

MIDLANDS CONFERENCE IN CRITICAL THOUGHT 2024

Centre for Policy, Citizenship and Society + Department of Social and Political Sciences, Nottingham Trent University

**Venue – Nottingham Conference Centre - Burton Street, Nottingham,
NG1 4BU**

April 5th to April 6th, 2024

Conference Program - (Long version with abstracts)

Welcome to the inaugural Midlands Conference in Critical Thought (MCCT). The MCCT is an offshoot of the highly successful London Conference in Critical Thought (LCCT), first established in 2011, the MCCT has taken onboard the LCCT ethos in that it is a free interdisciplinary conference in critical thought, providing a space for those who share theoretical approaches and interests but who may find themselves at the margins of their academic department or discipline. MCCT, in line with the LCCT, follows a non-hierarchical and decentralised model of organisation that undoes conventional academic distinctions between plenary lectures and break-out sessions, aiming instead to create opportunities for intellectual critical exchange regardless of participants' disciplinary field, institutional affiliation, or seniority. Following this decentralised, 'margins-at-the-centre' logic, both the MCCT and LCCT have no overarching or predetermined theme. Each year the conference's intellectual content and academic tone are set by thematic streams that are conceived, proposed and curated by a group of stream organisers. Each stream generates its own intellectual rationale and Call for Presentations, with conference participants responding to the accepted stream proposals.

Conference Streams 2024

Neoliberalism and Digital Societies: Rethinking the Relation between the Real and the Virtual

Antonio Cerella, Nottingham Trent University;
Luca Mavelli, University of Kent

Co-production in Research – The Emperor’s New Clothes?

Christopher R Matthews; Marit Hiemstra, Dee Yeagers, Nottingham Trent University

Critical Political Epistemology

Critical Political Epistemology Network

War, State Harm and Resistance

Hannah Wilkinson, University of Nottingham

Identity in Utopia

Jen Neller, & Kay Lalor Manchester Law School

Postcolonial and Decolonial Theory and Practice

Teodora Todorova, University of Warwick
Edward Wright, University of Nottingham

Apocalypse, crisis, and constructing our endings.

Dr Romain Chenet & Dr Bryan Brazeau
University of Warwick

Mental Health Commons: Fantasy, Utopia and Infrastructure

Raluca Soreanu & the FREEPSY team
freepsy.essex.ac.uk

Post-human social inquiry: ontology to method and back again

Dr Victoria Cluley, University of Nottingham
Professor Nick Fox, University of Huddersfield

Rethinking work and career; continued resistance to the neoliberal order

Ricky Gee, Nottingham Trent University;
Ranier Abengana, University College Dublin;
Anastasia Fjodorova, University of Stirling;
Louise Oldridge, Nottingham Trent University;

Media epistemologies: The formal, material, technical, infrastructural, and communicational conditions of knowledge

Thomas Sutherland, University of Lincoln,
Scott Wark, Goldsmiths College, University of London

Addressing the Underbellies of Neoliberal Academia

Dr Matko Krce-Ivančić

Transgressive Thought in the 21st century: Thinking the thought of the outside, the thought beyond the Law

GCAS College Dublin

Productivity or Process: What is the Value in Making?

Oliver Cloke (Questioner) and Patrick Loan (Instructor) VCAS - Vienna Contemporary Art Space

Gentle Gestures - To feel, touch, activate, brush, signal, indicate, host, carry, trust, blush, disrupt.

Alice Bell - University of Lincoln, Mark Kasumovic - De Montfort University, Danica Maier – Nottingham Trent University

Cultural Resistance in a Time of Economic Stagnation

Dr Hui-Ying Kerr, Nottingham Trent University

Critical Thought on Cities

Dr Francesco Proto, Oxford Brookes University
Dr Jenni Cauvain (Nottingham Trent University)
Dr Michele Grigolo (Nottingham Trent University)
Dr Yahya Lavaf-Pour (University of the West of England)
Dr Fidel Meraz (University of the West of England)

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- 9:30-11:00 – Parallel Sessions 1
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- 13:00-14:00 – Lunch Break (food not provided)
- 14:00-15:30 – Parallel Sessions 3
- 15:30-16:00 – Break
- 16:00-17:30 – Parallel Sessions 4
- 17:30 – Drinks Reception

Saturday 6th April

- 9:00-9:30 – Registration
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Schedule Overview

Information for Participants

Registration and Information

All participants are asked to register online, however we also ask that you to check in at the registration desk to confirm your arrival at the conference: Online via [Eventbrite](#) with details on [Londoncritical](#) website

Location

The Nottingham Conference Centre; City Campus of Nottingham Trent University

The main entrance to this centre is via the side of the Newton Building on Burton Street, please see [link](#) for more detail

Address: Nottingham Conference Centre, Burton Street, Nottingham, NG1 4BU

Internet access

All rooms offer the very latest, fully integrated audio-visual technology and free Wi-Fi access throughout..

Funding

The conference is free to attend for all, run by volunteers. Unfortunately, the MCCT cannot provide funds to support those travelling to the conference with limited or no institutional support.

Food and Drink

Coffee/tea will be provided in the morning/afternoon breaks, but participants will need to organise their own food. There are a number of cafés and restaurants surrounding the conference venue, and on the Friday there will be a university eatery open in the building of the conference, near the registration room.

Socialising

On the Friday evening we will have the conference reception event in the Registration Desk area. At the end of the conference there will be a social drinks at the Playwright, Nottingham

Friday 5th April

(Please note you can find a programme overview at the end of this document)

9:00-9:30 – Registration (Level 2 Foyer)

9:30 – 11:00 - Parallel Sessions 1

N28B Level 2 - Rethinking Work and Career: Continued resistance to the neoliberal order (panel 1): Exploitation in a post-industrial labour market

Constructing human capital by salariat and precariat: the neuroticization of immaterial workers in cognitive capitalism

Алиса Милецкая

In the contemporary labor sphere under cognitive capitalism, new types of workers are gradually emerging. These include immaterial workers, whose work process has new features, such as the affective nature of labor, the lack of physical attachment to the workplace, and the absence of formal external control over the labor process.

The labor process in a post-Fordist economy moves beyond the workplace directly into the subjects' living space. Accordingly, such workers have a certain autonomy in the implementation of work tasks and flexible schedules, which nevertheless impose high responsibility on the worker. Under such conditions of a constant working environment and concern for their own productivity, coupled with high self-control, which drive the subject to high levels of stress, workers may experience negative effects on their mental state. A condition in which the subject has such negative manifestations with a parallel constant striving to improve his/her own skills, high rationalization, and planning of his/her time, is called neuroticization, and, therefore, this study aims to determine the key implications of this condition among the immaterial workers.

Moreover, immaterial workers experience neuroticization in different ways, so within the research, it was suggested to examine two types of workers (Standing 2011): precariat and salariat. It is assumed that the precariat is experiencing higher neuroticization, since in addition to the general problems described above, it also additionally suffers from high instability in the professional environment.

We designed the trails of the psychological condition of modern workers, that arise as a response to a new system of (self-)management power. These features were carefully considered in the framework of in-depth interviews with employees and survey:

The Erosion of Personality – process arising from the high flexibility and precarity of modern employment, when the character of an individual begins to resemble a kaleidoscope of different traits, which in the conditions of the impossibility of a long-term perspective can change rapidly.

Demoralization – peculiarity of modern relations between people, which also become the object of economic strategies, while feelings and emotions also become profitable commodities.

Generalized Depression & Anxiety – state that results from the cult of productivity in which the individual exists. Workers who refuse to participate in the race for success become outcasts who "failed to put in enough effort" to be successful and happy, which leads to depression and anxiety.

Rationalization – process in which an individual subordinates his entire existence to the economic logic of planning his life to control work tasks and personal time. In conditions when an individual is fully responsible for designing the schedule of his life, problems may arise with the balance between work and personal life.

