# AC

#### The desire to transcend our terrestrial existence is founded in Earth’s alienation- perpetuating the loss of humanity by furthering our increasingly technological future.

**Kroker**, A., **&** **Kroker**, M. (**2010**). *Code drift: Essays in critical digital studies*. New World Perspectives. // sosa

In The Human Condition, Hannah Arendt, contemplates the conditions of existence for humans in the middle of the twentieth century when the first satellite was sent to "move in the proximity of the heavenly bodies as though it had been admitted tentatively to their sublime company" [6] she notes in modern science-driven moments of satellite launches, airplane travel, the test-tube production of humans, eugenic practices, and the attempts to prolong human life-span, a desire to escape from the confines of Earth-given existence. This desire for transcendence, or "Earth alienation" as diagnosed by Arendt, defines the contours of modern science at the middle of the twentieth century. Earth alienation features both techno-material and cultural-epistemological transformations; for Arendt, these transformations lead to losses within the life of politics, an activity that depends on an actively engaged citizenry of plural people in the world, rather than on a universalized and transcendent perspective of 'man' in the singular. Earth alienation as the 'hallmark of modern science' [7] describes a set of interrelated features that condition life in the twentieth century. The first features a dominant drive to escape 'naturally-given' conditions/limitations of life. This drive has led to a privileging of the 'man-made', in everything from the test tube creation of life to the creation of the 'heavenly bodies' in satellite technology. Whereas, homo faber has always been a maker of human artefacts, the modern version of homo faber, with rapidly proliferating tools of technology and continuous processes of automated labour has expanded a repertoire of making that includes channeling forces of nature at ever larger scales. [8] This endeavor has been achieved through the centrality of 'modern science' and its prime mode of expression, mathematics, which "frees man from the shackles of experience & sensory perception." [9] No longer must we rely on the all-too human subjective embodied senses to apprehend the world, rather numbers render an objective world with increasingly detailed grids of knowledge. The dual conditions of man-as-creator and the privileging of a mathematically-founded scientistic approach have led to the domination of the experiment as a key logic under Earth alienation. The experiment sets the stage for a human orchestration of apprehending objective truth, which leads to the human capability to play Cosmic-Creator. As Arendt notes, the object-orientation of the experiment as scientifically determined presents no necessary built-in ethical imperative or self-reflective principles that engage critical dialogue; the absence of dialogue and reflection in the constitution of modern science is the final and most problematic element of Earth alienation. A combination of scientific knowledge and authority, unprecedented experimentation with 'cosmic forces' such as atomic energy, and the lack of thought and deliberative dialogue about such experimentation threatens planetary life itself. A detached Archimedean perspective of the Earth central to modern science removes both the specificity of Earthly metabolism and the plurality of its inhabitants. For Arendt, Earth alienation also mapped onto cultural and epistemological coordinates; an Archimedean perspective similarly plagued the metaphysics of Western philosophy with its enduring attempts to locate 'man' in a singular and universal way; Arendt particularly critiques Descartes' quest for an objective metaphysics of man and his mathematical mapping endeavors that have contributed to a transcendent psycho- and geo-graphical cartography. Along with Galileo's confirmation of Copernican theory, Cartesian philosophy has posited an Archimedean point that can be located both extra-terrestrially and within man as transcendent human doubting subject. [10] What is most crucially at stake for Arendt in her description of Earth alienation is the loss to the worldly activity of politics. Transcendent grids of knowing remove the particularities of individuals and their active participation in the world, which are the conditions necessary for political life. Arendt, writing after witnessing the magnitude of losses under Stalinist and Nazi totalitarian regimes, appropriately flagged this loss to political life.

#### This maintains a militaristic and technocratic regime of disaster control- accumulating in extinction and world alienation.

Duffield, 19 [Mark Duffield is a Professor of Development Politics and Director of the Global Insecurities Centre @ the University of Bristol, “Post-Humanitarianism: Governing Precarity in the Digital World,” 2019, Polity Press]

This book is a preliminary attempt to try to understand this shift and assess what we may have lost and, for good or ill, what we have gained. Methodologically attentive to history, it addresses this question in relation to the changing understanding of the nature of humanitarian disaster. How disasters are understood and communicated shapes the nature of the global North–South interface (Chouliaraki 2013).2 Indeed, one could go further. Since the 1980s, disasters have become a new ontological force. From the crash of asteroids into a primeval Earth, disasters have been given a pivotal role in the evolution of life, in the development of creativity and, not least, as key punctuation marks in the emergence and spread of human society (Homer-Dixon 2007). This catastrophism has accompanied the rise to dominance of an ecology-based resilience thinking, with its signature view that ‘authentic’ life exists in the jouissance that lies on the edge of extinction. Resilience is a measure of the probability of escaping disaster through socializing the smart moves that drive developmental evolution (Holling 1973). Disasters are thus a potent bridging mechanism that connects humanitarian practice with wider ideological and societal change. These changes, moreover, help illuminate the move from optimism to political pessimism. This shift, it will be argued, is integral to the rise of post-humanitarianism.

However, in making a link from disasters to these broader questions, two additional and accompanying registers or sets of differences are important. Over the period in question, there has been a spatial shift from ‘circulation’ to ‘connectivity’, together with an interrelated ontological, epistemological and methodological transition from deductive ‘knowledge’, framed by history and causation, to an increasing reliance on inductive mathematical ‘data’ and machine-thinking for sense-making. The way we know the world and understand what it means to be human has fundamentally changed (Chandler 2018). Rather than seeing the emergence of a new post-human essence, this book grounds these shifts and registers in the changing nature of capitalism. While corporations, governments and the academy celebrate the age of connectivity, and regard the sort of international foreboding described in the Munich Security Report as a separate issue, we are more open to the possibility of their causal correlation. This Introduction unpacks these registers and gives the reader an indication of the structure of the book.

Circulation and Connectivity

Between the 1960s and the present, the nature and organization of international space have changed. Of primary importance has been the relative shift from ‘circulation’ to ‘connectivity’ (Reid 2009). As a factor of spatial organization, circulation involves the physical movement or flow of people and things within, across or around terrestrial milieus and topographies. Discussed more fully in chapter 5, Foucault has argued, that the principle of circulation was central to a liberal conception of security arising from the discovery of the early modern town in terms of its spatial and logistical dynamics. The problem of the town ‘was essentially and fundamentally a problem of circulation’ (Foucault 2007: 13). During the nineteenth century, improving the circulation of people, goods, sewage, light and air, together with managing the movement of disease, crime and political unrest, would become a key feature of modernist planning and urban design (Rabinow 1995). From the perspective of modern urban planning, the city was an infrastructure designed to maximize the circulatory potential of autonomous people and things, while controlling the bad and inimical. Through the opening-up achieved by roads, canals, sewers and railways, for example, people and things were enabled to move, change place and transact. While not without risks, and thus needing administrative, health and police oversight, the aim was to maximize circulation along such fixed conduits.

Connectivity is similar but fundamentally different. Google’s notion of a data-based urbanism, for example, sees cities as key sites for the conversion of data extracted from the electronic interactions of individuals into continually adapting forms of artificial urban intelligence. A 12-acre site in Toronto’s waterfront area is currently being developed as a testbed. It envisions: ‘Modular buildings assembled quickly; sensors monitoring air quality; traffic lights prioritising pedestrians and cyclists; parking systems directing cars to available slots; delivery robots; advanced energy grids; automated waste sorting and self-driving cars’ (Morozov 2017).

