### 1ac – v1

#### The World Computer has created a world characterized by racial capitalism and its financialization of all information and all life – every individual matters only as much as their overall contribution to the productive processes of the code, writing a bloody price tag in our flesh, dictating what we are worth to capital. This is built on the first-order financialization of blackness in the hold of the slave ship, rendering black bodies fungible, reduced to merely their productive value. This financialization of existence manifests itself in the externalization of the outside, an environment that includes not simply the physical resources of the Earth but also its people, rendered into simply another resource.

**Beller 18 –** Jonathan Beller is Adjunct Professor of English, Film Studies, and Women’s Gender and Sexuality Studies at Barnard.

Jonathan Beller, “Gramsci’s Press: Why We Game” from “The Message is Murder: Substates of Computational Capital” Pluto Press 2018 // sam

Communicative acts are directly or indirectly inscribed on desubjectified bodies. The extent of this desubjectification varies, but it follows racial, gendered, financial and national logics, among others; and in many cases approaches or achieves radical exclusion, extreme dis-mediation and social death. Surprisingly perhaps, computation, understood now in accord with the logic of media convergence to be the ultimate medium of communication, is not simply ancillary to this process of inscribing the messages of others on living bodies, but the very means by which this process has achieved a new level of efficiency, inexorability and hegemony. Simply put, global communication and information processing utilizes planetary dispossession as its substrate. All of our high-tech communiqués are written on the backs of modern slaves. This book included. How did this situation, in which it is statistically likely that your very utterance (whatever you might say) not only depends upon radical dispossession but also reinforces impoverishment and environmental degradation, come to pass? The Message is Murder endeavors to sketch an answer. The strategy of The Message is Murder is a selective decoding of various moments of encoding: a consideration of the tips of various icebergs in what is very loosely a field called media studies that when considered together begin to tell a different history of four seemingly separate domains: capitalism, racialization, gender formation and information. Western Marxism’s poor record in relation to decolonization, blackness, critical race studies and queer activism, and the seemingly autonomous emergence of cybernetics and computation make these ostensibly separate sectors of social transformation known as capital, race, gender and informatics unlikely bedfellows at first glance. Capital, race, gender and information have been most often considered separately and in relative if not complete isolation from one another. But a second look informed by anti-racist, feminist, queer, postcolonial and indigenous struggles to understand that what is called “convergence” indicates not just media convergence (the fact that audio, video and text can all be digitized), but rather a total informatic convergence in which financial, biometric, and computational operations are increasingly unified. This convergence has a brutal history as well as dire implications. A near total and becoming totalitarian convergence comes about because what we currently call digital culture is actually the second digital culture built atop a first order digitization by a racial capitalism that included colonialism, slavery, hetero-patriachy and industrialization. The commodity form, which imposed an exchange value on every use-value, was already the incipient digitization of the bios. In dictating the exact dimensions of the slave ship cargo hold during the Middle Passage and in pricing the slave on the Mississippi auction block, this digitization of living persons and their qualities lay its representational code upon bodies. Price, it turns out, was a digital message, though not the only one. The horrifying example of the slave ship’s hold, designed for maximum profits reveals the imposition of digital metrics on bodies, and here specifically on African bodies, on black bodies, with flagrant disregard for their person. It shows the convergence of a digital calculus on space, on movement, and on bodies and the ability of this calculus to marginalize or eliminate any sympathetic relation. This convergence results in an impossible-to-apprehend unmaking of black bodies, their reduction, as Hortense Spillers writes to “flesh,” and their reconstitution by an unimaginable history of violence that gets reified as “race.”2 The media of commodification was also a message. Yes, money clearly, but so much else too that we are still at pains to decode. What happens in the digital ether is not, as we have been sold, immaterial, fully abstract, or free, but rather ineluctably linked to the material conditions of the info-sphere’s emergence and sustenance, and hat in a way that includes all those externalities known (and indeed, unknown) as “the environment.” This “environment,” an externality from the standpoint of capitalism (Sean Cubitt, as we shall see shortly, has taught us to understand “the environment” as itself the symptom of a colonial logic), may and does take the form of forests, rivers, animals and people. Logically then, the included excluded of computational capital process may include not only forests and peoples but sectors of your mind that very possibly you thought were somehow exempt from financialized digitization. The breaking news is that they’re not. Vast swathes of our outsides and of our insides are within the enclosure of computational capital’s number crunch. That capture too is part of the message of The Message is Murder. In the domains traversed by messages, we play the odds or we get played

#### Our communication itself is labor – via the production and recirculation of images, we open a new terrain on which we are all both workers and the product – our reproduction of images serves to reinforce their exchange value.

**Beller 95** – Jonathan Beller is Adjunct Professor of English, Film Studies, and Women’s Gender and Sexuality Studies at Barnard.

Jonathan Beller, “The Spectatorship of the Proletariat” Boundary 2, 22(3), 171, 1995 // sam

The concept of the economic alienation of sensual labor (and hence the senses) has been with us since the 1840s. In a formulation that might have inspired Benjamin's "orchid in the land of technology," Marx tells us in The German Ideology that German philosophy's "man" "does not see how the sensuous world ... is, not a thing given direct from all eternity, remaining ever the same, but the product of industry and of the state of society; and, indeed, in the sense that it is an historical product, the result of the activity of a whole succession of generations, each one standing on the shoulders of the preceding one, developing its industry and its intercourse, modifying its social system according to the changed needs. Even the objects of the simplest 'sensuous certainty' are only given through social development, industry and commercial intercourse."38 That television and telecommunications are seen only as instruments of circulation suggests that Marx's concept of circulation-the mediation of value described above ("the image of a process occurring behind it")-needs to be rethought. Marx's rather cinematic trope signals that, in and of itself, circulation cannot produce value because the creation of surplus value takes place at a deeper level, in the production process itself, in other words, at the worksite. However, I am suggesting that the production process no longer occurs uniquely behind the image created by the commodity form in motion (what Marx here calls the movement of money); it occurs in the dynamics of the image itself--in its circulation, movement, incorporation. In our experience with the fetish character of the image, we know one of the forms this invisible labor of vision takes. This is more readily understandable when one realizes that, today, all things are, in addition to whatever else they are, images. Put another way, all objects are signs. As we read them (Coke bottles, sneakers, automobiles, whatever), we produce their signification. The image is perceived not only in and of itself but as a consequence of the perception of others. The density of this perception of others is part of the quality of the image-its cache. In perceiving the fetish component of the image, we perceive the value accrued to it from the looks of others. Thus, we perceive that the media, as a deterritorialized factory, has become a worksite for global production. The value of our look also accrues to the image; it sustains the fetish. This new type of production is not a happy accident of the postmodern condition, a fortuitous cyber-buzz, but a cipher of the transformed dynamics of the global mode of production. It is, at the same time, an innovation that works to stave off the falling rate of profit, since it increases the sites at, and times during, which value may be extracted. Cinema is an innovation in productive efficiency. Though I cannot develop this point here, let me simply say that if the circulation of capital is not simultaneously grasped as productive and exploitative, then there is no more Marxism.39 Marxism is the active dialectical critique of the price of society. Despite Baudrillard's claim in For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign that it is the sober dialectic that collapses when all objects circulate and, as a result, become mediators, that is, ambiguous signs in polysemous movement, the jury is still out on the fate of the dialectic.40 With all due respect to the Godard of Marxism, in cinematic spectatorship we are dealing with what the sociologists today call "disguised wage labor."