Thus, the work involves a diverse collection of data on two types of workers, precariat and salariat, followed by the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis with verification of the specified characteristics of workers.

"I've always felt passionate about not starving to death": The neoliberal co-option of passion in the service of work and capitalism.

Anastasia Fjodorova

The assumed passion an artist needs to have towards their work to find the motivation to persist in a career with entrenched precarity has become co-opted. Passion is also required of individuals responding to adverts for minimum-wage jobs which frequently seek—as an example—"passionate team members who are passionate about customer service excellence". The language of such job adverts has often been ridiculed in memes. Taking a creative approach by incorporating collage and memes, this presentation juxtaposes interviews with recent arts graduates against the language of job adverts, with the purpose of problematising the co-option and arguable 'weaponising' of passion by the neoliberal order.

The OED entry for passion includes its usual definition: "an intense desire or enthusiasm for/of something; the zealous pursuit of an aim". It is perhaps a perverse irony that another—long obsolete—definition of passion exists, that of "a suffering or affliction of any kind," which becomes strangely appropriate in the neoliberal work environment wherein passion is degraded by being demanded. A possible danger of using such language, wherein 'passions' are used to describe, or 'dress-up' the most menial roles (Burbridge, 2020), is that an argument can follow that those passionate enough can forego being compensated with a liveable wage when surely passion should be enough to sustain the worker, in the same way passion is assumed to sustain the artist. There is an inherent 'violence' in the endemic use of passion within the language of job adverts that further serves the aims of capitalism.

The Erinyes Within: The Entrepreneurship Concept in Post-Industrial Society

Tomáš Havlíček

What does it mean to be an entrepreneur? This paper aims to explore the relationship between the subject and the power that controls their actions in a society of non-authority. In this world, each of us is perceived as an entrepreneur - a person who participates in the exploitation of the working class, or "self-exploitation" (Han, 2017). This does not allow us to grasp the way in which society is regulated. How the elements of biopower that exercise control over our bodies and our actions are currently manifested (Foucault, 1972). In order to reconstruct this relationship, it is necessary to understand where the power centre of authority is located and whether it can be thought of as a fragment of social power within each of us. This takes us into an analysis of subjectivity and performativity (Butler 1990, 1993).

This paper analyses the ways in which we subject ourselves to metricization of our own actions. How we reinforce social structures endowed with the power of designation. In a society of total self-control, we resort to self-measurement of performance to prove our own social utility. In a world where we are aided in such self-measurement by, for example, phone apps, then becoming a slave to metrics approximates utter perfection (Mau, 2017). Although the technological revolution has brought us the possibility of non-starvation, it has become the basis for further alienation. This translates into the way we view our bodies, our sexuality, our place in society, our work, and our "careers." We become a commodity offered on the open market where we fight a fierce battle of competition (Reckwitz, 2017). As a result, this brings us closer to a society of depression and anxiety (Géryk, 2023).

This paper will therefore address the reason, manner and consequences of how we think about our lives and our work in the current ideological environment of metric ideology. How seductive these

considerations are not only for public officials (Supiot, 2017), for employers, but also for ourselves. How our agency and subjectivity are manifested in the case of submitting to the quantification and governance of data. The result is the creation of a comprehensive and coherent tool to describe the relationship between the human as subject, ideology and power structure, represented by the legal system. All this is a prerequisite for critically grasping the position of the human in the exploitative labour process and finding ways to break out of the universal desire for greater efficiency.

N27A Level 2 - Addressing the Underbellies of Neoliberal Academia 1 - Co-opted University

Disobedient collaboration in civic space: Reclaiming the co-opted in the neoliberal university

Alexandra Reynolds

The Civic University can be understood as a focal site of entwinement where the discursive dynamics of a networked, Post-Fordist Inclusive Neoliberalism (Wickstrom, 2012) and the potential for radical imagination and exploration of resistant, non-extractive futures sit side by side. Indeed, it is this hazy and discomfiting proximity which facilitates the co-option of many attempts at collaborative and cross-sector practices to neoliberal ends; creating a rhetorical palliative (Dean, 2009) often foreclosing the possibility of meaningful intervention leading to real change.

Through a series of case studies, this paper explores the slipperiness of collaboration in current Consensus Democracy (Rancière, 1995), and the saturated hegemonic discourse of New Capitalism (Fisher, 2010) in the neoliberal university. Examples delineate a spectrum of cross-sector university projects which evade, to differing degrees, the tentacles of co-option into neoliberal power structures.

Case Studies include Electronic Disturbance Theatre's Transborder Immigrant Tool created by UCSD Professors Ricardo Dominguez and Brett Stalbaum in collaboration with non-profit groups Water Station Inc. and Border Angels (2007-ongoing); Public Works' Common Room (2014-ongoing) devised by Dr Torange Khonsari in collaboration with local Bow residents, students from The School of Art, Architecture and Design at London Metropolitan University and Tower Hamlet's Enterprise Team; and Zero Flat (2017-19), a project co-produced by Professor Daniel Moragas in collaboration with architects Francesc Pla and Eva Serrats, local government and charitable organisations.

Analysis of these case studies suggests a two-fold finding. First, that an operative mechanism for radical reimagining of neoliberal dynamics within the saturated space of the civic university is the stubborn, defiant or obstinate holding and imagining of explicitly anti-neoliberal spaces and forms of interaction: something which actively defends the space of radical potential from co-option. Second, that creative collaborations in particular seem to offer a set of practical methodologies, principles and pathways towards reimagined civic futures through cross-sector work, perhaps because of the potential to creatively dream and concretely reimagine existing structures and modes of operating.

With this in mind, the paper closes with swift consideration of a second set of examples, this time drawn from creatively centred cross-sector projects reimagining civic spaces and futures. Examples here include initiatives led by artists and practitioners such as Gavin Grindon, Binki Taylor, Michael Rakowitz and Owen Griffiths, centring on the production of new economic, physical and communicative spaces and the reverse co-option of space out of neoliberal hands.

The hope is that these examples, drawn from outside the direct HE context, can serve as conceptual mechanisms for a spanner in the works; tools which can be productively re-placed in the HE context to support the construction of a truly civic 'undercommons' (Moten & Harney, 2013) within our public universities. In turn, this activity might build bubbles of radical action within the saturated neoliberal environment: cracks where non-extractive community work and meaningful collaboration can be found.

It is hardly news that academia, to say the least, might not be the very best place for questioning academia. Among the scholars with a critical study of academia in mind, this is such a widely accepted fact that it basically constitutes a truism. However, it is one thing to say that neoliberal academia is hostile to critical scholarship that would be eager to address its underbellies, but quite another to understand the architecture of exclusion pertaining to such a state of affairs.

With the aim of illuminating the performativity of neoliberal academia, the paper first examines how neoliberalism engages academic subjectivity, making it apparent that it is our hope of establishing a decent academic career at some point in the future that fosters the excessiveness of neoliberal academia. The paper then proceeds to its main subject of inquiry, that is rigged academia, while taking care not to present academia as a place where only the most competitive spirits come together as a result of neoliberal emphasis on building our self-entrepreneurial capacities through competition. While analysing neoliberal performativity, I fully acknowledge that 'the normative force of performativity – its power to establish what qualifies as "being" – works not only through reiteration, but through exclusion as well' (Butler, 2011, 140). Neoliberal academia does not establish itself merely by reiterating the discourse of competitiveness; it requires a particular constitutive outside. Neoliberal academia, to put it differently, requires exclusions.