Here the city appears as a closed interactive milieu involving the continuous recording and exchange of information between people, things and computer interfaces in motion. Connectivity draws together different domains such as consumer needs, waste disposal, transport, parking and delivery requirements into an integrated real-time information network. While people and things still move, change place and transact, it is no longer autonomous circulation in the modernist sense. Without triggering a series of alerts, a person could not, for example, arrive unexpectedly at a railway station, and buy a ticket for destination A but leave instead at station B. Within the smart city, movement and behaviour are constantly recorded, algorithmically analysed, optimized and directed (Halpern 2014b). Unlike the spontaneous circulation allowed by the modern city, movement within the smart city is essentially robotic.

As a science of information, cybernetics requires the recording and storing of data on all past interactions as a precondition for predicting future behaviour and signalling the presence of anomalies (Wiener 1954). Unlike free circulation, which always involves a potential threat to security (Foucault 2007: 19), connectivity uses the command and control functions made possible by data informatics to avoid surprise. To put this another way, while circulation is necessary it is also open to accidents, dangers and unforeseen consequences. Air travel, for example, can be a vector in the spread of disease. As a way of controlling the necessary risks of circulation, security has evolved as an expanding and invasive technology of connectivity (see chapter 5).

There is another aspect of connectivity, however, that is also important for this book, and which further distinguishes it from the territorially grounded nature of circulation. Imagine a dozen computers scattered around the globe, networked together via a central hub and each machine being able to transmit and exchange data with the others instantaneously. Rather than having to flow through or circulate within frictive topographies, connectivity has the power to leap directly across them, bypassing terrestrial insecurity while rendering distance insignificant. Finance capital, for example, is not like physical money. The latter constantly circulates between pockets, cash registers and banks until it is worn out. As an example of connectivity, finance is capital encoded as data that travels at the speed of light between the vast territorially dispersed network of computers that constitute the global banking system (Lewis 2014): ‘[Connectivity] de-spatializes the real globe, replacing the curved earth with an almost extensionless point, or a network of intersection points and lines that amount to nothing other than connections between two computers any given distance apart’ (Sloterdijk 2013 [2005]: 13).

Although different, circulation and connectivity are not mutually exclusive. They exist together, shape each other and, over time, exist in varying combinations. For this book, the relative shift from circulation to connectivity is implicated in the displacement of revolutionary optimism by political pessimism. In the 1960s, at the height of international expectation, the ability for people, their histories, experience and politics, to circulate internationally was greater than it is today. For a while, the circulation and flow of political praxis was possible as never before. During the period of decolonization, Western European countries were moved to accept permanent immigrants from their colonies and former colonies, together with allowing refugee settlement and recruiting significant numbers of migrant workers. Aspirational white settler colonies such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada also temporally lifted the ‘colour line’ that had earlier applied, especially toward Asian labour migrants (Meyers 2002). For Herbert Marcuse, as for other radicals exiled at some point in their lives, the ability for political praxis to circulate was taken for granted. At a time when journalists were not embedded (Page 1989), this ability was an essential condition of the international solidarity necessary for world revolution. By the mid-1970s, however, the near-universal curtailment of immigration was already underway. Driven by a mix of racial, social and security fears, the relative post-World War II openness to migration has narrowed and closed under successive waves of immigration controls, nationality laws and refugee restrictions (Hammerstad 2014). Since the end of the Cold War, as a visible register of this institutional move to closure and return, the number of physical border fences, demarcation walls or separation zones to contain the risk of autonomous movement has exploded globally (Brown 2010). Of course, the barriers and restrictions that now striate the globe have not prevented the urge to move. Indeed, as the upward track of numbers suggests (UNHCR 2017a), the pressure to escape poverty, disaster and war, even at the risk of an arduous and perilous passage, is as strong as ever. With millions in the queue, it shows few signs of abating. While offering no viable solution, the interdiction and return measures used to insulate the West have done little more than criminalize autonomous human circulation.

Connectivity and remoteness

As the legal circulation of migrants, refugees and other sans-papiers has narrowed and closed, in terms of the data being stored and exchanged between machines and screen interfaces, connectivity has expanded exponentially (Cortada 2012). At the same time, computational technologies including remote satellite sensing, computer modelling and Big Data informatics have come to shape a dominant, if particular, understanding of the world, how it works and the status of the humans that inhabit it (Halpern 2014a; Chandler 2018). Climate change, for example, was a key discovery of predictive computer modelling (Edwards 2010). The juxtaposition between the international closure to the circulation of political praxis and the expansion of data connectivity and its new remote sensemaking tools is a formative tension that runs throughout this book. To put this another way, since the 1990s there has been an associated growth in physical and existential ‘remoteness’ from the world that is being compensated by the digital recoupment of distance. Remoteness, however, is ambiguous. It is negative, as in a loss of familiarity, while also being a positive condition – that is, as a challenge for technoscience to overcome.

A negative remoteness is not only reflected in the erection of physical and technological barriers to stop the circulation of political praxis; it can be seen at many levels, including the fragmentation of nations. With examples spanning the globe, over the last three or four decades many erstwhile multicultural or mixed societies have been wrenched apart, fragmenting and polarizing along inimical ethnic, cultural and religious lines (Gregory 2008; Sorensen 2014; Mishra 2017a). Mid-level technological societies have been reduced to – or, should we say, ‘revealed’ as – a chimera of competing tribal amalgams (Usborne 2004). As if designed for it, the trend towards individuation, separation and polarization has taken to social media with alacrity (McBain 2014; O’Callaghan et al. 2014; Cadwalladr 2017). As discussed in chapter 7, through a combination of risk aversion and political push-back, a loss of familiarity can also be seen in the increasing absence of grounded international aid workers, journalists and academics within ‘challenging environments’ (Healy & Tiller 2014). President Trump’s travel ban on selected Muslim countries, and the current uncertainty over the future of EU nationals in Brexit Britain, are symptoms of this pervasive, and often violent and discriminatory, tendency towards distancing and a loss of familiarity.

Remoteness, however, also has a positive dynamic that springs from the ability of connectivity to leap across, sidestep or pass beneath the ground friction3 of a dangerous world productively, while simultaneously creating new ways of knowing and appropriating that world. First identified over fifty years ago, the inverse relationship that technoscience establishes between familiarity and distance is what Hannah Arendt called ‘world alienation’ (Arendt 1998 [1958]: 48–254). The paradox of exploration is that, while its aim was to widen horizons, the maps and charts of the early modern age ‘anticipated the technical inventions through which all earthly space has become small and close at hand’ (1998 [1958]: 251). This shrinking of the globe has continued through the surveying capacity of the human mind, ‘whose uses of numbers, symbols, and models condense and scale earthly physical distance down to the size of the human body’s natural sense and understanding’ (1998 [1958]: 251). The shrinkage of the Earth, however, has been compensated for by the objectivity that distance gives. Objectivity necessitates a disentanglement ‘from all involvement in and concern with the close at hand’ (1998 [1958]: 251). For Arendt in the 1950s, the decisive technology of shrinkage was the aeroplane. The advent of satellites, geospatial technology and interactive broadband, however, redoubles her point. The ability to leave the Earth, either physically or as an Internaut,4 ‘is like a symbol for the general phenomenon that any decrease of terrestrial distance can be won only at the price of putting a decisive distance between man and earth, of alienating man from his immediate earthly surroundings’ (1998 [1958]: 251).

World alienation is the hallmark of the modern age and is ‘inherent in the discovery and taking possession of the earth’ (1998 [1958]: 254). As the political history of maps suggests (Wood 2010), remoteness and distance call forth new sense-making tools which furnish new ways to strategize and project power – and, thus, to appropriate and reappropriate the Earth.