#### This means that the form of the message overdetermines its content – the use value of a message no longer matters as much as its exchange value. This means only a revolution at the level of communication can make our words mean something – star this card on your flow.

**Dean 5 –** Jodi Dean is an American political theorist and professor in the Political Science department at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in New York state. She held the Donald R. Harter ’39 Professorship of the Humanities and Social Sciences from 2013 to 2018.

Jodi Dean, “Communicative Capitalism: Circulation and the Foreclosure of Politics” Cultural Politics an International Journal 1(1):51-74, March 2005 // sam

The delirium of the dot.com years was driven by a tremendous faith in speed, volume and connectivity. The speed and volume of transactions, say, was itself to generate new “synergies” and hence wealth. A similar belief underlies the conviction that enhanced communications access facilitates democracy. More people than ever before can make their opinions known. The convenience of the Web, for example, enables millions not simply to access information but also to register their points of view, to agree or disagree, to vote and to send messages. The sheer abundance of messages, then, is offered as an indication of democratic potential. In fact, optimists and pessimists alike share this same fantasy of abundance. Those optimistic about the impact of networked communications on democratic practices emphasize the wealth of information available on the Internet and the inclusion of millions upon millions of voices or points of view into “the conversation” or “public sphere.” Pessimists worry about the lack of filters, the data smog and the fact that “all kinds of people” can be part of the conversation (Dyson 1998; cf. Dean 2002a: 72–3). Despite their differing assessments of the value of abundance, then, both optimists and pessimists are committed to the view that networked communications are characterized by exponential expansions in opportunities to transmit and receive messages. The fantasy of abundance covers over the way facts and opinions, images and reactions circulate in a massive stream of content, losing their specifi city and merging with and into the data flow. Any given message is thus a contribution to this ever-circulating content. My argument is that a constitutive feature of communicative capitalism is precisely this morphing of message into contribution. Let me explain. One of the most basic formulations of the idea of communication is in terms of a message and the response to the message. Under communicative capitalism, this changes. Messages are contributions to circulating content – not actions to elicit responses.1 Differently put, the exchange value of messages overtakes their use value. So, a message is no longer primarily a message from a sender to a receiver. Uncoupled from contexts of action and application – as on the Web or in print and broadcast media – the message is simply part of a circulating data stream. Its particular content is irrelevant. Who sent it is irrelevant. Who receives it is irrelevant. That it need be responded to is irrelevant. The only thing that is relevant is circulation, the addition to the pool. Any particular contribution remains secondary to the fact of circulation. The value of any particular contribution is likewise inversely proportionate to the openness, inclusivity or extent of a circulating data stream – the more opinions or comments that are out there, the less of an impact any one given one might make (and the more shock, spectacle or newness is necessary for a contribution to register or have an impact). In sum, communication functions symptomatically to produce its own negation. Or, to return to Agamben’s terms, communicativity hinders communication. Communication in communicative capitalism, then, is not, as Habermas would suggest, action oriented toward reaching understanding (Habermas 1984). In Habermas’s model of communicative action, the use value of a message depends on its orientation. In sending a message, a sender intends for it to be received and understood. Any acceptance or rejection of the message depends on this understanding. Understanding is thus a necessary part of the communicative exchange. In communicative capitalism, however, the use value of a message is less important than its exchange value, its contribution to a larger pool, fl ow or circulation of content. A contribution need not be understood; it need only be repeated, reproduced, forwarded. Circulation is the context, the condition for the acceptance or rejection of a contribution. Put somewhat differently, how a contribution circulates determines whether it had been accepted or rejected. And, just as the producer, labor, drops out of the picture in commodity exchange, so does the sender (or author) become immaterial to the contribution. The circulation of logos, branded media identities, rumors, catchphrases, even positions and arguments exemplifies this point. The popularity, the penetration and duration of a contribution marks its acceptance or success. Thinking about messages in terms of use value and contributions in terms of exchange value sheds light on what would otherwise appear to be an asymmetry in communicative capitalism: the fact that some messages are received, that some discussions extend beyond the context of their circulation. Of course, it is also the case that many commodities are not useless, that people need them. But, what makes them commodities is not the need people have for them or, obviously, their use. Rather, it is their economic function, their role in capitalist exchange. Similarly, the fact that messages can retain a relation to understanding in no way negates the centrality of their circulation. Indeed, this link is crucial to the ideological reproduction of communicative capitalism. Some messages, issues, debates are effective. Some contributions make a difference. But more significant is the system, the communicative network. Even when we know that our specific contributions (our messages, posting, books, articles, fi lms, letters to the editor) simply circulate in a rapidly moving and changing fl ow of content, in contributing, in participating, we act as if we do not know this. This action manifests ideology as the belief underlying action, the belief that reproduces communicative capitalism (Zizek 1989). The fantasy of abundance both expresses and conceals the shift from message to contribution. It expresses the shift through its emphases on expansions in communication – faster, better, cheaper; more inclusive, more accessible; highspeed, broadband, etc. Yet even as it emphasizes these multiple expansions and intensifi cations, this abundance, the fantasy occludes the resulting devaluation of any particular contribution. Social network analysis demonstrates clearly the way that blogs, like other citation networks, follow a power law distribution. They don’t scale; instead, the top few are much more popular than the middle few, and the middle few are vastly more popular than the bottom few. Some call this the emergence of an “A list” or the 80/20 rule. As Clay Shirkey summarily puts it, “Diversity plus freedom of choice creates inequality, and the greater the diversity, the more extreme the inequality” (Shirkey 2003).2 Emphasis on the fact that one can contribute to a discussion and make one’s opinion known misdirects attention from the larger system of communication in which the contribution is embedded. To put it differently, networked communications are celebrated for enabling everyone to contribute, participate and be heard. The form this communication takes, then, isn’t concealed. People are fully aware of the media, the networks, even the surfeit of information. But, they act as if they don’t have this knowledge, believing in the importance of their contributions, presuming that there are readers for their blogs. Why? As I explain in the next section, I think it involves the way networked communications induce a kind of registration effect that supports a fantasy of participation.

#### The history of revolutionary labor movements across American and global history proves the revolutionary possibility found in mass organization of labor, but to understand the strike as an economic and political formulation within the context of communicative capitalism, we must come to terms with the financialization of the strike – through the mass production and consumption of media like Disney’s “Newsies”, or the use of Striketober headlines to sell more newspapers, the World Computer has adapted to the strike by selling it, killing its potential to meaningfully challenge the armatures of racial capitalism. The strike has lost its power, and this is because the code always already has control of its communicative implications – only a theory that conceptualizes the expansion of labor to communication can revitalize the potential of strikes.

**Beller 95** – Jonathan Beller is Adjunct Professor of English, Film Studies, and Women’s Gender and Sexuality Studies at Barnard.