The paper will exemplify this by highlighting a practice that has been relegated to the constitutive outside of neoliberal academia, namely the rigging of academic positions, thus recognising the fact that a good number of advertised academic positions are not genuinely open but have a predetermined outcome. Rigging academic positions presents a corrupt practice that excludes those whose critical capacities could endanger a smooth performativity of neoliberal academia. It would nonetheless be all too easy to say that academic rigging is merely a deviation from the neoliberal ideal of competition and that we just need more neoliberalism to rectify this unorthodoxy. However, if it is acknowledged that the rigging of academic positions is a neoliberal systematic reversal of neoliberal emphasis on building our self-entrepreneurial capacities through competition, we lay ourselves open to the multifacetedness that marks the performativity of neoliberal academia.

The paper also does not fail to put the following questions forward: why has critical theory cherished the tradition of not addressing the underbelly of neoliberal academia that is reflected in the practice of rigging academic positions? What are the sources of its curious muteness in respect to criticising rigged academia? Does it really make sense to talk about critical theory if this very same critical theory is not willing to bite the hand that feeds it, namely academia? Could it be that what makes it both 'critical' and viable in today's academia is precisely this sort of alert restraint when it comes to addressing the immediate conditions of its reproduction?

Hooley Room - Neoliberalism & Digital Societies

Neoliberalism & Digital Societies: A Semiotic Framework for Analysis

Antonio Cerella & uca Mavelli

Critical scholarship largely agrees that neoliberalism has a negative, if not altogether hostile, view of society, which has resulted in the latter's 'crisis', 'dismantlement' and 'destruction'. Focusing on the case of digital societies, we argue that rather than destroying society, neoliberalism is reconstituting it in novel forms. Engaging with the thought of neoliberal founding father Friedrich Hayek, we discuss how neoliberalism regards society not as common good and pursuit of social justice but as the spontaneous ensemble of norms which is simultaneously the condition of possibility and product of the market order. Digital societies, we contend, are neoliberal societies in the sense described by Hayek, namely, as ensembles of rules, norms, and principles that emerge from the extended market. However, contrary to Hayek, these societies are not spontaneous. Drawing

on, but also departing from, Shoshana Zuboff's notion of 'surveillance capitalism', we argue that neoliberalism does not aim to dismantle society, but to establish societies that control and govern desires by mobilizing and modulating the very market freedom that for Hayek would be central to ward off authoritarianism. While not authoritarian, we conclude, the algorithmic sophistication of the code qua law that governs the digital society enables, at an unprecedented level, the integration of individuals' desires and their self-inscription and voluntary self-exploitation in the neoliberal digital apparatus.

Making Meaning in the Big Tech Era

Niels Niessen

This paper presents a critique of everyday life as it is accelerated and colonized by Big Tech's profit-driven algorithms. Everyday life is, or was, where ordinary people make meaning, a belief central to cultural studies. This paper asks: What happens to this belief that people make meaning in the Big Tech era, in which much meaning-making is mediated by Big Tech's corporate platforms?

The paper derives from a larger project on how Big Tech colonizes life, and how we can resist. I argue that for many people platforms like Youtube and Instagram are emancipatory. These platforms allow people to make meaning in new ways. Moreover, movements like MeToo and Black Lives Matter would not have happened the way they did without these platforms.

Yet while corporate tech helps liberate love and life in some respects, it also facilitates hate, misinformation, and a general feeling of discontent. In that sense, these media are not so "social." Ultimately, Instagram and the like are not designed for emancipation, but to maximize datafication of human experience.

Developing a non-moralizing critique of Big Tech, my paper analyzes the transformation of subjectivity as it is integrated into a data-driven stream. I theorize this new subject as a dissociated subject, a subject that is internally and socially divided in a way that surpasses modern alienation.

My paper illustrates this dissociated subjectivity through an advertisement by grocery delivery platform Gorillas (which during the Covid-pandemic colonized cities like Amsterdam with dark stores and billboards). The ad is an example of Tristan Cross's observation in *The Guardian* that "there's something more than a little worrying about an advertising culture that doesn't even try to delude us into imagining a fantastic future, but instead reflects the grim realities of the present."

The ad shows an almost empty fridge. Two youngsters are standing in front of the fridge. "I want cheese," says the one. "I just ate the cheese," says the other. The tagline below the image reads: "Looking for a bit of magic? Your groceries within minutes." We thus have two hungry subjects who want their cheese now. They log into their app and order "cheese," upon which cheese is delivered.

This is what dissociated life looks like: the reduction of human existence to mere drive in a platformized economy that further separates consumption and production. Under modern capitalism, desire for a commodity still involved a certain fetishism: the process of ascribing almost magic properties to a commodity's use value. Now, in the Big Tech era, "magic" is instantaneous and hence destroyed.

My paper ends on a note of resistance against the processes that dissociate and mechanically enslave subjects. Resistance starts with collective consciousness. Adapting the 1960s feminist slogan "the personal is political" for the digitalized age, I argue that "the personalized is political." Inspired by feminist consciousness-raising groups, I call to build self-educational spaces and conversations to become collectively conscious of how Big Tech affects people's sensoria, how they meaning-making.

Big Tech, Neoliberalism and the Form of Twenty-First Century Fiction

Joel Evans

In his account of the birth of actually-existing neoliberalism, Michael Hart has recently suggested that one of the fundamental characteristics of this is 'a decline of mediation'. The germ of this situation can be seen in the various crises and social movements of the 1970s, in which a newly emergent managerial culture refuses to meet workers' demands, in which the state is unwilling to reform in response to democratic movements and protest, and welfare structures are progressively degraded and gotten rid of. The end of mediation suggests, I think, a novel way of thinking about the ongoing situation of neoliberalism, in which – notwithstanding regular waves of oppressive state action -- the production of subjectivity and forms of life takes place increasingly outside the purview of state institutions and other such disciplinary entities. This is, one might say, one of the fundamental, albeit muted, creative potentials of the neoliberal model. In this paper, I seek to uncover initially how such potential is imagined in a series of twenty-first century fictions, from Sam Byers' *Perfidious Albion* (2018) and *Come Join Our Disease* (2021), to Cory Doctorow's *Walkaway* (2017), to Margaret Atwood's *The Heart Goes Last* (2015). Amidst their highlighting of the convergence between big tech and neoliberalism, these fictions end up producing a vision of new, collective, networked forms of life that are able to extricate themselves from the state and other patriarchal and oppressive formations. In this regard, they can be linked to a whole series of other contemporary narratives which, whilst they are not always concerned with neoliberalism per se, are nevertheless interested in articulating a vision of egalitarian community in the face of extreme wealth disparity, algorithmic control, or authoritarian states. Such narratives range from Ruben Ostlund's *The Triangle of Sadness* (2022), to Sarah Hall's *The Carhullan Army* (2008), to Dianne Cooke's *The New Wilderness* (2022). What I want to suggest in relation to this newfound proclivity toward the collective form in twenty-first fiction is that, firstly, it points toward something quite different to the standard reading of fictions of neoliberalism, which have been largely read as foregrounding the (futility of) the individualist world-view. But these narratives, I want to suggest, also figure a mutation in the form of fiction itself, whereby what various critics and thinkers have identified as a democratic spirit of fiction is subtly, and seemingly paradoxically, undermined in favour of a new paradigm of fiction altogether.

On What We Need To Know: The Necessity of Explainable AI in Legal decision-making

Andrej Krištofik

The very own reality of seeking a (human) judgment, in a form of judicial decision begs us to commit to an assumption that the underlying judicial process is not only structured in a fair and impartial manner, but it is carried out by fair-minded people, that bear this in mind and further that the law is known and knowable to them in a way that is congruent with the facts of the case, arising in the process of adjudication. The paradox of trust lies in the fact that in order for us to hold these assumptions, we require trust based on transparency in a form of reasoned judgment. While this relationship of trust, based on perceived transparency might have been flawed from the very beginning, and could essentially constitute a legal version of naive realism, this relationship becomes even more complicated when we introduce new technologies into the mix. As Supiot notes, technologies allow for the transparency to become one-sided, contrary to the popular believes and cybernetic theories, lying in the hands of those that wield power.