#### And data’s circulation is always haunted by the trace of death.

Kroker ‘14

[Arthur, running out of jokes here. 2014. “Exits to the Posthuman Future.”]

Digital cosmology? Its ontology is epigenesist, the belief that digital organisms proliferate by the new appearance of code structures and networking functions. Always disloyal to evolutionary logic, software code only recognizes digital life as a random struggle between digital design – repetitive patterned instructions – and the wild side of ruptures, conjurations, and intermediations.

There's no real difference between the two sides. They are only apparent opposites. This is the story of identity and difference: patterns and randomness, a strict tutelary of programmed instructions and the outlaw will to disturb the codes, disobey instructions, take programs to their wild side, surveillance to the extremes of micro-granular detail, and the persistent human desire to wetware machines.

Coming to maturity under the sign of the terrorism of intelligibility, the real seduction of code lies in its desire in the end to be unintelligible, untraceable, unknowable, not capable of being archived. That's why the story of digital complexity today is captured beautifully by the language of clouds, storm vectors of codes moving at high velocity across the electronic sky, data hurricanes, BitStorm tornadoes, all those drifting clouds of networked subjectivity circulating through social networking technologies with their unexpected new structures and functions of FaceBook, YouTube, Twitter, and iChat. Like the collective authorship over many centuries of the Book of Genesis, the Book of Digital Epigenesis also has its cosmologists now and into the future. For who can really anticipate what will happen in the time of digital epigenesis? Who can predict with any certainty what new structures and functions will emerge from this new story of creation from digital nothingness? In desperation, astrophysicists describe the situation as that of “punctuated catastrophe.” But we know better: digital epigenesis is the newest temporary solution to an ancient biblical riddle – creation out of nothingness – and to an equally ancient philosophical puzzle: the question of identity and difference.

And not only that but digital cosmology also introduces in its wake a new theory of epistemology: epigenetics – the study of the neural mechanisms by which digital genes bring about their phenotypic effects. The earliest of the technological utopians, Marshall McLuhan, Wyndham Lewis, and Teilhard de Chardin, provided eloquent anticipatory warnings that the externalization of the human sensorium under the pressure of technological media of communication would enable the emergence of a digital nervous system. Since the mid-twentieth century, this haunting prophecy concerning the digital nervous system has remained a literary construct, a metaphor begging to be made operational. That's definitely no longer the case. Through a curious twist of fate, the great discourses of digitality and genomics shared historical periodicity because data is actually the genetic structure of the digital body – the global data genome.

Like the seasons of life itself, data moves from plenitude to senescence, it also has dawns and twilights. The global data genome is a vastly improved nervous system since its neurological mechanisms can never be confused with the embedded mind as the locus of consciousness, but from its moment of inception are distributive, circulating, relational, complex. Seemingly always one step out of season with regimes of intelligibility, the very best of data has its own broken synapses, overloaded consciousness, flickering memory, and software glitches. When digitality and genomics merge in the form of the global digital genome, post-traumatic (data) stress disorder with all its traumas is finally realized as the animating principle of augmented reality. “Post-traumatic” because the abrupt shutting down of the human sensorium accompanied by the immersion of the human organism in the skin of data, this profound originary event, announcing the termination of the human species as we have known it with its privatized ego, localized consciousness, and radical separation of the senses; and the inception of something profoundly new, simultaneously ominous and exciting – the subject as an emergent ecology of biology/sociality/data – this awesome event announcing the eclipse of one (human) species-form and the immediate emergence of its networked successor has already occurred.

McLuhan once claimed that the blast has already happened: we're floating in the debris from the breakup of the autonomous body, discrete ego, and embedded nervous system. Who was prepared for this? Who was ready for the immediate mutation eclipse of the species-form of the human into half flesh/half code? In this epochal shift, data itself suffers stress disorder as its primary trauma. It is not really so much that the new organism of half flesh/half code cannot tolerate the speed of technological acceleration. Liberated from the plodding world of materiality by networked regimes of relational processing and ubiquitous computing, the neural mechanisms of the human mind demonstrate unexpected plasticity and openness to heterogeneity. The evidence is all around us: brains sustaining physical injury that instantly reorganize the field of perception, artistic vision accelerating the speed of data, sci-fi literature overstimulating the nervous system of information, cinematic futurism that easily outruns the speed of technological change, a new aesthetics of perception that eagerly embraces the delirious simulacra of gaming. Everywhere the neural mechanisms of data flesh skip across liquid streams of information flows like flat-edged stones tossed on a lazy data summer afternoon. Every bit of media evidence, from television and radio through computing, cells, Blackberries, Twitters, and the virtual apparatus of augmented reality, suggests that the human brain has absorbed, easily and enthusiastically, its ablation into the nervous system of the fully externalized technological media of communication.

The real challenge is data trauma, the fact that data cannot keep up, either metaphorically or materially, with the speed of perception. That is why data often resembles the conservative ressentiment of Wendy Brown's States of Injury, resentful, left behind, revenge-seeking. Data seeks the safety of digital purity; firewalling itself in the hygienic spaces of closed data dumps. In other instances, data become aggressive – it turns on its human companion species, taking cold comfort in the durational memory and identity triangulations so necessary to surveillance systems. Like the worst of the human species before it, data is capable of the ethics of Heidegger's “injurious neglect.” It too can sometimes only find expression in terms of a “malice of strife.” Born again in the baptistery of genomics, data is a fully completed nihilist, infected with the ressentiment of the human species that it was so eager to replace, the spearhead of a purely technical will – drifting, oscillating, wiping away the horizon, in its leading expression a software animation precisely because data is haunted by the trace of death. But of course the death of data is precisely why information culture can be so dynamic. It is the tangible scent of the necropolis in the data storm that makes information culture so deeply, so seductively charismatic. Bored with the logic of presence, the ablated neural mechanisms of the networked subject sift in deepest fascination through the debris of the human remains of the species – shards of memory, strands of forgotten codes, dead media, broken thoughts, book after book of fatally overcome faces. It is this hint of death that drives the necropolis of software. Feasting on the remains, the massive accumulation that is dead information is finally free to express itself as a pure technical will, and nothing besides. Literally, data today is a nervous breakthrough. Refusing stability, never stationary, data is condemned to a cycle of endless circulation. It has no destiny other than that of the pure will: augmented, streamed, mobilized, Facebooked, Twittered, iPodded, flickered, upgraded, downloaded, wide-screened, multitasked, and GPSed. Like all species before it, there will finally come a time when data will grow weary with itself and, as an exhausted nihilist, find pleasure only in making itself ill. My suspicion is that, in this time of accelerated data flows, the appearance of data as an exhausted nihilist is already upon us. In this age of exhausted data, everything counts, everything apps precisely because nothing now counts but the ersatz nothingness of data itself. Digital trauma.

#### Data’s current pursuit of growth is part and parcel with cybernetic violence

Hui ‘20

[Yuk, teaches at the Bauhaus University in Weimar and is a visiting professor (PhD supervision qualification) in philosophy and technology at the China Academy of Art. Interviewd by Anders Dunker. 06/19/2020. “On Technodiversity: A Conversation with Yuk Hui,”

There is a great passage in Nietzsche’s The Gay Science (1882), where he talks about “the horizon of the infinite.” It describes the moderns who have abandoned land for the pursuit of the infinite, yet, when they are in the middle of the ocean, there is nothing more fearful than the infinite — there is no more home to return to. The desire of the moderns, described by Nietzsche, continues to produce an effect of disorientation, while the sentiment that there is no longer any home to return to provides a huge market for psychotherapy and spiritual salvation. The longing for the infinite transports us toward the inhuman.