Jonathan Beller, “The Spectatorship of the Proletariat” Boundary 2, 22(3), 171, 1995 // sam

Because today capital "thinks" several cycles in advance of itself, or, to put it another way, because it has several historical stages of its own development simultaneously available to itself that can be utilized in varying proportions, one could well argue that isolated labor strikes are made productive for capital and that phenomena such as the general strike or Samir Amin's "de-linking" are impossible.' The argument for the productive value of the strike for capital would not in itself necessarily be to ignore what Jacques Derrida has recently called "Marx's injunction."2 In discussing the capitalization of the resistance to capital, given perhaps its most dramatic form in and after 1989, one might still hear the ghostly admonitions of the "specter of Marx," which, for Derrida "reaffirms the question of life and death." Furthermore, one might hear the moans and intimations of such an absent presence without oneself becoming as dead as Marxism is purported to be. Though this essay is in no way directly concerned with the viability of the labor strike per se, it is most definitely concerned with the objective of the strike, that is, the reappropriation of historically sedimented human labor (the means of production) by disenfranchised individuals and groups. Such reappropriation of historically sedimented labor and of living labor, I suggest, is, in fact, going on all the time; it is endemic to social change. As Antonio Negri argues, in endeavoring to establish the subjectivity of labor in history, not only does labor produce capital, but labor, in its resistance to capital exploitation forces structural and technological innovations in capitalism. Though this is surely the case, we have lacked, since the advent of cinema in particular, a specific theory that accounts for the development of certain new regimes for the production of cultural and economic value via mental activity; we do not yet know how to account for the present-day dynamics of value production and appropriation that operate through the conversion of mental activity into social force. The capitalization of mental activity is an enabling factor in capital's ability to continue all previous forms of violation. By looking at the recycling of the resistance to capital by capital (the making productive of the strike against capital by capital) our affective production of hegemony may be foregrounded, and possibilities for the disruption of coercion and exploitation may be foregrounded as well. Toward those ends (and perhaps to the surprise of some), I would like to discuss the development of mass media during the time of early modern cinema, more specifically, those particular developments that can be found to crystallize in Sergei Mikhailovich Eisenstein's 1924-1925 film The Strike.3 For it was here, precisely, in revolutionary cinema, that capital's encroachment into the visual sphere met with resistance. And yet, in spite of its intentions, The Strike, like capital itself, participates in producing a new regime of the sensorium by advancing an increasing integration of machines and culture, of labor and perception. We can use The Strike to mark an emergent sociohistorical change in the character of what Marx called "sensuous labor" and, by direct implication, to mark as well a new strategy for the production and appropriation of value. To talk here about the political economy of the reorganization of society in terms of the simultaneously economic and cultural value necessary for the reclaiming and restructuration of communicative pathways (media), and of sexual identities, of groups, of subjects, of time, and of institutional power, et cetera, and the management of the world of objects, in short, social organization in general, would be to get far ahead of the task at hand, in spite of the fact that these are the terms in which such a discussion will ultimately take place.4 As a prelude to new possibilities in a discussion of culture and economy, I have set myself the task of showing how what might be thought of as the political economy of organization comes into being.

#### The strike isn’t just a material conflict between the workers and the boss, but rather a confrontation between organizational structures – the algorithms of the World Computer and racialized capitalism, the scab, the boss, the police inevitably conflict with the algorithms of the proletariat. However, the algorithms of the proletariat are necessarily distinct in that they are formulated through revolutionary movement – movement that is always already a form of communication – put simply, the strike is reliant on how we move and how we communicate, and only an examination of how we formulate revolutionary communication can overcome the financialization and sale of the strike that makes revolutionary workers movements impossible.

**Beller 95** – Jonathan Beller is Adjunct Professor of English, Film Studies, and Women’s Gender and Sexuality Studies at Barnard.

Jonathan Beller, “The Spectatorship of the Proletariat” Boundary 2, 22(3), 171, 1995 // sam

Lenin's words stressing the importance of organization are quoted at the opening of The Strike: "The strength of the working class lies in organization. Without organization of the masses the proletariat is nothing. Organized it is everything. Organization means unity of action, unity of practical operations." Following this organizational directive, The Strike sets out to catalog various moments in the organization of the revolutionary proletariat at the same time as it strives itself to be a moment in the organization of the revolutionary proletariat. It constructs a continuity between the past and the present, and portrays the proletariat's revolutionary role in the reorganization of society. Indeed, the opening of the film is staged as the struggle between two communicative regimes that have at stake the resolution of a schism between two competing models for the practical organization of the workers and the state. The capitalist owners, for their part, have telephones, the power structure of the factory itself, and spies who report back to management. Ultimately, the owners can depend on the state in the form of police and military power for the enforcement of their hold over the workers. The capitalists, along with their managers, machines, spies, and police, form an entrenched organizational network. It is a living architecture of power. Meanwhile, the workers have for themselves only what they can create out of the conditions of their existence. In the fantastic shot sequence showing the interlocking components of the czarist state and the regime of private property, a factory foreman, who early on believes trouble to be brewing, calls his superior, who then calls his superior on up to the capitalist owners and the military police. As the call goes up the ladder of command, talking heads listen to a phone in one ear while picking up a phone for the other ear in order to send the message on up the line. It is here that the film not only shows the technological immediacy of the connections between capitalist industrial management and other forms of state power but suggests that peoples' functions within that mediating network are determined by their position in the organizational array. In a certain way, the telephone has more agency than its user-at least when its users are capitalists or the lackeys of capitalists engaged in the oppression of forces (workers) that threaten to transform the organizational integrity of their systems. This telephonic medium functions somewhat like cinema does in the hands of Eisenstein. The bureaucrats' heads mechanically transmit the message just as the capitalists and their state can do nothing but attempt to suppress the strike. The telephone cable, thin as it is, embodies tremendous organizational force. That the call reaches its final destination at the military commander, who has at his disposal the public records (maps of the city and images of spies whose photographs immediately begin to move), goes to show that the call for coercive counterrevolutionary force will animate already existing structures on its way back down the hierarchy toward its oppressive realization. Unaware of impending