And while there is a need to recognize the potential transformative ability of introducing technologies into adjudication, as a tool that could help us move beyond the stagnant privileged optics of current judicial decision-making as a sole means of rights-enjoyment, any such advancements must not be done to the detriment of the existing level of rights protection. Our strong held beliefs of the technological as being always neutral, closely lined-up with the (neoliberal) thesis of the inevitability of progress, may leads us to sacrifice the underlying fair process in favour of efficiency afforded by advances of technologies, and most relevantly for today, in machine learning and applications of artificial intelligence.

Therein then lies the quintessential problem, a new way of approaching Ungers' ultimate question of legal development - how should judges decide cases, and to begin with what we need to know about it. For us to believe that the decision has been fair, we need to see not only the decision but mainly, its reasoning. In the following submission I will analyse such requirement, for the process of fair adjudication, in a face of the technological development, and mainly the permissibility of the use of AI in adjudicative processes, focusing on the pervasive issue of black box. The paper will examine firstly the existing approaches to this issue, as well as the underlying neoliberal logic of sacrificing the just in favour of the efficient, and the role of explainable AI in maintaining fundamental values in the process of technologization. Further, the paper will sketch out the

rules for the use of AI in public institution and adjudication processes , so that we are not only able to retain the just in the adjudication process but so that, in the view of possible explainability of machine decision, it is done to a greater benefit of all.

Adams Room - Gentle Gestures 1 – Panel 1 -Enacting Ephemeral Places of Discovery

Touched by Sound: The Being-Together-Being in Movement Art

Lars Koens & JuJu Kusanagi

This paper proposes a set of movement and vocalisation workshops for dancers, and other movement practitioners, facilitated by a choreographer and sound artist. The purpose is for movers to coalesce through improvisation in response to ecological soundscapes and prompts. From researching and discovering connections between body-voice, and movement-sound, an inter-sensorial language involving movement and vocalisation is cultivated with the participants. This practice-based research was facilitated as rehearsals for the choreographed piece, *1:1:1* (Kusanagi, 2023), which embodies this language as the score. The workshop exploration is grounded in embodied and emplaced touch, including the feeling associated with listening and the sense of touch through sound. Using the concepts of performativity, acoustic ecology, and an ontology inspired by the Japanese language, we identify a hypostatization, denoted as being-together-being. It arises as a precarious, ontological state, a hyperobject, or landscape on the move, where the sense of belonging coincides with that of an evolving, activated space. In short, each participant aims to reach a dynamic state of being that can be expressed as: I am the space, and the space is me. We argue this state, which sustains the being-together-being, can be understood as the convergence of objecthood and eventhood. Furthermore, the being-together-being requires movers to (1) be aware of their own self, (2) to have a perspective of themselves rooted in the totality, and (3) to practice inclusivity through an awareness of the unified whole. As such, this method rejects traditional dualistic and hierarchical approaches aimed at objectification and spectacle. Instead, the role of the choreographer and sound artist is here to cultivate awareness, care, and compassion, leading to collaborative, participatory movement art; and, for sound more specifically, to create a symphonic atmosphere by tuning into soundscapes of multi-species environments, from which movers embody posthumanist modes of being.

The gesture of push in drawing – a tango with other

Sarah Tutt

We now live in, or are impacted by, a world where frictionlessness and immateriality are becoming synonymous with technological advancement. Our entanglements with the material world are shifting as we encounter the virtual. Indeed, our contemporary experience of the world today 'may be related with a certain pathology of the senses' (Pallasmaa, 2012).

My research considers how the gesture of push in a material drawing practice might operate as a reparative, affirmative critical agent through which to respond to a contemporary experience of frictionlessness, immateriality and desensitisation. Through the creation of a series of drawing processes, my research explores how entanglements within the gesture of push enable a haptic and relational journey through line, time and space. The act of drawing is the critical focus for investigation, building on research that postulates the power of drawing is in the act.

In this presentation, I propose a critical approach to the gesture of push formed from a parallel enquiry into learning tango - a personal research journey through intimate encounter. The presentation considers how insights from learning tango might be brought to labour in a material drawing practice. In what ways might learning tango operate as method or methodology within drawing?

Tango and drawing can offer uncertain sites of encounter - moving, entangled journeys that are frictive, close and haptic. In tango and drawing the gesture of push has affective and fragile interdependencies, and innate states of awayness and orientation towards other. This parallel enquiry considers how these inter-relationalities,

orientations and uncertainties might be embraced and mediated, with the aim of suggesting how drawing might operate as a micro-political practice.

I also propose a short performative intervention to compliment, but not necessarily accompany, this presentation.

Beyond Words: Exploring the Silent Dialogue Between a Musicalized Body and Linguistic Expression

Yuchen Li,

This paper explores a crucial silent moment in an interview with a musician, revealing the revolutionary impact of the "feeling body" on language's power structures. The interview, conducted in July 2023, featured an experienced musician discussing her creative journey while working on her first solo album. Struggling to articulate details about her inspiration and writing process, she fell into silence, grappling with the challenge of putting her memories into words.

In this silence, two significant events unfolded: 1) the co-emergence of her feeling body and the musical instrument, back in moments of her songwriting, and 2) her inability to express her musicalized body through language. In this instance, an alternative form of knowledge originated within the feeling body is dismissed in a world with the hegemony of language.

The value of this alternative knowledge lies in its ahistorical and materialist essence, which is an important source to attain shared experience of our bodies and the world without being discriminated by socio-symbolic power dynamics. In contrast to approaches influenced by market trends or existing music symbols, my interviewee's creative process begins with the feelings emerges within body. To further illustrate its importance, I will examine how existing symbols in language interrupt her chaotic dwell within the body, structure her feelings and reproduce discriminable representations in accordance to established norms in music industry, and thus reducing the infinity of intuitive creative outcomes to a definite position in the discourse.

The interviewee's silence during our conversation is interpreted as a powerful disruption within the music industry's discourse, bringing attention to the events concealed by silence. The intersection of her feeling body and language—the rupture—encourages an alternative but important way of listening and learning. This involves tuning in to the unnamable representation of a feeling body in the event, going beyond reliance on symbolic language – in this paper, tuning to her music to alternatively understand her creative journey instead of by talking about it. This alternative type of learning reawakens the feeling body that yields transformation of the "thinking body", bringing a more creative and revolutionary change than learning within the thinking body. With dynamics in the interview analyzed in poststructuralist psychoanalytic framework (Lacan, Kristeva) and Ettingerian psychoanalysis, this case study provides a paradigm to uncover aspects of the world and ourselves often filtered out by symbolic lenses, delving into a more intimate form of knowledge that goes beyond reproduction of power structure.

Kilpin Room - Mental Health Commons: Fantasy, Utopia & Infrastructure 1

'Writing Out of This World': Restoring Texts from the Archive of Psychosis

Matt fytche

At the beginning of the twentieth century, schizophrenia was frequently described in terms of a breakdown in the functions of speech and thought, or as an 'autistic' withdrawal from the outside world. The psychiatric archives of psychosis are thus full of written documents – letters, memoirs, manifestos, diaries, declarations of protest, poems, jottings, incantations – which have been deemed incapable of being read, except as documents of pathology. That is to say, by virtue of their production within the asylum, they were by definition incapable

of communicating, and not worth paying attention to except in the service of research on the disintegration of mental and social functions.

But what has it meant, and what does it mean, for the cultural custodians of such writing and message-making to refuse to accept it, to deliver it, to respond to it? Such texts have languished for many decades as culturally 'unacceptable' artefacts. These include letters written to relatives describing life in the asylum and imploring for contact with friends and partners, usually consigned straight to patient files and never delivered; or they include reports of fantasies; attempts to recollect and reconstruct a past life; or to make sense of terrifying experiences.