For Jean-François Lyotard, there are both positive and negative infinities, which are connected to different forms of rationality. Positive inhumanity captures us in rigid technological systems, like we see in China with the social credit system. The positive inhuman is one that is “more interior in myself than me” — for example, God for St. Augustine. We humans carry something inhuman in us, which is irreducible to the human and which maintains the highest intimacy with us. At the outset of his book L’Inhumain (1998), Lyotard asks if the ultimate goal for science is not that of preparing for the death of the sun, which, granted, lies unimaginably in the future, but which also entails the destruction of all living beings on Earth.

Rocket billionaires, who are all transhumanists, want to overcome finitude: the finitude of human life and of life as such. This longing for the infinite also implies no limit to capital accumulation. Overcoming human limitations — the search for eternal life — also implies an infinite market. In a way, the same happens in space exploration: investors want to profit from the Earth losing its meaning, as if leaving the planet were a matter of leaving one spaceship to enter another. I don’t think it is wrong to explore, or to try to understand the universe, but the conquest we see today seems to me to be merely a preparation for tomorrow’s consumerism. Transhumanists impose on us a false choice because they connect the question of the future of human existence with the question of immortality and describe Earth as a mere spacecraft.

#### Vote affirmative to utilize countersurveillance as a lens to observe the cybernetic appropriation of outer space by private entities as unjust.

#### By bringing to light what cybernetic capitalism would prefer we didn’t, the aff engages in an ongoing process of giving witness to the unsustainability of our current state.

**Kroker and Kroker 21** [Arthur Kroker](https://u1lib.org/g/Arthur%20Kroker), [Marilouise Kroker](https://u1lib.org/g/Marilouise%20Kroker), “Technologies of the New Real: Viral Contagion and Death of the Social” 2021 // sosa

Consider, for example, the deep irony of that media day in late May 2020 when televised scenes of a burning police station in Minneapolis, Minnesota, surrounded by angry, grieving night-time crowds of protesting citizens illuminated against a fiery background contrasted so sharply with that other media event taking place at exactly the same time. Here, SpaceX’s launching of a manned space vessel for a mission of replenishment to the International Space Station was also the key media event of that tragic day. This time, though, the scene was not burning cities but fiery space launches, not angry Black Lives Matter witnesses on the streets but breathless technological hosannas from media commentaries about SpaceX, and most certainly not federal troops and National Guards with the presidential words of authorization embedded in their minds – “when the looting starts, the shooting starts” – but a resplendently arrayed demonstration of American space force power prominently highlighted by President Trump himself. The empire might be in decline, streets may be in riot, citizens of colour may have dissented against the policing of white supremacy, but at this SpaceX moment in the history of the United States, the illusion of American hegemony in space, if not in the actual earth, was ready for a triumphant blast off, not to the stars of deep space but to their orbiting token, the International Space Station. But what happens when the smooth narrative of this deep-space moment is broken by counter-surveillance, this time not with a streamed video image or a cell phone shot but counter-surveillance by the power of imagination, by establishing unspoken connections between the clashing events of that turbulent media day in late May? What happens, that is, when counter-surveillance is liberated from technological devices, becoming instead a new way of critically seeing the world: making connections between data feeds; bringing into visibility the illegible remains of racial, economic, and political inequalities; giving voice through imagination to the silenced, the excluded, the prohibited? In this case, if the SpaceX launch can be such a compelling display of the technological imaginary of a society permeated with the logic of racial hierarchy, then what is the meaning of these contrasting media images: bursts of flames burning with the anger of riots in the night, and spectral space launches by day? Are we witnessing a fatal struggle between metaphor (SpaceX) and metonymy (torched police station) in the contemporary American mind? And if, in fact, the essential symbolic meaning of the SpaceX launch was that it was a highly visible reminder that the animating energies of America’s empire of technology – the spirit of instrumental activism and the magic of a society infinitely adaptable to changing economic circumstances – was about to be exported to the stars, what symbolism was to be had in the burning remainders of that day, in the charred embers of the police station and the angry crowds of protesters, not projected towards a future in the stars but present in the remains of the earthly night? We therefore have two sharply clashing media images: one about astronauts travelling to a space station in the sky, the other depicting those gathered in grief over a police murder in the streets. One image is the imaginative technological creation of Elon Musk, celebrated by American media for his enthusiastic spearheading of the power of positive (technological) thinking – a model of the much-cherished business myth of the entrepreneurial spirit, an evangelist of technological futurism who has managed to successfully launch himself beyond the bitter racial politics of South Africa to the more friendly, experimental, and supposedly racially antiseptic digital terrain of west coast America; the other is the product of the persistence of that most fundamental of all clashes in the heart of contemporary America – rage against racialized violence and the very real persistence of an ideology of white supremacy launched historically from the ruins of the Civil War to take root seemingly everywhere in the language of the everyday: in jobs, housing, health, security, prisons, and policing. Are we witnessing here the rise of the uncanny in American thought: dreams of technological redemption from above, revolt against racialized violence from below? Surveillance technology closes its eyes of digital perception when actually confronted with the complicated intersections of social history. There is no digital cloud, no information flow, no pattern analysis, no determinate data, no harvested archive of behavioural histories that would enable understanding of the strange paradox of days of rage in the streets and technological utopia in all the launch pads of deep-space futurism. But if the apparatus of mass surveillance is bereft of the saving power of vision, it does not mean there is not much to be learned from that sad day in May when the real world of racialized social reality crossed paths with dreams of technological transcendence. When mass surveillance falls silent concerning the really existent drivers of the unexpected, the unpredictable, the unsecured – unchecked aggression in police uniform; the persistence of white male rage; the contemporary political reality of panic, fear, anxiety, and melancholy; the stubborn continuation of patterns of racial inequality, class disparity, and gender discrimination – it is fated to be marginalized as a predictor of the future, as an intimation, that is, of the likely consequences of a society where technology moves at the speed of escape velocity while the lives of Black people and people of colour remain stuck in the inertial weight of social oppression. Consequently, two very different futures of surveillance are presented: one, the shared product of the national security state and corporate technological platforms that consistently “see” the world only through digital algorithms Z; the other, the insurgent creation of citizen journalists committed to the deeply ethical practice of giving moral witness to social injustice – a form of critically engaged media practice that has the effect of providing images of a world that power would prefer to prohibit from witness, an invisible world of the silenced, excluded, oppressed, and abused. While the former is about control, the latter concerns taking back the streets of imagination, the alleyways of life lived in the full spirit of multiplicity. While mass surveillance reduces society to the codes of digital inscription, the algorithmically knowable, and the data detectable, counter-surveillance is always about the immeasurable, the off-grid undetectable, the strangeness of the unknown, the immense, radiating power, creativity, and courage of those living under the punishing sign of social invisibility. Two worlds materialize: fast data and slow bodies; technologically enabled mass surveillance and humanly enacted counter-surveillance; monitored bodies treated as data trash and bodies struggling in the streets of power, with brutal streaming video evidence of the real meaning of abuse value everywhere. A future is envisioned of data archives, quantum surveillance, embedded sensors, and the ever-expanding network of the “Five Eyes” in a contemporary political situation that intimates so forebodingly that this future is also tangled up with very real violence. Having witnessed so often and in so many places the deployment of surveillance technologies for purposes of overwhelming state power, we find the issues that haunt any discussion of surveillance today concern the ultimate uses of information gathered, the alliance between data and domination, often resulting in unaccountable policing, whether of the imagination or bodies – the targeting of peaceful protesters, increased mass incarceration, and pre-emptive sabotage of democratic dissent. Hence, we have capitalism under surveillance, power under suspicion, and media distrusted as the essence of a future now shaded by the clashing horizons of counter-surveillance by citizen activists and mass surveillance by always watching Big Brother algorithms.