defeat, the workers use their life-energy to organize by word of mouth, by pamphleteering, and under the cover of art. During leisure time by the water, the handsome leaders argue and plot while reposed on an anchor. Their fraternal bond forged in working together for a common cause is perhaps, for Eisenstein, the libidinal core of a revolutionary society. We get several shots of men in repose taking advantage of "leisure" time to organize. Sitting among a tremendous mountain of piled iron train wheels, the workers, planning yet again, seem to draw inspiration from a material intimation regarding base and superstructure: rolling stock cannot roll without its wheels. In a factory bathroom, they are again conspiring until, upon the unwanted entry of the boss's foreman, they tear down their pants and face the urinals or sit on the pots in individual stalls- "innocently" going about their business. And under the superimposed cover of an accordion that opens and closes as if breathing a message in and out, we see bands of workers and their families walking, singing, and talking among themselves as a title states "spreading the word." On printed leaflets, too, the workers call for an immediate strike. This is the organization of the workers' countermovements. They are building revolutionary consciousness and a revolution. In solidarity with the workers' use of their own spaces and creative force to assemble a strike, The Strike organizes the myriad movements and patterns of daily life to orchestrate a message. However, this message is not only meant to be understood, that is, it is not, as the above paragraph might seem to imply, merely a handbook of revolutionary activity. As the capitalists and the workers attempt to outmaneuver each other using their networks of organization and communication, it becomes clear that in the case of the workers, it is movement itself that is their medium of communication. They express themselves in the concrete reorganization of their surroundings. This reorganization is, as it were, the film-language of The Strike. The placing of things in motion is the form of this society's expression. Capitalists orchestrate movement according to their interests, while workers try to orchestrate their own form of movement. To move differently in a society of highly regimented motion is already to express something else. Alternative motions may defy, or even exceed, the dominant social order. Indeed, it is the workers' goal in The Strike to rip the factory out of the capitalist's network of organization and control, and to incorporate it into their own. They move to make its moving parts move for them. In The Strike, the reorganization of movement (space and time) is made eloquent. Set apart from the capitalists, who are caricatures, and their spies, who are named for animals, the humans who appear as "The People" (whom, in Eisenstein's films, Roland Barthes notes, are "always lovable" 9) are the only ones able to exercise autonomous agency. In moving for themselves, the people claim their humanity. It is as if revolutionary movement itself begins to reverse Marx's description of the animalistic conditions imposed by capitalism, in which "what is animal becomes human and what is human becomes animal."10 For Marx, the animalistic conditions of the workers' lives under capitalism exist because all of the workers' creative energy (human labor) belongs to the capitalist. Though in their exploitation of workers the capitalists behave inhumanely, they appropriate the human attributes of the workers whom they have caged. The worker, in being able only to reproduce his or her own subsistence, is reduced to an animal, as "an animal only produces what it immediately needs for itself or its young .... An animal produces only itself whilst man reproduces the whole of nature."11 However, the workers' movements, organized for revolutionary change, produce something beyond immediate subsistence and reveal that it is the capitalists and their lackeys who, through their lack of agency, are capable of producing only themselves. The workers' movements in The Strike reveal the capitalists' animal nature. It is as if the spell that turned the workers into animals by freezing their humanity in the objects they made and that now cage them could be broken through the reorganization of movement. In Eisenstein, humanity remains a specter, while the world is under capital's enchantment. It is not for its own sake that I have raised the animal/human dichotomy present in Eisenstein, Marx, and, as will become important for us shortly, the imaginary of this period. Because capital was, in fact, producing animality, Eisenstein's concern with the relationship between animals, humans, and social organization was, at the turn of the century, part of a widely debated problematic. This constellation of capital, animality, and humanity suggests the powers of metamorphosis latent in the communicative aspects of movement, since reorganization potentially breaks the spell of capital, of animality. The important point here is to see the conjunction of capital and animality with the process of communication. For Eisenstein, communication arises as a result of the organization of production and functions as a form of production. Furthermore, it transpires directly in the movement of materials. That movement is itself communication is made most explicit in a scene in The Strike that occurs once the work stoppage is under way and some of the workers in the foundry refuse to join. An angry mob of striking workers picks up the raw materials of what will soon be a hail of cobblestones and, heaving them, breaks jagged holes in the windows of the foundry. There is no doubt about what they are doing in making the stones fly: they are sending a message that even an animal could understand- "Get out!" That the movement of material is made expressive in Eisenstein is only slightly less extraordinary than the fact that it actually occurs via the dematerialization ofthe movement of material. But this dematerialization of material movement is the moment that goes beyond the mere meaning of the film in the sense that I indicated previously and marks its significance for the reorganization of the material and the materiality of signification. It is here, in the abstraction of material movement away from materiality, and in the ensuing phenomenological and visceral effects, that the cinematic mode of production comes into full presence. From now on, perception will be more or less consciously engineered according to the protocols of circulating materials. Because The Strike is itself a materialization of the movements that have begun to inhere in social organization as language, it is the materialization of a "language." Language is, however, as inadequate a term as meaning, inasmuch as what is accomplished in The Strike is less the speaking about something and more the transferring of its very motion, the transferring of revolutionary movement. In "The Third Meaning," Roland Barthes uses Eisenstein stills to arrive at a concept of the filmic, which surpasses the realm of the signified. For Barthes, "the third meaning," that which he calls "the obtuse meaning," is that which exceeds language-a "signifier without a signified."12 In his words, "the third meaning -theoretically locatable but not describable-can now be seen as a passage from language to significance and the founding act of the filmic itself."13 I am suggesting that "filmic" encounters take place in a translinguistic environment, which at once utilizes thought and is beyond it. Cinema is a technology for the organization of the scene of this encounter-let us provisionally call this space the space of the Real. Material reorganization of the world of capital and animality is, for Eisenstein, designed to produce psychic reorganization, physical reorganization, and, hence, social reorganization. That this organizational force materializes in, and as, the dematerialization of material movement only suggests that there is a new kind of energy for the transformation of the material organization of society-steam! The gaseous film in all its airy immateriality extends the circulation of movement beyond its immediate place and time and into the arena of its employment-the social and the sensuous.