There have been piecemeal attempts historically to retrieve such works as radical aesthetic artefacts (for instance, by surrealism, or by the exponents of art brut). More recently several archives – most notably the Sammlung Prinzhorn in Heidelberg – have attempted to restore the biographies and the social and historical context pertaining to some of their archived writers. By looking beyond the terms of psychiatric diagnosis they reconstruct the elusive infrastructure of experiences inside and outside of the asylum, setting in motion new possibilities of meaning-making.

This paper reports on a project 'Writing Out of This World' initiated in 2016 at the University of Chicago as an experiment in reframing texts from the archives of psychosis, and continued at the National Humanities Center, North Carolina, and at the Sammlung Prinzhorn in Germany, laying the groundwork for a forthcoming anthology of 'marginal, excluded and idiosyncratic texts from "outsider" and psychiatric archives'. Though building on pre-existing attempts to retrieve such writing 'aesthetically', and to restore its historical and cultural contexts, its aims are different. From the perspective of a mental health commons it asks: how can we think of our own contribution to the ruptured dialogue with people characterised then – and now – as being incapable of communication with or contact with the other? What has it meant to treat such writing as unreadable, and such thought as unthinkable? And what would it mean to instead re-encounter such excommunicated texts as acts of communication, even where the message is that something has broken down, something is unbearable or impossible? As such it takes responsibility in the present for not 'excluding' madness, but providing new social forms of listening to those voices marginalised as 'insane'.

Dig a hole and step inside On collective wounds and artistic interventions in public sites

Magda Schmukalla

This paper explores the public space as an infrastructure for working through collective wounds. More specifically, it examines whether and how artistic interventions in material and discursive arrangements of public sites can trigger shifts in routinized forms of forgetting and denial and in doing so bring to the fore complex collective affects that require new forms of thinking and being together. The paper will bring in dialogue new feminist materialist understandings of matter (Barad, Braidotti) with a Deleuzian theorization of space and an Ettingerian approach to art. It will analyze how artworks, which change signifiers or rearrange performative practices in everyday spaces, allow for unexpected collective encounters with unprocessed fears and desires. The paper will, however, also elaborate whether and how the artwork is able to hold the affects that emerge and what happens if it fails to do so.

These questions about the interventionist and therapeutic potential of public art will be examined in a discussion of artistic practices and experiences involved in digging holes. By looking at two artworks by Joanna Rajkowska (Oxygenator 2007, Ravine 2009), I ask what it means to dig a hole or create a ravine as a material-discursive intervention in public sites. What does it mean to uncover, feel close to and touch hidden layers of sites shaped by transgenerational historical events? What happens if we rediscover sites by getting close to the matter of their underground? I will argue that such embodied interactions with everyday places allow the artist to engage with unconscious dynamics of the public space and that the artwork as a new object and signifier in public sites is able to convey such subterranean experience as an emerging, collective knowledge of the repressed.

11:00-11:30 – Break

N28B Level 2 - Postcolonial and Decolonial Theory and Practice 1 - Postcolonial and Decolonial Practice

How do educators in primary schools understand and teach Britishness?

Alex Kosogorin

This study problematizes Carroll, Howard and Knight's claim that 'the promotion of British Values through education and training must start with an agreement and shared understanding of what is meant by Britishness' (2018, p.2). The main problem that this research identifies is that schools in England, since 2014, have been forced by government into promoting Fundamental British Values or FBVs (DfE, 2014) without adequate guidance and training in how to approach such a controversial and contestable topic such as national identity within these securitised educational spaces (Elton-Chalcraft et al. 2017; Lander 2016). This research aims to explore whether primary educators, when teaching about FBVs, reproduce the dominant assimilationist discourse of Britishness as produced and reproduced by the state who have long 'played a leading role in shaping, defining and guarding 'Britishness'' (Grube, 2011, p. 628) or whether, as Lander suggests, this 'hegemonic discourse of British values can be disrupted and transformed to embrace an inclusive notion of Britishness which reinforces notions of belonging to a multicultural, multilingual and multi-ethnic Britain' (2016, p. 278).

In order to work with these tensions and uncertainty, this research will draw on Hodges work on 'rivers of experience' (2010, p. 188) to metaphorically conceptualise Britishness as being a river or rivers, in that its competing discourses are politically, socially and historically contingent. As well as using this metaphor as a conceptual tool to help understand and analyse this contestability, this thesis will also utilize it as a visual aid, or metaphor as method, to help research participants reflexively consider critical incidents in their own interpretations of Britishness; and finally as a structuring tool for the researcher's own reflexive journey. To reflect the contestability of Britishness in the research design, this thesis utilises an instrumental, collective case study approach or design (Creswell 2007; Yin 2013) to qualitatively research how the phenomena of Britishness is understood and taught in 3 Nottinghamshire primary schools from varying local contexts.

This thesis will argue that the dominant discourse of Britishness, still rooted in its colonial past, continues to impact the way people, consciously or unconsciously, struggle to identify who they are and how they view Britishness today. This has resulted in a narrow racialized view that uses 'racist nativism as a signifier for Britishness' (Smith, 2016, p. 308) excluding anyone not deemed to be 'British enough' (Lander, 2016). Further, it is argued that children, even at such a young age, cannot adequately be prepared for life in modern Britain and meet the FBV of having 'mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs' unless there is an honest and explicit exploration of the diversity that exists in modern Britain today and historically how this has come about. Schools cannot continue to avoid, ignore and/or deny this with some form of banal (Billig, 2006) whitewashed version of Britishness as seen in many school displays and/or by an over-simplified incorporation of British values into school values.

Muq: critical pedagogy experiences and museum as practice

Lucas Reitz and Gustavo Machado

Muq-museum of what we have left is collective that speculates the museum as practice in architecture, arts and psychoanalysis, through workshops, research, design and counter-archive building. Muq is grounded in different (digital and physical) territories, and operates from Brazil since 2021, having participated in local and international exhibitions and workshops. We work in the scales of space, memory, desire and the body,

exploring climate and social-minorities emergencies in an extra-disciplinary approach and investigating the emerging (multi)media agency in the construction of broad and democratic knowledge. This paper aims to build a narrative of pedagogical experiences developed at muq, showcasing the collective's approaches and methodologies towards a critical and decolonial pedagogy and framing it in a broader picture of independent education-based practices. It will first showcase muq's pedagogical and curatorial experiences from 2021 to 2022, locating it theoretically and within an ecosystem of non-normative practices in architecture, arts and psychoanalysis. Then, it will discuss on muq's most recent pedagogical experiences developed in 2023, *Desengaveta* (Uncloseting) and *Grupo Mostro* (Monster Group). The Museum of what we have left started as a response to COVID-19 collective grief in Brazil, as the country pictured as having the world's second largest number of deaths caused by it. In museum of what we have left - grief, our first work, we constructed a collaborative digital archive for grieving and set up talks with wide range audiences in university seminars and museums (UNIVALI, Portuguese Language Museum and The Wrong Biennale). Later, in 2022, we launched our second work, *Instructions for a queer counter-archive*, at the School Museum of Santa Catarina. Queer Counter-archive aims to gathering queer memories and build an archive that comes out to the world. In 2023, the Museum of what we have left becomes muq, a broader platform for speculating radical, critical and experimental approaches in the museum's core of interests. As the new activities in the broader spectrum of muq, *Desengaveta* (Uncloseting) and *Grupo Mostro* (Monster Group) were developed as both a pedagogical hybrid experimentation and as modes of creating a safe space for debating sexuality and gender, racism and decolonial thinking. *Desengaveta* was a six-week design studio in partnership with the State University of Santa Catarina that aimed to unveil the city's hidden stories and to reverse normative narratives built to sustain white-male-heterosexual heroism and colonialism. *Grupo mostro* consisted in a four-week independent study group and seminar series that debated on Paul B. Preciado's *Can the monster speak?* Those experiences conducted by muq were initiated on the emergency of building critical pedagogical approaches from uncertainty and situated in a Paulo Freire tradition of education for the autonomy. They are examples of possible ways to tackle our society ethical crisis as they point to directions where pedagogy meet sensible topics both practice-based and as theoretical speculation and investigation.