#### The aff generates interventions into the affective structure of imperialism – that jams empire’s communication networks and creates new resistances.

Tiqqun ‘1

[French leftist philosophical journal, founded in 1999 with an aim to "recreate the conditions of another community." Probably not you. 2001. “The Cybernetic Hypothesis,” [https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/tiqqun-the-cybernetic-hypothesis](https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/tiqqun-the-cybernetic-hypothesis#toc11)] pat

These questions, seen from the neutralized and neutralizing perspective of the laboratory observer or of the chat-room/salon, must be reexamined in themselves, and tested out. Amplifying the fluctuations: what’s that mean to me? How can deviance, mine for example, give rise to disorder? How do we go from sparse, singular fluctuations, the discrepancies between each individual and the norm, each person and the devices, to futures and to destinies? How can what capitalism routs, what escapes valorization, become a force and turn against it? Classical politics resolved this problem with mobilization. To Mobilize meant to add, to aggregate, to assemble, to synthesize. It meant to unify little differences and fluctuations by subjecting them to a great crime, an un-rectifiable injustice, that nevertheless must be rectified. Singularities were already there. They only had to be subsumed into a unique predicate. Energy was also already there. It just needed to be organized. I’ll be the head, they’ll be the body. And so the theoretician, the avant-garde, the party, have made that force operate in the same way as capitalism did, by putting it into circulation and control in order to seize the enemy’s heart and take power by taking off its head, like in classical war.

The invisible revolt, the “coup-du-monde” [world coup] that Trocchi talked about, on the contrary, plays on potential. It is invisible because it is unpredictable in the eyes of the imperial system. Amplified, the fluctuations relative to the imperial devices never aggregate together. They are as heterogeneous as desires are, and can never form a closed totality; they can’t even form into a “masses,” which name itself is just an illusion if it doesn’t mean an irreconcilable multiplicity of lifestyles/forms-of-life. Desires flee; they either reach a clinamen or not, they either produce intensity or not, and even beyond flight they continue to flee. They get restive under any kind of representation, as bodies, class, or party. It must thus be deduced from this that all propagation of fluctuations will also be a propagation of civil war. Diffuse guerrilla action is the form of struggle that will produce such invisibility in the eyes of the enemy. The recourse to diffuse guerrilla action taken by a fraction of the Autonomia group in 1970s Italy can be explained precisely in light of the advanced cybernetic character of the Italian govern-mentality of the time. These years were when “consociativism,” which prefigured today’s citizenism, was developing; the association of parties, unions, and associations for the distribution and co-management of Power. This sharing is not the most important thing here; the important thing is management and control. This mode of government goes far beyond the Providential State by creating longer chains of interdependence between citizens and devices, thus extending the principles of control and management from administrative bureaucracy.

It was T.E. Lawrence that worked out the principles of guerrilla war from his experience of fighting alongside the Arabs against the Turks in 1916. What does Lawrence tell us? That the battle itself is no longer the only process involved in war, in the same way as the destruction of the heart of the enemy is no longer its central objective; a fortiori if this enemy is faceless, as is the case when dealing with the impersonal power materialized in the Empire’s cybernetic devices: “The majority of wars are contact based; two forces struggling to remain close to one another in order to avoid any tactical surprises. The war of the Arabs had to be a rupture based war: containing the enemy with the silent threat of a vast desert unknown to it and only revealing themselves at the moment of attack.” Deleuze, though he too rigidly opposed guerrilla war, posed the problem of individuality and war, and that of collective organization, clarified that it was a question of opening up space as much as possible, and making prophecies, or rather of “fabricating the real instead of responding to it.” The invisible revolt and diffuse guerrilla war do not sanction injustices, they create a possible world. In the language of the cybernetic hypothesis, I can create invisible revolt and diffuse guerrilla war on the molecular level in two ways. First gesture: I fabricate the real, I break things down, and break myself down by breaking it all down. This is the source of all acts of sabotage What my act represents at this moment doesn’t exist for the device breaking down with me. Neither 0 nor 1, I am the absolute outsider/third party. My orgasm surpasses devices/my joy infuriates them. Second gesture: I do not respond to the human or mechanical feedback loops that attempt to encircle me/figure me out; like Bartleby, I’d “prefer not to.” I keep my distance, I don’t enter into the space of the flows, I don’t plug in, I stick around. I wield my passivity as a force against the devices. Neither 0 nor 1, I am absolute nothingness. Firstly: I cum perversely. Secondly: I hold back. Beyond. Before. Short Circuiting and Unplugging. In the two cases the feedback does not take place and a line of flight begins to be drawn. An external line of flight on the one hand that seems to spread outwards from me; an internal line of flight that brings me back to myself. All forms of interference/fog come from these two gestures, external and internal lines of flight, sabotage and retreat, the search for forms of struggle and for the assumption of different forms-of-life. Revolution is now about figuring out how to conjugate those two moments.

Lawrence also tells how it was also a question that it took the Arabs a long time to resolve when fighting the Turks. Their tactics consisted basically in “always advancing by making small hits and withdrawing, neither making big drives, nor striking big blows. The Arab army never sought to keep or improve their advantage, but to withdraw and go strike elsewhere. It used the least possible force in the least possible time and hit the most withdrawn positions.” Primacy was given to attacks against war supplies, and primarily against communications channels, rather than against the institutions themselves, like depriving a section of railway of rail. Revolt only becomes invisible to the extent that it achieves its objective, which is to “deny all the enemy’s goals,” to never provide the enemy with easy targets. In this case it imposes “passive defense” on the enemy, which can be very costly in materials and men, in energies, and extends into the same movement its own front, making connections between the foci of attack. Guerrilla action thus since its invention tends to be diffuse. This kind of fighting immediately gives rise to new relationships which are very different than those that exist within traditional armies: “we sought to attain maximum irregularity and flexibility. Our diversity disoriented the enemy’s reconnaissance services... If anyone comes to lack conviction they can stay home. The only contract bonding them together was honor. Consequently the Arab army did not have discipline in the sense where discipline restrains and smothers individuality and where it comprises the smallest common denominator of men.” However, Lawrence did not idealize the anarchist spirit of his troops, as spontaneists in general have tended to do. The most important thing is to be able to count on a sympathetic population which then can become a space for potential recruitment and for the spread of the struggle. “A rebellion can be carried out by two percent active elements and 98 percent passive sympathizers,” but this requires time and propaganda operations. Reciprocally, all offensives involving an interference with the opposing lines imply a perfect reconnaissance/intelligence service that “must allow plans to be worked out in absolute certainty” so as to never give the enemy any goals. This is precisely the role that an organization now might take on, in the sense that this term once had in classical politics; serving a function of reconnaissance/intelligence and the transmission of accumulated knowledge-powers. Thus the spontaneity of guerrilleros is not necessarily opposed to organizations as strategic information collection tanks.