#### Thus, we defend that a just government ought to recognize the universal right of workers to engage in communicative strikes. As a response to the communicative nature of racial capitalism, the 1ac seeks a radical constellation found in a strike against communicative labor – this is articulated via a refusal to move right, and instead dare to imagine new ways of being, one that builds communist algorithms by weaponizing the affective technologies of communicative spaces against the World Computer.

**Beller 21** - Jonathan Beller is Adjunct Professor of English, Film Studies, and Women’s Gender and Sexuality Studies at Barnard.  
Jonathan Beller, “The World Computer: Derivative Conditions of Racial Capitalism”, Duke University Press, 2021 // sam

Given the sea change in the nature of languages and images themselves—their wholesale transposition and transformation from a means of representation to a means of production— the difficulty here is both with the substrate of communication (its bits) and with the us-versus-them perspective:, we want to ban advertisers but today we must also confront the disturbing possibility that we are them. Remember, “they” program “our” language and “our” imagination, “we” speak “their” thought—indeed, that is our work, or rather our labor. What to do with the fact that “we have seen the enemy and he is us?” One could say, one could want to say, “I don’t care who you are: if you live in the first world, if you live in the Global North, then fuck you! You ain’t no victim, even if you’re sick.” But who would be saying that? Probably some other Northerner, writing about how culture or the Venice Biennale, as if it were, could or should be more than a lavish spectacle of global suffering staged for a cosmopolitan elite. As capital’s nations, banks, armies, schools, languages, newspapers, and films did to its colonies and colonial subjects, the current institutions from states to computer-media companies do to “us”: they command us to make ourselves over in capital’s image for their own profit through networked strategies of expropriation and dispossession. “We” do it to ourselves, and our representations of self and other are designed to sell a version of ourselves back to ourselves so that we can perform further work on what is now the raw material for the next iteration of images. Therein lies our ontological lack, an ontological lack of solidarity and of even the possibility for solidarity. Therein lies the desire for and indeed necessity to become a plantation manager—the word is overseer. Though it is beyond the scope of this essay, this digital neocolonialism that practically commands global Northerners to in one way or another accept Nazism and genocide with their cappuccino could be understood as being on a continuum with the internal colonization of Europe by the German banks—which depends of course on the distributed production of a kind of neoliberal “realism” that Mark Fisher (2009) called “capitalist realism,” and was only ever a hair’s breadth away from fascism. This fact of our investment in and by advertising, the conversion of the sign to what I call the “advertisign,” poses a genuine problem for theory— indeed an unprecedented one. This problem is particularly evident considering the material conditions (class, nationality, education, race, language, etc.) of the participants in the would-be counterhegemonic theoretical discussions of culture and policy that presuppose the books, computers, schools, and institutions that sustain these. Those within the circuit of these discussions have already passed through a homogenization process which programs them in compatible systems languages. Without submitting ourselves and our own aspirations to radical critique, without conducting a Gramscian inventory of our ostensibly internal constitutions, we run the risk of merely trying to set up a competing corporation with a new business model. The revolution will not be televised; decolonization will not be a brand. Any would-be anticapitalist “we” runs this risk of coopting and cooptation from the get-go, particularly if it does not think about the materiality of social production from top to bottom: class, yes, but also race, nation, gender, sexuality, ability, geolocation, historical stratification. The world’s postmodern poor, the two billion–plus living on two dollars a day, also labor to survive in the material landscape organized by the post-Fordist social factory its anti-Blackness, its Islamophobia, its endless and mutating racism and imperialism. However, from the standpoint of capital, the role of those at the bottom is to serve as substrate for image-production and semiosis; not only in factories, cottage-industries, subsistence farming, and informal economies, but also as starving hordes; “irrational,” criminalized or surplused populations; subject-objects for policing, encampment, and bombing; desperate refugees; and even as voids in the idea of the world—as sites of social death. Forgive me, but I’d wager that no one capable of understanding these words can claim full exemption from the indictment they issue regarding structural complicity with the production and reproduction of everyday life. Humans are troped (via discourse and the screen) to organize military production, national policy, internment camps and prisons, bourgeois imaginations, museum shows, corporate strategy, and market projections. Let us clearly state here that any program that does not admit this excluded planet into dialogues that vitiate the monologues imposed by capitalist informatics and advertisigns is still floating in the realm of the ruling ideas and therefore participant in murder. These ruling ideas are the ones whose density and weight, whose material support and very machinery, threaten to further crush the late-capitalist poor out of not just representation but out of existence. This erasure and disposability, imposed by systems of informatic inscription designed to absorb every output of sense, is the achievement of the advertisarial relations endemic to computational racial capitalism. When information is an advertisement for itself that presupposes the operating system of the world computer as virtual machine, banning what we recognize as advertising on the internet, even if an excellent beginning, is just not adequate to address these issues of representation, social justice, planetary and climate racism, and emancipation. To summarize: the forms of sociality which are the conditions of possibility for the online, informatically organized relations—best characterized as advertisarial—run through every sector and register of planetary life. The internet, while recognizable as an effect and a cause of the current form of planetary production and reproduction, cannot be considered in isolation as a merely technical platform or set of platforms if its historical role is to be properly understood. To take the internet as an autonomous technological force results in a species of platform fetishism that disavows both the histories and material conditions of its emergence, conditions that are, in short, those of screen culture and racial capitalism; this is to say that it, the internet, is the very means by which the capitalist suppression of global democracy (which is emphatically, economic democracy as well) has been accomplished and continues. If the internet is autonomous, it is because it expresses the autonomization of the value form. As noted previously, with the hijacking of communications and semiotic infrastructures by racial capitalism, the medium is the message and the message is murder. To ban advertising on the internet would be a good start —but what if the whole thing is advertising? One reading of what I have said thus far might suggest that, given the expropriation of the cognitive-linguistic, our volition is overtaken by capital logic; and given our inability to cogitate in any way that is genuinely resistant to capitalist expropriation, coercion, strictly speaking, is no longer necessary to impose cooperation for capitalist production. We “want” to cooperate productively, our desire—which, from the dispossession of even language and mind constitutes ourselves as subjects in the media ecology of the capitalist technical image, that is, in and through the organization of digital information—is itself an iteration of capital, a script of becoming predestined to become capital. The old language scored by the new image machines and their extractive algorithms locally organizes cooperative subjects who want to cooperate with vectoral capitalization. We want to provide content in order to derive currency and survive. Our solidarity on the internet produces more internet. Thus, in a certain way—and particularly since we no longer properly have any thoughts of our own—we all collaborate in a world organized by images and screens, thereby participating more or less mindlessly in the seamless realization and triumphant apotheosis of the programming business. However, I am sorry to have to report that the dystopian vision here is not quite as bucolic as even this already dreary picture of unwitting and irredeemable pulverization and servitude. While I do see that representation and semiotics have been increasingly flattened à la Orwell and Marcuse by a vast internalization of the apparatuses of oppression (in which “thought” is the [productive] thought of the [capitalist] Party and “repressive desublimation” is an engine of capitalist-fascist production) the “old problems” like the hierarchy of class have not gone away; neither have racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and fascist nationalisms ceased playing their roles to create vectors of privilege for white male–identifying aspiration. Indeed, most thought today, such that it is, is all about maintaining hierarchical society. The thinking runs thus: capital is nature, capital is eternal, capital is information is nature. Or, in a more pedestrian mode: human beings are naturally acquisitive and competitive, economic growth and technological advancement mean progress, this tech provides, or almost provides, a color-, gender-, and religion-blind society, and so on—and one must advance one’s place in it by any (crypto- or not-so-cryptofascist) means necessary. Of course, there exists better thinking out there. Mia Mingus: “As organizers, we need to think of access with an understanding of disability justice, moving away from an equality based model of sameness and ‘we are just like you’ to a model of disability that embraces difference, confronts privilege and challenges what is considered ‘normal’ on every front. We don’t want to simply join the ranks of the privileged; we want to dismantle those ranks and the systems that maintain them” (Mingus 2011, cited in Puar 2017: 16). However, there is broad-band, ambient programming that facilitates assuming neo-liberal and full-on fascist subjective sovereignty. This programming seeks triumphant brushes with plenitude (communion with the big Other, as distinct from the racial or otherwise other, becomes the ego-ideal), and this same programming is violent, competitive, hateful, mean-spirited, and alienating when embraced —at the same time that it is also cooperative, simpering, and abject. Servitude, even when automatic and mostly unconscious, is unhappy and, as we can see any day from the daily news, utterly pathological and sick. Of course, this diagnosis represents a huge generalization, but despite its broad-brushing lack of subtlety we may find that such a schizoid oscillation between entitled adjudicator and abject supplicant sums up the contours of your average reality television show or comments section on YouTube. It is Bateson’s (2000) and Deleuze and Guattari’s (1977) schizophrenic, caught in the double-bind, who has become the capitalist norm—the one who struggles to negotiate in the form of contradictory signals the aporias of hierarchical society, while reproducing it, and all the while experiencing their own psychic dissolution as an injunction to create.3 With this schizoid capture in mind, let me then develop my question about the internet—“What if it is all advertising?”