N27A Level 2 - War, State Harm and Resistance 1 - War and Terror

Contextualising the Dead: The War on Terror, Casualty Recording and the Work of Iraq Body Count

Lily Hamourtziadou

How many Iraqis have been killed in Iraq's 2003 invasion and its long-drawn-out, bloody aftermath? A handful of rigorous efforts attempted to estimate a 'total' number of Iraqi deaths, including some that briefly captured the headlines, but these provided only snapshots, rather than the continuous monitoring and updating that a long war requires. When it comes to recording deaths, the appropriate question is who died, not merely how many. Each of the 210,166 civilians whose deaths Iraq Body Count has documented from March 2003 to March 2023 had a name; each was an individual, a family member with a role in the community, a painful loss now commemorated in an online public database, an incident scribbled in a recorder's notebook. The history of war is often told from the top down, analysing dilemmas facing presidents and prime ministers, charting strategies and tactics, triumphs and failures. Yet the one consequence of all wars is the abrupt ending of life en masse. Telling a story of war from the bottom up uncovers patterns of harm, lends weight to advocacy against the use of certain weapons or tactics, and illustrates how the acts of the powerful affect the powerless. Meticulous, ongoing casualty recording enables us to see wars through the lens of civilian suffering and loss.

Armed conflicts invariably leave behind a trail of deceased bodies, which are often displayed in the media, used to wage wars, concealed in mass graves, and that serve as focal points for forensic investigations and efforts towards reconciliation. The treatment and perception of these human remains raise critical questions that cut across various fields of study, including sociology, anthropology, forensic science and international relations. This paper aims to explore the diverse ways in which the bodies of the deceased are perceived, treated and understood in different contexts,

and to examine how the perception of the dead evolves, as they are viewed as cultural objects, protected persons, or instruments in international politics.

This victim-focused paper, based on the documenting of civilian deaths in Iraq by the NGO Iraq Body Count, takes a human security approach and explores civilian casualties in various contexts: the invasion, the insurgency, war crimes, state legitimacy, society, drone warfare, family, identity, an online database and a researcher's logbooks. Set in each context, the war dead acquire different significance and meaning, highlighting personal, strategic, legal and moral understandings of human loss. They become tools for conflict evaluation and resolution, adding pieces to the puzzle of war, as a more complete memory of the conflict.

The 'Legal Black-Hole': the impact of 'enemy combatant' status on resettled and repatriated Guantanamo Bay detainees'

Natalie Porter

It is a natural assumption that the primary goal for many detainees held at Guantanamo Bay would be their release. That they would once again be a free man following their inhumane treatment at the detention facility, where 16 out of the remaining 30 detainees have been cleared for release but remain detained (Amnesty International, 2023).

Why would life following their release be frequently referred to by past detainees as 'Guantanamo 2.0'? Surely freedom is preferable to the indefinite detention which they faced at Guantanamo? But are they actually free?

By conducting a literature review, we critically analyse the impact of an 'enemy combatant' status on Guantanamo Bay detainees who have been repatriated or resettled following their release. We consider the impact of the 'legal black-hole' and the context around this designation within the 'War on Terror'. Through analysing and comparing individual case studies of repatriated or resettled detainees, we will consider the common trends in their experiences, including continued harassment, stigmatization, and an inability to rehabilitate themselves into repatriated and resettled life.

Whilst there has been a wide breadth of research on the inhumane and illegality of the Guantanamo Bay detention centre, there has been little available research into what happens to detainees following their release. The international spotlight which has been placed on Guantanamo Bay has resulted in intense scrutiny, although we argue that this is only a micro-level issue which must be placed on a global scale. This case highlights the importance for international bodies to provide modernised applications and terminology for individuals in combat. Furthermore, we must also consider whether there are other Guantanamo's that we are unaware of. The use of CIA black sites remain highly secretive, with little proven evidence about where they are located, who or why they are held there, the conditions they face during their detention and what happens to them following their release. Thus, the implications of the 'legal black-hole' extend far beyond the borders of Guantanamo.

The United States' continued refusal of any accountability for the suffering of these individuals continues to affect detainees long after Guantanamo. Even in cases where the U.S. Government conceded that there was little intelligence value or where wrongdoing could not be proved, no reparation or apology has been offered to the detainee following their release. Rather it seems that the U.S. Government believe that their 'freedom' is enough.

Whilst the U.S. has displayed care to not repatriate individuals to insecure political climates, evidence has demonstrated that resettled detainees have been forcibly repatriated to a country where they face likely persecution following a period in their resettled country. This is particularly common in the UAE. Both repatriated and resettled detainees reported continued stigmatization and labelling as a 'terrorist' and former 'Guantanamo detainee', making employment, autonomy, freedom, and

financial security difficult to maintain. Both repatriated and resettled detainees have also reported continued harassment by the authorities, with some suggesting that the U.S. continue to question and conduct surveillance following their release.

Rising State Violence and Politics of Hate

Amr Marzouk & Hannah Wilkinson

This paper explores global trends of rising authoritarianism and the weaponisation of hate to justify policies of state violence and the crushing of resistance. Drawing parallels with the past, the paper demonstrates how such techniques of state power are not 'new' but are perhaps concerningly familiar – especially during times of mass uncertainty. Attention will be drawn to the socio-economic conditions that can be 'ripe' for (ab)use by states to redirect blame for mass human suffering towards already marginalised groups. Further, the increasing use of technology to push techniques of propaganda amid a time of state described 'fake news' will be discussed. The aim of the paper is to raise criminological alarm bells about the urgent need for scholars to critically consider the mass harms we are living through, as well as sharing frameworks to collectively understand atrocity and develop the tools we need to resist.

Nz8A Level 2 - Identity in Utopia Panel 1 - Embodying Feminist Utopias

The Dialectic of Sex: An Existential Premise

Thomas Chesworth

Too brazen and lacking in rigour, too politically furious to be philosophically sound, we are so often told that Shulamith Firestone's landmark manifesto of second-wave feminist thought, *The Dialectic of Sex* (1970), gets lost in the grandeur of its ambitious utopianism and ultimately fails to conceptualise identity outside of a biological-essentialist framework. Firestone's reduction of the life of human society to its purely sexual component is presented as the example par excellence of all that was wrong with the second wave; in Ann Snitow's now famous phrase, it is the "demon text" of '60s radical feminism. But just how accurate is this reading? In this paper, I argue that Firestone's feminism does not simply take identity as a biological given, but rather that she uses the ontological framework of existential humanism, and particularly that of Simone de Beauvoir, to develop her utopian vision of the feminist future. I begin by exploring the curious manner in which Beauvoir's work—and particularly her moral philosophy—both is and is not taken up by Firestone in *The Dialectic of Sex*. I demonstrate that the turn to Beauvoir constitutes a key structural moment in Firestone's manifesto, used as it is to suggest that *The Second Sex*, and particularly its development of an ethics of "transcendence," might be the antidote to the economic monism Firestone locates within Marxian anthropology. I then look to how such a Beauvoirian methodology materialises in Firestone's historical analysis. To do so, I read Firestone's ambitious chapter on the "Dialectics of Cultural History" in order to suggest that her argument therein can only be parsed when conceived as an essentially Beauvoirian account of the human subject as ontologically transcendent. In theorising the subject as the negative to Nature's positive—and, in particular, technology as the means of that negation—I suggest that Firestone's invocation of Beauvoir's philosophy is used as the ontological groundwork upon which she is able to both envision a feminist utopia and enact that utopianism within her politics. I conclude by arguing that this category of "transcendence" is taken up by Firestone precisely so as to avoid the biological essentialism for which she is so often charged, demonstrating that, within Firestone's utopia, the goal is for the category of "identity" itself to be transcended.

