. Situations that involve a threat of extinction, for instance by natural disaster (*Cat's Cradle*), war (*The Sirens of Titan*), or disease (*Galapagos*), is seen alongside a political agenda that renders hegemonic masculinity redundant. I contend that the articulation of the hegemony's existential anxiety creates possibilities for new formations of anti-hegemonic masculinity. I further hold that this anxiety becomes more visible in Vonnegut's later works as opposed to the early short stories, in which the reader can discern a discourse of the end of hegemony.

## Culture/Politics of Trauma 3

### Trauma Beyond Guilt & Atonement: Améry with Nietzsche & Freud

John R. Spiers

Following the introduction of the Nuremberg Laws, the philosopher and novelist Jean Améry was exiled from his native Austria, tortured by the SS, and imprisoned in Auschwitz. The trauma of these events fundamentally and irreversibly altered Améry's experience of the world. First, it undermined his faith in human solidarity: not a moment could be lived without the knowledge that one's neighbour could transform into one's torturer. Second, it disordered his time-sense: "Whoever was tortured, stays tortured," Améry states, as time finds itself incapable of healing psychic wounds. Knowledge and trauma are bound together as Améry's experience permanently transforms the world and negates the possibility of ever having trust in it again. With no hope of returning to his previously held "naïve" conception of humanity, Améry nonetheless engages in an attempt to reconstruct the fracture and renew the possibility of human community.

In exploring the complicated character of this attempt I will demonstrate how Améry both challenges and subverts the Nietzschean concepts of *ressentiment* and the Eternal Recurrence. Drawing on recent work by Alan Itkin (2014) that reads Améry's phenomenological descriptions of victimhood as an ethical expansion of Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, I will argue that reading Améry alongside *both* Nietzsche and Freud is particularly productive because it reveals the fractured temporality of the victim's experience as one that is distinct from that of the un-traumatised world. These perspectival differences, or "interstellar distances", are the main obstacle to re-establishing the possibility of human solidarity in Améry's thought.



## **Durational Trauma: Employing Bergson to Elucidate Embodied Tactics of Enduring**

*Hannah Bacon*

In this paper I employ Henri Bergson's conceptions of duration, embodiment, intuition, and memory to formulate an account of durational trauma. This new conception is a critique of the diagnostic strictures of PTSD, which construes trauma as eventual, individual, psychological, limited, 'exceptional' and medical. My aim is to interrogate the conceptions of selfhood, memory, and experience that subtends the framework of trauma and examine who this model excludes and what forms of enduring it renders unrecognizable as trauma. I am not claiming that trauma never occurs as an event, but that this event is never contained. It reverberates throughout a life, coloring what comes before and after, is carried forward in the body, and in durational experience. For Bergson, it is recollection's permeation of the present that would imply that all traumas are necessarily ongoing and durational. This elucidation of durational trauma gives voice to a wider-range of experience as traumatic most saliently ongoing experiences of marginalization and oppression such as the trauma of racism. Furthermore, Bergson's account of embodied memory offers alternative reparative practices for expressing and incorporated trauma into lived experience. Using the choreographic work of Anna Sokolow I examine embodied performativity as a tactic for enduring that reintegrated the self by incorporated trauma into motility. This somatic work aligns with Bergson's championing of creativity and instinct as counterweights to linguistic and intellectual expression and knowledge.

## **Trauma and The Refugee**

*Claire Marshall*

Trauma is a paradigm that, within certain discourses, we often take for granted. Trauma is a paradigm imported and imposed onto another person's experience. That person may otherwise understand their experience in a very different way. They may draw upon different registers, embodied resources, or frameworks of understanding to make meaning out of their experience. Why do certain communities insist on understanding other communities through the trauma paradigm? What function does trauma serve, not for the 'victims/survivors of trauma' but for those importing this paradigm?

This critique of trauma will be deconstructed in relation to 'the refugee' who, in contemporary culture, is often viewed through the lens of trauma; the 'refugee experience' is often labelled as traumatic. The concept of the traumatised refugee is prevalent in legal, humanitarian, political, social, anthropological and psychological discourses. It will be argued that it is through a radical self-examination and scrutiny of the systemic interplays between communities, we might begin to deconstruct the notion of trauma.