—in the framework of post-Fordist production. The argument is that, in the context of virtuosity and the expropriation of the cognitive-linguistic by computational racial capital, sociality itself has become advertisarial, a ceaseless waging of capitalized exploits designed to garner attention and value for oneself and one’s capitalists. This situation represents—indeed imposes—a derivative logic, a logic in which every action is a hedge, a kind of risk management devoted to maximize a return. In addition to the fractalization of fascism, in which agency is manifest as a profile that has aggregated the attention of others, advertising has worked its way into the sign itself, into the image, and into data visualization, and it has generated the advertisign. All signs become points of potential cathexis, derivative positions on the underlier that is social currency and ultimately value. This new type of sign is not simply the brand but also an element of vectoral language (Wark 2007): functionalized words in a production channel, engaging in the micromanagement of desire, the production of new needs, and the capturing of the imagination, all in order to induce linguistic and behavioral shifts in the attention of others while aggregating their attention for oneself—turning their heads with an interface. This combination of the manipulation of market conditions (that is, everyday life) through techniques of risk management is no longer merely the province of advertising but of so- called human interactivity (what was once just communication and before that culture), now become advertisarial through and through. From Smythe’s claim in the “Blindspot” essay (1977) that all leisure time has become labor time, to Virno’s (2004) notion of virtuosity, we have seen aspects of this model for the capitalist overdetermination of apparently unremunerated time before. However, here—with the financialization of expression—we clearly grasp that the financialization of everyday life means also the convergence of semiotics and financial derivatives. Given the thoroughgoing intensification of vectoral, and in fact matrixial, signs, we need to investigate its implications in the context of a discussion of radical media practice. I will make two additional points here before shifting gears and turning at the end of this chapter to what I identify as an aesthetics of survival—an aesthetics that emerges from within the matrix of advertisarial, schizoid capture. The final chapter of this volume will endeavor to extend aspects of such socioaesthetic forms, those resistant to computational racial capitalism, to new notions of radical finance and the possibility of platform communism. If, as was already becoming true in the cinematic mode of production, the dominant means of representation have become the dominant means of production, the questions of and models for political agency are radically transformed, and the urgent need to decolonize communication and decolonize finance presents itself. Future communication will require a cybernetic approach, and, as we shall argue, this cybernetic approach will necessarily be financial, though it will be reaching toward a different order and different mode of production. Like communism, because it will need to be communist, it will see economic transformation of the material relations of production and reproduction as essential to the revolution. It will draw on the repressed and extracted cognitive-linguistic resource of the racialized and otherwise marginalized and configure ways to make our voices matter both as meaning and as tools for the reorganization of the material world and the social relations therein prescribed. Language and images are neither inside nor outside; they are part of the general intellect—currently they are at once media of thought and of capital. We also know that languages and images are not isolable, meaning that they are not and have never been stand-alone entities but rather exist in relation to their media, their platforms, which are again inseparable from society and its institutions. Furthermore, each platform relates to another platform. Paraphrasing McLuhan, we could even say that the “content” of a media platform is another platform. Thusly the general intellect is inseparable from its media platforms and their financials. We see that the general intellect, once largely held in common, is increasingly being privatized; the very media of our thought belong to someone else. This expropriation of the media commons is precisely the precondition of the real subsumption of society by capital. It is an extension of the ongoing expropriation begun by primitive accumulation and money as capital, and it has been accomplished through the financialization of media as platforms of extraction. The ramification of mediation by computation and information has resulted in its convergence into formats offering derivative exposure to underliers that are the expressive vitality and futurity of our communication. We therefore no longer have any organic relation to the materials for thought itself (sincerity has become a myth, at least in the medium-term of most circles)—the words, images, and machines we require to think, to express ourselves, to interact, and to know have been ripped from the species and privatized via the longue durée of dissymmetrical exchange. We work on the words and images, but as numbers they belong to someone else. The media themselves have become forms of capital—forms of racial capital—and our usage of these media means that we work to add value that valorizes capital, for the capitalist and within a relation designed as much as possible to guarantee that our creative acts necessarily occur as dissymmetrical exchange with capital. I write this book in a discourse that does not just not belong to me because it is shared, but in a discourse that is increasingly the property of a set of institutions— publishers, journals, universities—that all have their eye on the bottom line. The means by which we most intimately know the world, ourselves, and our desires (our images and words) are themselves vectors of capitalization intent upon converting our very life-process into surplus value (which is to say value for capital). We need strategies that will seize the means of production and create a reverse subsumption of affect, intellect, knowledge, capability, communication, and community. When all media have converged as economic media, it is economic media that must be re- engineered. Again, I think this subsumption of cognitive and affective capacity, the quasi-automating (scripting) of productive labor for capital, is what Stiegler means by the proletarianization of the nervous system—which would include the proletarianization of the pathways of feeling and thought. Our affective capacities are put to alienated and alienating work in the social factory, and their product too is alienated, producing ever-intensifying and ever-accumulating dispossession and disempowerment as the dialectical antithesis of its simultaneous production of unprecedented wealth and power for the cyborg avatars of the great media conglomerates. Intellect and emotional intelligence, the product of thousands of years of species- becoming, is being strip-mined so that extraction machines may continue their furious innovation to further discount people. I write this book aware of the pressure to think it just right, to at once extend thinking in order to command attention and produce new needs, but also to delimit it, to control myself, and to put the reins on whatever counterpower may rage within my body, because academia can tolerate only so much “bullshit” and no more. Yes sir, I’ll be careful not to cross that line, but a word to the woke: the bullshit is the best part. From a historical perspective, this encroachment on the means of representation—that Banksy and I and a billion others join the silenced majority in opposing—indicates that the individual subjective agent, itself a platform for sociality that developed with the rise of capitalism (as the subject who relates to other subjects in the market, the bearer of the commodity and thus its thought), is nearly defunct. As has been noted previously, in a world where life processes are stripped, ripped apart, rebundled, and sold as derivative exposures, the individual subject is an outmoded technology despite the fact that it still appears as a skeuomorph in certain updated technosocial apparatuses—like the latest forms of films, games, influencers, and versions of national politics that proffer invitations to momentary individualistic identification for the dividual purpose of providing a sense of familiarity and orientation. While palliative for some in small doses, such individuality is no longer a viable (which is to say, sustainable) fantasy. The real thought is that of the infrastructure, of the AI that codes our meat and scripts our sheets. Sure I take up the mantle for a few moments each day to appear as the agent of this text, suiting up as the operator of an intellect that might be adequate to the informatic shit-storm of racist, capitalist, imperialist, patriarchal, for-profit assaults, but then I drop off into an ocean of petty concerns, food shopping, and home repairs. And even when I say “I,” to perform as the nexus of all this insight, I also know that it’s hardly me talking. I’m just curating at the gates of shit that needs to be said, and hopefully titrating to let the right stuff through. That’s part of my politics though Dog knows that I could create a more lucrative named-professor type profile with just a little more discipline, a bit more self-interested adherence to the protocols of the academy’s factory code. Instead, there is the effort to overturn, to be or at least to live something beyond being the scribe of the world computer, to at once witness the drama of the emergence of the intelligence of commodification, testify to its outrage, and intimate the possibility of its overthrow. Such would