But the important thing is that the practice of interference, as Burroughs conceived it, and after him as hackers have, is in vain if it is not accompanied by an organized practice of reconnaissance into domination. This need is reinforced by the fact that the space where the invisible revolt can take place is not the desert spoken of by Lawrence. And the electronic space of the Internet is not the smooth neutral space that the ideologues of the information age speak of it as either. The most recent studies confirm, moreover, that the Internet is vulnerable to targeted and coordinated attacks. The web matrix was designed in such a way that the network would still function if there were a loss of 99% of the 10 million routers — the cores of the communications network where the information is concentrated — destroyed in a random manner, as the American military had initially imagined. On the other hand, a selective attack, designed on the basis of precise research into traffic and aiming at 5% of the most strategic core nodes — the nodes on the big operators’ high-speed networks, the input points to the transatlantic lines — would suffice to cause a collapse of the system. Whether virtual or real, the Empire’s spaces are structured by territories, striated by the cascades of devices tracing out the frontiers and then erasing them when they become useless, in a constant scanning sweep comprising the very motor of the circulation flows. And in such a structured, territorialized and deterritorialized space, the front lines with the enemy cannot be as clear as they were in Lawrence’s desert. The floating character of power and the nomadic dimensions of domination thus require an increased reconnaissance activity, which means an organization for the circulation of knowledge-powers. Such was to be the role of the Society for the Advancement of Criminal Science (SASC).

In Cybernetics and Society, when he foresaw, only too late, that the political use of cybernetics tends to reinforce the exercise of domination, Wiener asked himself a similar question, as a prelude to the mystic crisis that he was in at the end of his life: “All the techniques of secrecy, interference in messages, and bluffing consist in trying to make sure that one’s camp can make a more effective use than the other camp of the forces and operations of communication. In this combative use of information, it is just as important to leave one’s own information channels open as it is to obstruct the channels that the opposing side has at its disposal. An overall confidentiality/secrecy policy almost always implies the involvement of much more than the secrets themselves.” The problem of force reformulated as a problem of invisibility thus becomes a problem of modulation of opening and closing. It simultaneously requires both organization and spontaneity. Or, to put it another way, diffuse guerrilla war today requires that two distinct planes of consistency be established, however meshed they may be — one to organize opening, transforming the interplay of lifestyles/forms-of-life into information, and the other to organize closing, the resistance of lifestyles/forms-of-life to being made into information. Curcio: “The guerrilla party is the maximum agent of invisibility and of the exteriorization of the proletariat’s knowledge-power; invisibility towards the enemy cohabiting with it, on the highest level of synthesis.” One may here object that this is after all nothing but one more binary machine, neither better nor worse than any of those that are at work in cybernetics. But that would be incorrect, since it means not seeing that at the root of these gestures is a fundamental distance from the regulated flows, a distance that is precisely the condition for any experience within the world of devices, a distance which is a power that I can layer and make a future from. It would above all be incorrect because it would mean not understanding that the alternation between sovereignty and unpower cannot be programmed, that the course that these postures take is a wandering course, that what places will end up chosen — whether on the body, in the factory, in urban or peri-urban non-places — is unpredictable.

#### Only changing our relationship towards technology is able to solve.

**Morrissey**, C.S. **2017** “'Blade Runner 2049' depicts technocratic globalization” BC Catholic [https://bccatholic.ca/voices/c-s-morrissey/blade-runner-2049-depicts-technocratic-globalization //](https://bccatholic.ca/voices/c-s-morrissey/blade-runner-2049-depicts-technocratic-globalization%20//) sosa

To get the most out of Ridley Scott’s new movie Blade Runner 2049, we need to first consider the dystopian Los Angeles of 2019 portrayed in the original Blade Runner.

That movie became a cult classic because of a feeling about the future it conveyed. It invited us to ask a crucial question: as we enter our technocratic future, are we losing our humanity?

Other sci-fi films have likewise tried to generate a feeling of dread over the prospect of a dystopian future. But while Blade Runner got the particular details about 2019 wrong, it got that general feeling right.

Acid rain hasn’t eclipsed the sun, nor have skyscrapers filled with human overpopulation extinguished wildlife. Japanese technocratic culture hasn’t colonized America. We don’t have flying cars, space mining, or robot slaves.

However, the androids that propel the plot of the Blade Runner films are best understood as symbols for our feeling about a technocratic future. Blade Runner’s “replicants” act as mirrors of the humans who are losing their humanity.

This feeling of dread needs to be taken seriously because, as Pope Francis has written in his encyclical Praise Be to You (Laudato Si’): On Care for Our Common Home, “humanity has taken up technology and its development according to an undifferentiated and one-dimensional paradigm.”

Art often functions as a distant early warning system.

Art often functions as a distant early warning system. The Blade Runner films reflect back to us our most pressing contemporary concern, which the Pope calls “the globalization of the technocratic paradigm.”

The movies tell of human beings whose relationship to nature has become one of “a technique of possession, mastery, and transformation.” But this simply holds a mirror up to us today because, as Francis notes, our own “relationship has become confrontational” with the environment.

The source of this adversarial relationship is our belief in a lie, says Francis, “the lie that there is an infinite supply of the earth’s goods,” which “leads to the planet being squeezed dry beyond every limit.”

But this lie is taken up into the service of an even greater lie: “the idea of infinite or unlimited growth.” Hence, technocratic culture today carries with it the imperative of the upgrade cycle. Yet it turns all of us into servants of the technocratic vision of a few, says the Pope.

“We have to accept that technological products are not neutral, for they create a framework which ends up conditioning lifestyles and shaping social possibilities along the lines dictated by the interests of certain powerful groups,” he writes. “Decisions which may seem purely instrumental are in reality decisions about the kind of society we want to build.”

This social truth gets embodied in the sci-fi world of Blade Runner. It’s the source of our feeling of dread about the unintended future consequences of letting technology use us.

If we leave technology to its default settings, it will have a negative impact. According to the Pope, the technological paradigm is already doing harm: “Our capacity to make decisions, a more genuine freedom and the space for each one’s alternative creativity are diminished.”

This cultural reality has an economic engine. In the Pope’s memorable phrase: “Finance overwhelms the real economy.” That is, the pursuit of unlimited growth makes a few corporate shareholders wealthy in a short time. But a real economy that would permit sustainable production and consumption is destroyed.

This warped economic engine, which pursues unlimited profits no matter what harm is done to people or to the planet, also generates political problems. If there is no concern for “more balanced levels of production” and “for the environment,” then we also turn a blind eye to “a better distribution of wealth” and “the rights of future generations,” as Pope Francis notes.

Francis is right to warn us how humanity is failing “to see the deepest roots of our present failures, which have to do with the direction, goals, meaning and social implications of technological and economic growth.”

That’s why artworks like Blade Runner that spring from a sci-fi imagination can be so important. They help us to call into question the trajectory of our current culture. Perhaps they don’t accurately show us our future, but at their best they equip us with the emotional intelligence we need to avert a dystopia.

“We have the freedom needed to limit and direct technology,” affirms Francis. But this requires of us “a bold cultural revolution,” which only begins when we “slow down and look at reality in a different way.”

#### Altering our relationship towards technology is the launch pad (pun intended) for a better orientation towards outer space.