## Rethinking New Materialism 4

### Containing Globalization

Daniel Quiroga-Villamarin

The historical field has recently witnessed a “material turn”, in which scholars have increasingly questioned the ways the history of objects and infrastructure have shaped our present institutional arrangements. In other words, historians have focused on how “things today are shaking our fundamental understandings of subjectivity, agency, emotion, and the relations between humans and nonhumans.” Drawing from Foucauldian insights on power, Psychoanalytic considerations on identity formation, and Marxist critiques of consumption, material historians have highlighted the central place of things in society. Law, however, has been conspicuously absent from these discussions. It was only until recently, that objects began to be studied as instruments of (global) regulation.

On the other hand, an ever-growing body of literature has questioned the traditional assumptions regarding the sources and processes that govern law-making in the international sphere. It appears that a classical approach concerned mainly with state consent can no longer explain – if it ever did - the complex regulatory dynamics of informality, normative pluralism, and fragmentation that occur in contemporary global governance.

Aiming to start a conversation among these two strands of literature, this paper proposes to trace a global history of transnational law-making through the materiality of shipping containers. Drawing from the Foucauldian notion of governmentality, it will study the container as an instrument through which power and regulation expresses itself, albeit in a way that defies traditional categories of state-focused law-making processes. In addition, it will argue that the containerization of shipping at the world level occurred through transnational standardization, in a process that involved both state and non-state actors at various levels of global governance. Without the adoption of any instrument of formal “law”, the container informally shaped the contours of economic global governance in ways that are relevant for both (material) historians and (international) lawyers.

### Government as habitat: red imported fire ants and the state

William Rollason

What is the role of governance in the production of ‘lively interspecies assemblages’? The work of Haraway, Tsing, and likeminded interspecies scholars tends to presume that capitalism and the state are inimical to the production of such lively assemblages, which appear as governance moves on. For them, interspecies assemblages are lively because they are *independent* of dominant social forms, and independent because they are *marginal*. Latour, conversely, urges us to study such assemblages in the midst of things, comprehending life at its centres not its margins. His assemblages are lively because they are *central*, well-connected nodes; by the same token, they *lack independence*, existing only for and as part of a larger collective of humans and non-humans. In this paper, I examine the career of red imported fire ants, *Solenopsis invicta*, in the USA and Australia. I argue that, in the broadest terms, the habitat of these South

American ants in their introduced range stretches to include bureaucratic processes and political decisions at the centre of the political-economic constitution of social life. This habitat constitutes an interspecies assemblage that is not marginal, but central to systems of governance and produced by them. However, it is also *independent* of those systems. I show that the assemblages that fire ants articulate in both Australia and the USA cut across collectives of humans and nonhumans as a collective of ants and nonants, with a distinctive perspective and interests wholly separate from the systems of governance that it inhabits.

### **Voids, Vacuums and Loopholes: Law, Sovereignty and New Materialism**

*Charlie Blake and Lucy Finchett-Maddok*

This joint paper will address some of the ways in which the meontological tradition of thinkers such as Nishida Kitarō and Keiji Nishitani from the Kyoto School of Philosophy, the concept of nomos as developed by Carl Schmitt, the thinking on diffraction and trouble explored by Karen Barad and Donna Haraway and various writers and artists associated with new materialism and posthumanism, and recent developments in ecopolitics and post-internet art together and in spite of their apparent divergence coalesce fundamentally around the question of void or absence or emptiness as it configures the origin of both law and sovereignty as a kind of rule-making and rule-breaking in the process of thought, creativity and activism. Exploring examples and issues raised in and by the Art/Law/Network of which the speakers are both founder members, it will look in particular at the ways in which the idea of the void or emptiness bear on post-internet ethics and aesthetics at a time of profound political and ecological challenge.

## **Post-Conference Drinks**

Venue to be announced