be the art of this text, practiced at the limits of disciplinarity and of subjectivity, guaranteed by nothing and no one. The expiration of the subject form, imminent since the subject’s first intimation of mortality—and made structurally mandatory by Freud and especially, with the full-blown rise of the sign at the moment of it radical marginalization by visuality, by Lacan—is not necessarily a cause for lament, despite the increasingly intense fading of its incalculable beauty, its sad reduction to cliché. From a political perspective, it means that within each concrete individual body the presumed continuity of the individual is riddled with contradictory and indeed unassimilable indicators; it means also that there exists in differing quantities and qualities capitalist and noncapitalist striations or sectors. Hallways of emptiness, but also hallways of love. Like bundled assets, the mind-body is tranched by executable logics organized by a calculus of risk available to investors. There are, to be a bit simplistic, aspects of desire that are programmed (indeed farmed) to produce practices that function in perfect accord with capitalist accumulation strategies (individualizing or schizoid) and aspects of desire that are atavistic or collectivist, utopian, communist, or maybe even just plain lonely, and, in short, subprime. In reality, of course, desire is more singular than even such formalizations might indicate. Insert your favorite snippet of poetry here. Hortense Spillers in “All the Things You Could Be by Now If Sigmund Freud’s Wife Was Your Mother” (1997) invokes “the Dozens” and the music of and like that of Charles Mingus (152–3), to make present an “interior intersubjectivity”(140) testifying to the rich unaudited psychic life of what might today be called Blackness. There are vast resources beyond the easy resolution of hegemonic hermeneutics whether deployed by institutionally validated psychoanalysis or compressed by current systems of informatic extraction. In agreeing with Freud that consciousness makes up a small part of mental life when compared to the preconscious, the unconscious, dreams, and so on, but in rejecting the normative assumptions and disavowals (including his own Jewishness) that situate Freud and the psychoanalytic discourse that will become part of European and U.S. bourgeois society, Spillers recognizes a vast store of mental life and the possibility of listening anew. However, when speaking of politics now, we therefore necessarily speak of the abstract forms available for the conceptualization and deployment of concrete emergences whether referring to haecceities that are innumerable or collective forms of existence and psychic life actively mediating between “the one” and “the ‘masses’ ” (141). Let us listen anew. Acknowledging that we ultimately and if possible immediately want to “marry our thought” (Wynter 1994b: 65) to the wealth of subaltern forms of life and the care of the bios, allow me then to put the situation of the post- Fordist subject thusly: in Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism, Lenin (1939) showed how imperialist dividends complicated class issues in England, since many people, otherwise part of the working class, got a share of the dividends of imperialism by clipping the coupons of their investments in racist, exploitative British enterprises across the globe. Today this race-based class fractionalization is fully internalized in the Global North; on our iPads built by Chinese slaves from blood metals extracted from the Congo, we may momentarily feel like biomorphically unmarked nobles in the global cosmopolis; while on the job market or when simply seen in our raced and gendered embodiments, we are abjects. Materially and intellectually we are nodal points on a global network. The signal oscillates between narcissistic megalomania and utter abjection and can be affected by a billion parameters taking us from melancholia to outrage. Thus, even the concrete individual is composed of class fractions, race fractions, gender fractions. In the form of signs, we clip coupons that validate our investments. The language of object-identification, we observe here, cannot really keep up with the fluctuations resulting from the throughput of code as we work to identify and disidentify our agency. Can we audit a different mode of emergence, a different futurity than one inexorably overcoded by capital? Of course this is still somewhat simplistic and also class-specific, as many (billions even) never get to participate as an enfranchised global citizen in any aspect or moment of life, even if the lived experience of these same billions is radically overdetermined by the class(es) from which they are excluded.4 The gilded poverty of the enfranchised, as opposed to the mere poverty of the rest, is now a measure of connectivity. A more complete view is that we are the product of the world system and thus everything we are has been produced vis-à-vis globalization, and therefore everything bears the trace of the system in its entirety (again, in varying proportions). This conceptualization of concrete individuals (bodies) as global communitarian products forced to varying degrees into templates of individualized risk by capitalist states, is not to erase class; however, it suggests that, just as Fanon saw the great European metropoles as the product of third world labor, we are all products of the worst conditions prevailing in the Global South and around the planet. Global inequality is internal to our being. It is us. How then does one (such a one who is relatively enfranchised by the derivative language of texts such as this one) inventory those relations and produce them as formations of solidarity rather than as disavowed residuum? Is there another data-sphere, a communist one? Can we build communist interfaces, networks, and finance? How would we register, track, amplify, and render actionable the communitarian affinities, solidarities, obligations, and debts, the resources in the wake of too many genocides to count, that in actual practice underpin the official economy, collective life, and whatever authentic hope is left to our species? Perhaps we have arrived at a question worthy of theory: Is there, could there be communist algorithms? Communist derivatives? Derivative communism? We are looking for that path. To add to my point about the shifting, distributed character of political actors—that goes so far as to suggest that we can no longer think only of actors but rather must think of vectors and fields in addition to thinking of the resources developed in cultures of survival—I will make a second observation. A political intervention in the advertisarial relations that have this planet heading toward environmental doomsday requires not only revolutionary policy but revolutionary culture. (I defer further discussion of a third requirement, revolutionary finance, to the final chapter.) This culture must take into account that, for many on this planet, Armageddon is not the future but an ongoing constant. My call here (which should not be entirely unfamiliar, as it gives petit bourgeois intellectuals something important to do) is to (re)politicize semiotic and affective structures and practices, including and perhaps especially those we might control, for example our own utterances—our expression. Of course, to call them “our own” seems to contradict what I’ve said about the expropriation of the cognitive- linguistic and the intensification of aphanisis by visual, verbal, and digital media derivatives, but it is here precisely that we confront one of the significant material contradictions of our time: who or what speaks in us? This question, which I shorthand using the phrase the politics of the utterance and which you can experience palpably right now (as you endeavor to think), seems to me to insist that our idea-making must actively produce its solidarity with the dispossessed. We must struggle for the radical constellation. The question concerning the politics of the utterance, asked here in a strange passage of this text through a beyond-academic terrain, a moonless forest the traversal of which may or may not at this point lead us back to the plot, also raises the question of becoming, as well as the questions of agency and of action within the capitalist image— programmable images, racializing and racist images that, in the terms we have set out, are functionally omnipresent. Continuous media throughput has generated a capitalist imaginary structuring both language function and imaging processes, coordinated at scales and by calculative logics that exceed individual comprehension. Though the occasion is upon us, we must struggle for space and time to think. We must open a spread on which to bet against the dominant order. We glimpse, and we feel, that to insist upon the unremitting relevance of both culture-making and of cross-cultural transnational solidarity helps to avoid platform fetishism because it sees the internet and its machines not as a set or collection of autonomous technologies but as a historically emergent system of value-expropriative communication and organization, built directly upon older but nonetheless contemporaneous forms of inequality, including but not limited to historically emergent techniques of gendering, racialization, and imperialism, and embedded in the living flesh of the world. All of this calculative interconnectivity and networked agency implies, contradictorily, in fact, that the internet is not all advertising—but neither is advertising all advertising. It is also murder and struggle. Banksy knows that. The advertisarial relation is the programmatic relation encrypted in the apparatuses of capital: the war of each against all, taken all the way from finance, computation, and surveillance to the speech act and the imagination in accord with the autopoietic algorithm of the distributed Leviathan. Marx himself saw capitalism as vampiric, and today’s processes of capitalization are even more totalitarian, more widely distributed, and more blood-, life-, and indeed soul-sucking than even in prior eras—though such comparisons don’t do those killed by past iterations of capitalism any good. Despite the disavowals to the contrary, we recognize that capital needs labor, needs metabolic time more desperately and more voraciously than ever before (what else is biopolitics?) and, furthermore, that it wages war on life-time on all fronts, in order to secure labor power, its product and basis, at a discount. The pyramids of inequality become internal fractals, and even as the base broadens, the tip with the all-seeing eye (that is not a subject) ascends ever higher. We do not yet know what can be destroyed or indeed built with the massive appropriation of Banksy’s rocks, but we do know that at present there is total war against our using them to build anticapitalist, nonhierarchical, horizontal, solidary sociality. The refusal or détournement of capital’s encroachment is itself a creative act. Perhaps we have only begun to glimpse what a total refusal might achieve.