Lolitas, Mountain Witches and Sexy Gals: Japanese Fashion as Rebellious Style in the Lost Decades.

Hui-Ying Kerr

In the 1990s, following the bursting of Japan's economic bubble, Japan experienced a prolonged period of economic stagnation when incomes were significantly halted for the first time in its postwar history and many companies failed under the weight of financial mismanagement. During this time there was a freezing of employment among the youth and mass redundancies, which in a culture used to lifetime employment and steady continuous growth, had the effect of shaking Japanese society to its core. Lasting well into the 2010s, this period transcended the initial singular term of 'Lost Decade', leading to the phenomenon of Lost Generation youth who failed to achieve conventional Japanese adulthood through the markers of corporate job, home, marriage and children. Instead, there appeared a slew of socially anxious observations to describe the new generations, including NEETs (Not in Employment, Education or Training), violence among the youth, 'parasite singles', 'herbivore' men and hikikomori (homebound recluses who retreated from outside society by staying at home, often for decades) (Matthews and White 2004; Cargill and Sakamoto 2008; Kingston 2011).

Yet against this picture of gloom, the 1990s and 2000s were arguably some of the most vibrant decades in modern Japanese culture, affecting areas such as fashion, fine art, design, music, film and advertising. The famed areas of Harajuku, Shinjuku and Shibuya in Tokyo became meccas of pilgrimage for style and subculture-conscious Japanese youth, manga and anime became staples of subcultural cool for a global audience hungry for a new J-wave of counterculture, while Japanese design, architecture, film, fashion and J-pop music gained fans across different spectrums in Asia and the West. (Befu and Guichard-Anguis 2001; Iwabuchi 2002)

Epitomising this vibrancy were the grassroots consumer-led street-fashion of Tokyoites, each congregating in their own distinct patch of Tokyo, from the sexy-cool gyaru ('gals') and extreme 'mountain witches' (yamanba) to the decoratively cute Lolitas (Keet 2007; Kawamura 2012; Monden 2015).

Characterised by aesthetics taken to their extreme, these street styles, far from being a fantastical and therefore exoticized reading of Japanese youth and culture, need to be read within the wider context of both Japanese society and the economic and social conditions of that moment. Bounded-in by demands from conventional Japanese society to adhere to social and gendered norms, and economic conditions of a lack of future and hope in achieving normative lifestyles, these extreme fashions demonstrate a break of Japanese youth with the postwar narrative of national progress, while simultaneously continuing a long history of youthful rebellion, albeit one that was more hidden and dependent on soft power rather than demands for hard power. Characterised by a turning-inwards, it was similar to the tuning-in and dropping-out of Western youth subcultures, using strategies of soft-rebellion, alternative communities and taboo-breaking as reactions to the social malaise surrounding them.

As a new reading in Japanese fashion scholarship, this paper will explore this phenomenon of youth rebellion through fashion as a direct result of surrounding economic stagnation, that challenged the realities of Japanese society through alternative world-building and exploration of unconformity.

Hooley Room - Critical Thought on Cities 1 – Social Theory

Safe Neighbourhoods, Contested Spaces

Yesmean Khalil

The paper will present findings from a qualitative research project examining the lived experiences of second and third generation Muslims in Nottingham, of the consequences of external racial identity constructions. The paper aims to contribute to critical urban debates by opening up discussions on racialisation and the way in which shifts in racial identity constructions perpetuate racism. Corresponding to shifts in external identity inscriptions, the findings offer insights into the multiple protective strategies deployed by participants to navigate a hostile environment, but which have in turn be weaponised against them in media, policy and public discourse. A counter-narrative is offered to hegemonic discourses that Muslims, particularly of Pakistani heritage, who are shown to face disproportionate levels of socio-economic and health inequalities, refuse to integrate and are leading parallel lives. The paper argues that racialised identities and the navigation of space,

particularly urban spaces must be a central concern of critical spatial action, especially in the current socio, geographical political context.

Cities as spaces of human rights: children's right to clothing in Nottingham

Michele Grigolo

This paper will provide some reflections on initial findings from an ongoing research project involving a team of researchers from Nottingham Trent University, in partnership with Sharewear Clothing Scheme, a charity from Nottingham that is currently campaigning for the right to clothing in the UK and repurposes second-hand clothes to contrast clothing poverty. The project focuses its attention away from a notion of human rights centred on global arenas and transnational processes, and recentres human rights in urban space. In so doing, the project draws on existing research around 'the social origin of human rights' (Van IJsschot 2015), human rights cities and the 'urban practice of human rights' (Grigolo 2019), as well as the right to the city (Lefebvre 1968), to explore the social and political processes in space through which human rights acquire new relevance and meaning. The case of Nottingham and children's right to clothing will be used to illuminate these processes, by inviting children to reflect on the meaning of clothing in their everyday life and space, and eventually on clothing as a human right. While focusing on the case of clothing and children, we expect the project to help generate critical reflections on human rights, capitalism, and austerity, and open a new field of multi-disciplinary inquiry into human rights and space capable of generating new ideas and concepts of human rights, connected to new forms of deprivation and inequalities as well as social mobilisation that are spatially bound and connected.

Cities and climate change: towards local epistemic and social orders

Jenni Cauvain

Cities have been argued to be "first responders" to the growing number of acute challenges arising from the climate emergency. One might think, following the escalating patterns of severe and "unprecedented" weather events as well as scientific advice about the causes and systems of climate change, that a "public consensus" would emerge. However, the policy apparatus in cities faced with the task of making necessary mitigations and adaptations in urban systems faces social and political resistance, sometimes insurgency and vandalism towards measures put in place to implement climate policy – in tandem with defenders and environmental social groups taking into direct action to demand more from political leaders. It appears that the epistemic foundations of public life concerning climate change are fracturing to the extent that competing and opposing narratives emerge and are pursued by various civic, economic and political actors. This presentation focuses on civic epistemology, a theoretical framework that allows the investigation of how knowledge and social order are co-produced through practices that simultaneously give rise to specific epistemic frameworks (about climate change) as well as social and political arrangements that attempt to address (or resist) climate change. It argues that a more local and embodied narrative could be fostered in cities that helps to form the epistemic foundation, therefore social and political order, on climate.

Kilpin Room Mental Health Commons: Fantasy, Utopia & Infrastructure 2 - Figurations of Psychosis (1): Archives and Ethnographies

The movements of the listening: cartography of the psychosocial care offered to immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