Laufer, 19 (Mixael S Laufer; anarchist biohacker, Professor of Mathematics at Menlo College, and visiting teacher at San Quentin Prison, “Squatting in Space,” Anarchist Library, 2019)

Everybody thinks they want to be an astronaut when they grow up. When people learn that space programs are controlled by governments which spend obscene amounts of money on them instead of feeding or educating their citizens, and only take the most privileged members of society, that dream melts, and people get down to the shitty business of survival. Space travel sucks. Everything about it sucks: it's dangerous, it's expensive, it's unavailable to almost everyone while simultaneously being romanticized to the point where everyone wants to do it. Not well publicized is the fact that there are defunct craft in space which are lying fallow, just waiting to be refurbished in space and re-inhabited. The reason this is not widely publicized is because space programs don't want the flack associated with throwing away multi-billion dollar hardware and burning it to vapor by letting it fall into the atmosphere at 7,000MPH. Seemingly as a belated april fools day joke, on april 2nd this year the burnt remains of the space-station Tiangong-1 crashed into the pacific ocean. That's like buying a Bugatti Veyron, and then instead of changing the oil at 1000 miles, just sending the thing over a guardrail. The sticker price on the Veyron is $1.7 million. Comparatively, the cost of the Tiangong-1 clocks in at $3.1 billion. So, really, letting that fall into the pacific ocean is like dumping 1,800 Veyrons over a guardrail before the oil change. And that's over triple the total that have ever been produced anyway. Over 21,000 pieces of space trash larger than 10 centimeters and half a million bits of junk between 1 cm and 10 cm are estimated to circle the planet. This is a huge problem, because when things are zooming around at 7,000 miles per hour, and they hit each other, bad things happen to delicate scientific instruments, even the ones hardened for space. The traditional methods are to track these, and or “de-orbit” them, meaning to crash them, so they are no longer in circulation. But better if they were instead used as parts to fix up the abandoned spacecraft to then be inhabited by brave space-steaders. What if we didn't wait for progressive space programs to give their unused tools to the public domain for the world to use, but instead just seized the damn things before the orbits decayed so much they started to catch on fire? One of the most beautiful tenets of the squatting philosophy is that functional infrastructure should not be allowed to sit fallow, if it could be used by others. If one regards legality to be worth anything, space is technically international waters, and so is the right of every human being to explore as they wish. But much as peasants of old couldn't sail the ocean, because they couldn't afford a ship or crew, modern folks with a desire to travel in space are often barred from it de facto, as they can't afford a spaceworthy craft. While legally you are a pirate, because space it covered under international maritime law, it's important to recall that there is nobody to come after you: for the same reason governments spend so much to send space vehicles up, they can't afford to send anyone after you to stop you. Flip them all the bird from 26,000 miles up. Many people and organizations are already gunning to try to turn space into just another market for the extraction of resources and exchange. Let's get in there first, and keep it wild. In 2015 the so-called “Space Act” was signed into US law, violating the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, by allowing claims to be laid to extraterrestrial territories and resources. This was a result of caving to the asteroid-mining lobbyists, who are clearly only daunted by the fact that there aren't indigenous people on asteroids on whom they can commit a genocide like in the good ol' days of colonial resource extraction. However, we should hardly be surprised: the first piece of space legislation the united states ever passed was in 1958, drafted moments after Sputnik-1 launched, to ensure that space would be treated as a capitalist market, and not a communist playground. More space stations are going to be built, and they will similarly be abandoned. We need to be ready to pick up the garbage. Space will be the new Jakarta. There is a point in the stratosphere where there is a peak temperature of about 0 C just over 50km up. Manned high altitude balloons can ◦C just over 50km up. Manned high altitude balloons can easily reach this spot, and have done so twice recently by the skydivers Felix Baumgartner and Alan Eustace, both setting records for freefall skydives. If they had prepared just a little differently, they might have stayed up there, instead of jumping back to earth. Industrious folk will use high-altitude balloons to get high enough, close to the mesosphere, and will use booster rockets or use a skyhook momentum exchange tether systems to catapult themselves up by crashing their balloons, and jump the gap to the thermosphere where the abandoned space stations are, and attach home made add-ons with aquaculture farming units, and new models of zero waste permaculture will be developed in real-time adaptive trial runs. The new shantytowns will be zero-G raft cities in orbit. There will be a new group of people who transcend race and class, and become the space-squatters on jerry-rigged space garbage that has been upcycled. The Uru-nuevo, Xin-Tanka, or Makoko-akotun. Exploring space has a genuine possibility of testing new economic and social models. You have to truly start from scratch, because there is literally nothing up there. Can you maintain? It is a question of will, technology, and luck. Let's see. As the development of technology for space travel progresses, the detritus will be filtered through Shenzhen just like all technologies, and we'll have access to last year's technology, which still works just as well. Better than the state funded space programs, or the commercially funded space programs, the discoveries that will happen by space explorers unbeholden to overlords will be of a scope heretofore never imagined. We will learn about psychology when people who were not screened spend indefinite periods of time in confined spaces with a small group of people. We will learn about astrobiology when we see how the microbiome of an unsanitized space station develops. We will learn about nutrition, as people eat in a closed-loop system for long periods of time. New experiments will be run on particle physics, using the vacuum of space, instead of the ultra-high vacuum systems which are so expensive on earth. Art of new media will come to be, and we will be in awe. Most importantly, ideas and discoveries will be made which are so divergent from our present thinking that they will spawn new fields of inquiry. So much will come from what so many will call reckless, and what the truly free will call a testament to the human spirit. Maybe, the first people to settle on Mars, or Enceladus, or Europa, or on little chips in the Oort Cloud, won't be the agents of a state or of a megalomaniacal billionaire, but just people who decided they wanted to go. They will develop custom genetically modified organisms artificially adapted to live on those places once thought to be too hostile to support life. We will see entire artificial ecosystems of synthetic astrobiology, which will develop both organically, and artificially, but will have started entirely artificially. Creative solutions borne out of necessity, way beyond the risk profile set by investors or oversight politicians will create new techniques of space exploration and travel. Will things fail? Undoubtedly, but we will learn from that too. Burt Monroe set records that will never be broken because he didn't have safety gear. This is why people who are sufficiently brave can get to space if they really want. Let's not forget the flow chart model of science: Flow chart model of science: Blow Things Up -> Analyze Results: If Yes, Science; If No, Entertainment; If Pretend, Mythbusters Comandeering From Afar Now, the number of actually inhabitable spacecraft which have been disused over the years is small, but the number of functional items in space itself is quite high. There are 98 derelict satellites currently orbiting earth. Most of these still have power from their nuclear radioisotope thermoelectric generators, so they still could be running. Their owners just got bored, and decided to waste taxpayer dollars on something new. If you hacked in, you could get them running again, and do more science. This is the essence of hacking: do more with less. Satellies are so often abandoned, there is a technical term for it: passivization. Isn't that awful, on like, every level? The glory of hacking is that we can occupy places/spaces/objects without being physically present. Let's use the unused satellites which could be giving free cell phone service to everyone, and give it. Let's give satellite radio to everyone. Not just to listen, but to broadcast. Let's hijack the working satellites and bring free internet to everyone. Outernet [before it was called Othernet] originally was a company trying to bring free open-source internet to rural areas. You could build a receiver with a raspberry π and a minidish, and be able to download a curated block of the most popular data on the internet every day. But now it is just another cog in the nonprofit industrial complex trying to make people buy their proprietary hardware, and subscription services, while pretending to be altruistic. Let's do better. The possibilities for this are endless: data havens sending huge volumes of IP down, monitoring drone activity from space, open-source space surveillance of government black sites, pirate radio from space, maybe even a new internet. Right now, the old iridium satellites are being decommissioned. They are being replaced with new ones, but the old ones still work really well. Some of them are so-called “hot spares” which have never even been used! They were low-orbit non-geosynchronous communication satellites, and what is super cool is that they were a mesh network. You communicate directly to your local satellite, and it bounced the signal amongst neighbor satellites until it gets to the one closest to your intended recipient. Imagine if instead of letting these billion dollar spacecraft just fall out of orbit and burn up in the atmosphere, or crash into the ocean, a group of dedicated hackers used the information that Stefan “Sec" Zehl and Schneider, and their group managed to get by reverse-engineering the system in order to hack it, broke in, and kept them aloft in order to build an open global satellite data network that everyone can use with cheap open source hardware, like the r0ket and rad10 badges. Of course this brings up the romantic notion of the freedom of radiowhich once existed: anyone who can grab the signal can listen, and anyone who can send a signal can be heard. This was the freedom that radio amateurs of the 20s 30s and 40s felt, before the FCC decided that electromagnetic waves were the domain of the government. Also similar to the freedom of the early days of the internet, and more recently of the various darknets out there. The problem with the darknets is that they still sit on top of the infrastructure of the internet as it exists, and despite the magic of various subterfuges to disguise traffic, it's becoming harder and harder to maintain open channels online. I dream of industrious hackers finding whitespace in the broadcast spectrum, and setting up independent uplink/downlink systems with upcycled tv dishes and tinfoil coated umbrellas. We could stop fighting for “net neutrality” if we just built one of our own. Take the Data and Run So let's say that you don't have the stomach for space travel, and you don't quite have the chops to hack into a defunct satellite and get it running again. There is still more occupation which can be done. The objects in space are still spewing out information, and you can reach out and take it, even the disused ones. NOAA-9 went up in 1984, and you can still hear its transmissions, which have been likened to a drunkard whistling. All you need to do is build yourself a little YAGI antenna out of coathangers and coax cable, or chicken wire and refrigerator tubing, and you can listen. Check the timetable for when it is due to fly over your location and listen to 136.770. If you jack some VHF stuff into the system, you can transmit as well. That's illegal without a license, but let's not let the law stand in the way of good extraplanetary communications. There is so much out there to be caught. Once you start listening, it's hard to stop. This is why amateur radio enthusiasts are so insufferable in their endless enthusiasm. In the 1995 film Heat the character Kelso is pitching a job to Neil, and they have the following exchange: KELSO: Like I was saying that’s not really an estimate, these are exact figures. I have a printout here of the cashflow of the bank for the past few months. NEIL: How do you get this information? KELSO: It just comes to you. This stuff just flies through the air. They send this information out, I mean it’s just beamed all over the fucking place; all you have to know is how to grab it. See, I know how to grab it. The elements to doing so are fairly straightforward: you need an antenna, a filter so you are just getting the part you want, and then a computer to interpret the data stream. A linux box with a DVB-S card is sufficient, and there are plenty of tools which will let you tune to get the specifics you are looking for, and dump the contents from a stream into audio, video, and data decoders. Free-to-air, and Wildfeeds are constantly coming down off of satellites with an incredible amount of content, which you can just grab. Are you still paying for your dish TV subscription? No need. You can grab NASA's feed off of the Horizons-1 satellite at 127◦W, You can grab the DoD news off AMC-1 at 103◦W, and Al Jazeera english is on Galaxy-19 97◦W. The list goes on. The Meek Shall Inherit the Stars With all but a dozen or so locations on the surface of the earth claimed and ruled by one government or another, space is one of the next logical options for autonomous zones. Like everything which is sufficiently different from the status-quo to allow for new paradigms, access to space is being cloistered away from those without influence. However, like everything which has come before, real people will find ways to subvert the systems for the benefit of the people, instead of the rulership. Don't wait for the gatekeepers to let you play in space. Go when you like.2