#### So, we must build alternative, communist modes of communication that resist the pathological demand of capitalism to require access. As we know, the first step to the strike is to stop working – you should vote affirmative to step away from the assembly line and begin a general strike that can revolutionize communication.

**Harney and Moten 18** – Stefano Harney is Professor of Strategic Management Education at Singapore Management University. Fred Moten is Professor in the Department of Performance Studies, Tisch School of the Arts. He holds an A.B. from Harvard and a Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley.

Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, “Mikey the Rebelator” in “LEAVE OUR MIKES ALONE”, 2018 [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/53a0503be4b0a429a2614e8b/t/59d81c2eedaed84653048f0d/1507335215476/Harney-Moten.pdf //](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/53a0503be4b0a429a2614e8b/t/59d81c2eedaed84653048f0d/1507335215476/Harney-Moten.pdf%20//) sam

In Upon Westminster Bridge, Mikey Smith is jay-walking through the language.2 It’s 1982, the beginning of logistical capitalism. The assembly line is snaking out of the factory and into his mouth. And he cyaan believe it. He won’t believe it. He won’t go to work. He comes from the property. He’s been there before. He’s come to undo. He’s moved to dissemble. The gathering in his mouth is out of line. 2 With the rise of logistical capitalism it is not the product that is never finished but the production line, and not the production line, but its improvement. In logistical capitalism it is the continuous improvement of the production line that never finishes, that’s never done, that’s undone continuously. The sociologists caught a glimpse of this line and thought that they were seeing networks. The political scientist called this line globalization. The business professors named it and priced it as business process re-engineering. Mikey knew better. Mikey veers back across the street to where Louise Bennett sits, talking about how she inspired him. We can see her in a clip, wronging rights with her words, advocate of an undone language open to respecting what you like, and liking what you respect. Now her words are everywhere, like whispers from a cotton tree, and they have to be. And logistics, which is to say access, is everywhere—again, because it wants to be. But not just logistics; and not just any kind of access. The capitalist science of logistics can be represented by a simple formula: movement + access. But logistical capitalism subjects that formula to the algorithm: total movement + total access. Logistical capitalism seeks total access to your language, total 3 translation, total transparency, total value from your words. And then it seeks more. At Queen Mary, University of London, before the counter-insurgency, we called this postcolonial capitalism. How does it feel to be a problem in someone else’s supply chain? What else is a colonial regime but the imposition of psychopathic protocols of total access to bodies and land in the service of what today is called supply-chain management? The problem of the twenty-first century is the problem of the colour line of assembly. This logistical capitalism, this postcolonial capitalism, uses the stored, stolen, historical value of words to press its point. But Mikey would not speak that way. He saw what was coming by misremembering what had come to pass. Mikey jay-walked through his audience as they listened the wrong way across his words. Mikey put his hands up to fight one night and surrendered to us. He fought, and by fighting surrendered, to what M. Jacqui Alexander called our ‘collectivized self-possession’, to our hapticality, which is at the same time our collectivized dispossession.3 Because a rebelator defends our partiality, our incompleteness, our hands dispossessed to hold one another up in the battle of Zion. Mikey was a rebelator in the battle of Zion. Mikey the rebelator sabotaging a line of words(worth). 4 Mikey is talking to C. L. R. James on a bed in Brixton in South London, in an unsettled room, Linton Kwesi Johnson standing to the side. You have to move across the language because the language moves the line through you. The line moves now, the assembly line, the flow line, the high line, and that means you. You’re moving to work like you always did but now you’re working as you’re moving, too. James is telling them he used to love Wordsworth and still does, but it was only when he got back to the Caribbean that he realized what was missing in that poetry because something else in that poetry was everywhere. James is talking about language as domination; Mikey is already having to deal with language as forced improvement in production, on the new and improved line, where the Man gives orders to His men. Mikey’s working on an old new open secret logisticality, born in the hold, held together in loss and in being lost, and James is giving him some uncoordinates, a sea captain like Ranjit’s father, high on the land now, low, shipped, stranded on a bed in Brixton, in an unsettled room. Mikey’s not working on improving the English language. He’s working on disproving it. Mikey Smith deregulates the Queen’s English in ‘Mi Cyaan Believe It’ and he’s not worried about being incomplete. He’s jay-walking through the Queen’s English, instituting a sound system to which her standard submits, right across down there so. He’s walking across to it right now, on the gully side. Mikey the 5 rebelator. He says that those have ‘been restless a full time, dem go get some rest’. But there’s no rest with access; access troubles the unrest it came to steal, and still. This is the early moment of logistical capitalism, with James on the bed aged from industrial capitalism, and all that settler capitalism sedimented underneath them in London in the hard red earth. In an unsettled room they institute. They’re the offline institute of the new line, the new poetics of the anti-line, the antillean, multi-matrilinear dispersion of drum and bass and grain against the grain of organized saying, catching logistics in logisticality’s crosstown traffic, in crosstown traffic’s constant violation of the crosswalk, the sanctioned intersection, the settled, hegemonic term. Mikey’s more and less than perpendicular swerve cyaan believe that managed disturbance and keeps on fucking it up as a field of hypermusical staying, crossed between crossing and forgetting, contradicting and misremembering, revealing and rebelling, refusing to believe. Look the wrong way before you cross. Move the wrong way when you cross. That’s how we semble. When we move we move to access, which is to say we assemble and disassemble anew. And in logistical capitalism the assembly line moves with us by moving through us, accessing us to move and moving us to access. We can’t deny access, because access is how we roll, and roll on, in and as our undercommon affectability, as Denise Ferreira da Silva might say.4 But we make access burn and we love that, the line undone in the undoing of every single product, our renewed assembly in the general disassembly, our dissed assembly offline on the line, strayed staying, stranded beneath the strand, at rest only in unrest, making all the wrong moves, because our doing and undoing ain’t the same as theirs. They know, sometimes better than we do, that to move wrong, or not to move, is now no longer just an obstruction to logistics or an obstacle to progress. To move wrong or not to move is sabotage. It is an attack on the assembly line, a subversion of logistical capitalism. To move wrong is to deny access to capital by staying in the general access that capital desires and devours and denies. To move wrong, to move nought, is to have our own thing of not having, of handing and being handed; it is our continuous breaking up—before, and against that, we were told—of our continuous get together. But with the critical infrastructure that is the new line, and with the resilient response that protects it, the jay-walker becomes no longer just a rube in the way of logistics, a country bukee in traffic, but a saboteur, a terrorist, a demon. Jay-walkers do not sabotage by exodus or occupation as once a maroon, or a striking miner, or a ghost dancer may have. Jay-walkers disturb the production line, the work of the line, the assembly line, the flow line, by demanding inequality of access for all. When the line don’t stop to let you catch your breath, jay-walkers stand around and say this stops today. Jaywalking is dissed assembly for itself. Such sabotage is punishable by death. It’s 7 hard to know what we institute when we don’t institute but we do know what it feels like. Total value and its violence not only never went away, but as da Silva says, they are the foundation of the present as time, the condition of time, of the world as a time–space logic founded on the first horrible logistics of sale, the first mass movement of total access.5 Now continuous improvement drives us toward total value, makes all work incomplete, makes us move to produce, compels us to get online. We are liberated from work in order to work more, to work harder. We are violently invited to exercise our right to connect, our right to free speech, our right to choose, our right to evaluate, our right to right individuality in order that we may improve the production line running through our liberal dreams. Freedom through work was never the slave’s cry but we hear it all around us today. Continuous improvement is the metric and metronomic meter of uplift. Those who won’t improve, those who won’t collectivize and individuate with the correct neurotic correctness, those who do the same thing again, those who revise, those who tell the joke you’ve heard and cook the food you’ve had and take the walk you’ve walked, those who plan to stay and keep on moving, those who keep on moving wrong—those are the ones who hold everybody back, fucking up the production line that’s supposed to improve us all. They like being incomplete. They like being incomplete and incompleting 8 one another. Their incompleteness is said to be a dependency, a bad habit. They’re said to be partial, patchy, sketchy. They lack coordinates. They’re collectively uncoordinated in total rhythm. They’re in(self)sufficient. Paolo Friere thought our incompleteness is what gave us hope.6 It is our incompleteness that inclines us toward one another. For Friere, the more we think of ourselves as complete, finished, whole, individual, the more we cannot love or be loved. Is it too much to put this the other way around? To say, by way of Friere, that love is the undercommon self-defence of being-incomplete? This seems important now when our incompleteness is something we are invited and then compelled to address and improve, when we are told to be impatient with it, and embarrassed by it. We need to be intact. We’re told to raise our buzz because we’re all fucked up. But in our defence we love that we are complete only in a plained incompletion, which they would have undone, finished, owned, and sent on down the line. We do mind working because we do mind dying.