#### The Role of the Judge is to think through virtual reality.

#### We control a uniqueness question with regards to how the virtual collapses all thought and flesh into the digital archive – what we do now in response to this end of history and the recombination of human experience is the only discussion left.

Kroker and Weinstein ‘94

[Arthur, (post?)human meth pipe, and Michael Weinstein, Purdue University. 1994. “Data Trash.”] pat – ask for the PDF 😊

Virtual reality sells the illusion of displacement. It allows you to jump out of the inertial drag of skin and bones, and patch into the cybernetic side of your schizoid other, leaving the “there” behind like a burning car wreck that quickly recedes in the rear-view mirror as you zoom down the freeway on the way from nothing to nowhere.

Artificial games are the reality-principle of virtual culture: real cybernetic flesh, real vaporized eyes, real data organs. A strange matrix of play-functions for travelling across the electronic frontier. Ludic only because they are work training sessions for virtualized flesh, artificial games have a veneer of imaginative fantasy, but an inner reality of reworking the organic body into its virtual replacement. In this mirrored universe, things appear only in their opposite sign-form: games are, in fact, hard cyber-work for virtualized flesh. Artificial, here, means the grubbly street materialism of a new (cyber) reality-principle, in which fantasy is the projection of the operational logic of telematic life onto the body electronic.

In virtual culture, the only interesting artificial game is life, itself: that hybrid world of organic flesh that has been left behind as excess ballast when virtual reality launches into the stratosphere of cyberspace. Once in a while, virtual bodies that have lost their way in the maze of cybernetic dungeons, and strange attractors have been known to accidentally download into the body organic, finding themselves in an eerie world of air, trees, and bio-organs breathing without technical support functions. Like amphibians struggling out of the primordial muck of ocean foam, virtualized flesh, has to learn anew the artificial game of earthly life. But it never will. It is speeding to nowhere.

Recombinant History

The millennium is most certainly not the “end of history” so lamented by all the conservatives, nor a period of “post-history” as trumpeted by liberal historians, but, most definitely, the beginning of recombinant history. We live, that is, at the edge of a fantastic intensification of a history that is yet to be written: the telematic history of the virtual body. It is a history marked by a double moment: its reflex, the archiving of the horizon of human experience into relational data bases; and its dynamic will, the creative recombination of our telemetried past into monstrous hybrids that will form the incisions of the electronic landscape of the twenty-first century.

While the “end of history” thesis had use-value as an explanation for the fading role of ideology in the twilight days of the Cold War, and the perspective of “post-history” expressed insightfully the eclipse of the referential illusion of modernist history, recombinant history is the telematic future of virtualized flesh. Here, the (virtual) history file compresses the electronic body into a universal digital archive, always available for sampling, triggered by system operators at its XY axis, and indefinitely recombined into hybrid images of the telematic future.

No longer localized in bounded energy fields, virtual history is finally free to produce recombinant images of life once the organic body has been fitted with a customized nervous system. Expressing perfectly the ruling mentality of the virtual class, recombinant history archives the human condition in the form of its smallest elementary data particles, and then, as Data philosophizes in Star Trek, “reassembles the body as a machine.” Pushed from behind by the will to (data) archivalism and pulled from ahead by the will to recombination, virtual history recounts how electronic flesh comes to full self-consciousness, how the digital body becomes aware of its abandonment of the drag-weight of skin as it synchs smoothly with its bio-machine interfaces. The virtual sex archive beckons to us from the welcoming shore of a third sex, a floating sexual screen where gender signs go to ground, as the electronic body flips into the non-space of the ecstasy of anamorphosis. The electronic body archive scans the future of organs without a body, perfectly fibrillated and hyper-charged for nomadic journeys across the media-net. The military-entertainment archive seduces it with its telematic vision of a logistics of perception, so precise in its greenish thermal infra-imaging that data becomes the only battleground: the event-horizon of the war machine as the indispensable entertainment conglomerate for virtualized flesh.

In recombinant history, archiving is always on its way to recombination into a new configuration. Electronic bodies merge: the consumer body is a war machine; the medicalized body has its financial history stored in the spooling gateways of hospital computers, waiting to be leeched (recombined) of the weight of its earthly possessions; and the celebrity body is a dead star, which, like the luminous brilliance of a “red dwarf,” is understandable only by the rules of deep space astronomy. Just when we thought that history as a grand récit had finally died as the last victim of the modernist illusion of misplaced virtuality, suddenly it returns in full recombinant force: that point where history merges with digital technology, becoming the world-historical process animating the will to virtuality.