Gustavo da Silva Machado

The human migratory flow is characterized by distinct characteristics, including the search for survival or improved living conditions, which can bring different psychosocial effects. An immigrant is someone who is not in their geographical and cultural area of origin. In their quest for medical assistance in a foreign land,

immigrants are compelled to acknowledge the inherent vulnerability of their psychological distress in healthcare facilities that may not always incorporate cultural factors into their diagnostic frameworks. This brings up a discussion about the diagnostic procedure as a tool of control and standardization, since the pathologization of cultural experiences beyond the current one is established as a method of controlling this body constantly and symbolically "at the border". The psychological aspects of the reception of immigrants and refugees in Santa Catarina are the focus of this research, which is part of a larger project titled Psychosocial Dimensions of the Reception of Immigrants and Refugees in Santa Catarina, conducted by the Núcleo de Estudos em Psicologia, Migrações e Culturas (NEMPsiC) from the Psychology Department of the Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil. This research merges the theoretical contribution of psychoanalysis and ethnopsychiatry, articulating them with decolonial perspectives. The aim is to comprehend the process of assessing the psychological distress of immigrants from the viewpoint of professionals in the fields of psychology and medicine, specifically in the areas of Family and Community Health Medicine and Psychiatry. As a method, the cartographic perspective aligned with psychosocial ethnography was adopted in two movements: first, an analysis of the author's field diary of professional practice as a psychologist in these contexts and, in the second half, in-depth interviews with professionals who agreed to describe the therapeutic itinerary of immigrants who complained of psychological distress and the clinical and diagnostic behaviours adopted, with a particular focus on Florianópolis, southern Brazil. The main results point to the understanding of listening as a political act, implicated and in constant construction, since it needs to allow certain destabilisations to be carried out in a culturally sensitive way. The second movement revealed numerous obstacles in collaborating with immigrants in health facilities in Florianópolis, implying the acquisition of abilities to lessen the fragmentation of care and the frequent medicalization of this group. This research has shown that normalising practices emerge as a response to the unexpected that the disturbing difference offers to the clinical encounter. To overcome this barrier, possibilities arise from the constant problematisation of the re-edition of colonial and discursive practices that encounter therapeutic relationships daily, demanding a certain elasticity in the clinical technique in the face of trauma. This perspective highlights a movement in our listening, which shouldn't be crystallized by the norms of rigid theoretical frameworks.

Dispersed Transference: Francesc Tosquelles and the Saint-Alban Hospital

Candela Potente

The Catalan psychiatrist Francesc Tosquelles (1912-1994) was one of the main figures in the theorization and practice of institutional psychotherapy. He was interested in moving away from what he called "clientele psychoanalysis," which was oriented towards the individual, to establish what he sometimes called "public psychoanalysis." In particular, his work at the Saint-Alban psychiatric hospital in France (which, in fact, is now called Centre Hospitalier François Tosquelles) between 1940 and 1962 offered a unique institutional model to treat psychosis based on the conviction there is an intimate connection between psychic and political oppression. Unlike many psychiatrists, who "think they can fix the world with a pill," Tosquelles thought that "without Marx, a psychiatrist is nothing." Even more, Tosquelles claimed that in order to cure the ill, the hospital itself needed to be cured as well, advancing a new understanding of the relationship between the treatment of psychosis and psychiatric institutions. At the Saint-Alban hospital, every aspect of life was part of the treatment of patients. This hospital had the goal of disalienating patients, which went from the architecture of the hospital to the way in which patients were addressed by doctors and other workers at the hospital. There were one-on-one consultations with doctors, group meetings, work activities (for which patients were paid a small amount of money), and the general environment turned the hospital into what Tosquelles called a "healing collective." The meetings, attended by doctors, nurses, patients, and staff, were anti-authoritarian; everything was discussed and everyone was consulted. For Tosquelles, it was important that the patients conquered speech, learned mutual respect, and had a say in the conditions of their stay at the hospital.

Based on the premises of institutional psychotherapies and the specific activities and spaces of the Saint-Alban hospital, the concept of transference needed to be reconfigured. In the hospital, transferences and projections are not addressed to the figure of the analyst (as it would be the case in what Tosquelles calls "clientele psychoanalysis"), but rather dispersed and brought together by the structure of the hospital. In this paper, I take the Saint-Alban hospital as a case of commoning of mental health. I articulate the relationship between Tosquelles's theory of madness, his political activism, and the concrete ways in which everyday life was organized at Saint-Alban through an analysis of his understanding of transference as a diffused phenomenon.

13:00-14:00 – Break for lunch (food and drink not provided)

14:00 – 15:30 - Parallel Sessions 3

N28B Level 2 - Postcolonial and Decolonial Theory and Practice 2 - Harm, Postcolonial Theory and Decolonisation 2

Dismantling Narratives and Borders: Decolonising the Climate 'Refugee'

Irene Sacchetti

My contribution invites to reconsider existing dystopian narratives on climate induced (im)mobilities and climate 'refugees' specifically, those forced to flee their homelands because of the devastating impacts of climate change, to ultimately offer a counternarrative grounded in decolonial thinking. This fits into the broader goal to better equip the existing international legal framework to protect those directly affected by climate change, who are now left in a protection vacuum (Behrman, Kent, 2020) and deal with a fortified border regimes that stigmatise those 'outside the border'.

The idea that migration, including climate-induced movements, is a problem to be solved plunges its roots into Eurocentric narratives that pathologize migration, and a Western sedentary tendency and bias that frame modern society and its norms (Castels, 2011). This results in governance responses to climate-related mobility aimed at stopping movements of people (Zickgraf, 2019), exclusively focusing on mitigation strategies to contain migration and increase securitisation of national borders (Leonard, 2014). Climate 'refugees' embody the dual construction of threat and victim, that according to scholars (Baldwin, 2013; Bettini, 2019) is a warning signal for the presence of racial power within climate change and migration discourse. The threat/victim label contribute to 'othering' climate migrants and fortification of border regimes, while also authorising forms of moral intervention from the global North- which often results in neo-colonialism and white saviourism reinforced patterns (Gonzalez, 2019).

After challenging existing knowledge (re)production on climate change and related (im)mobilities feeding into such Western centric conceptualisation and narratives, the analysis looks at climate induced (im)mobilities through historical lenses of colonialism. The aim is to dismantle existing myths by reconceptualising 'climate refugees' as the historical product of colonialism and bordering practices (Waldemariam, 2019). Decolonising the climate 'refugee' carries the need to look at climate change as the result of Western centuries-long practices of colonial-capitalism operated by developed countries at the expenses of the Global South (Atapattu, 2020). Building on the colonial origins of climate change, climate induced mobility is not only displacement, but mainly 'dispossession' of land due to deteriorating consequences of climate change (Narang 2017), where 'othering' narratives intertwine with bordering practices and racial past and present injustices. To this end, the analysis offers a counter narrative on climate change and displacement to debunk myths around climate mobilities and discard the (neo)colonial attitudes towards refugees, grounding the discourse in decolonial thinking and pluralisation of knowledge production on climate (im)mobilities and border practices.

When all you've got is a hammer, everything looks like a nail: explaining the absence of race within the zemiological toolkit.

Edward Wright

Zemiology initially developed through a dissatisfaction with criminology. Reasons for this dissatisfaction include criminology ultimately being part of a state assemblage which implicates the discipline in the

maintenance of inequalities, and for the discipline being ignorant to many serious non-criminalised harms. Based on this, the potential for zemiology to contribute to a discussion of racial justice should be readily apparent. The field of study is prima facie open to critical analyses of power relations and their relation to inequalities and injustices, and much racial injustice is not criminalised. However, race and racial injustice simply do not feature in much zemiological discussion. In this paper I consider why this is the case, and argue that this absence can be understood as deriving from a pervasive blindness to colonialism within zemiology, and a commitment within the field to a framing of social problems in terms of capitalism. I also outline that when zemiological discussions of race are held, they are often conceptually insufficient, with race for instance being understood as a 'cultural' as opposed to a fundamental structural issue. Race, however, cannot be reduced to this, and this articulation of race is also a result of the general zemiological blindness to the colonial. Race is a category produced through colonialism – it is a structural phenomenon – but this only becomes apparent by thinking against orthodox Western social theory, in which most zemiology is situated. Through all of this discussion, this paper creates an entry point for considering social harm in a way that adequately accounts for race, beyond the standard zemiological frame. It also contributes to thinking about racial injustice beyond standard criminological frames, by opening matters of racial injustice to the notion of social harm.

N27A Level 2 - War, State Harm and Resistance 2 - State Harm, Activism and Resistance

Immigration raids, harm and violence in Britain

Monish Bhatia & Jon Burnett

This paper explores immigration raids in Britain as a frontier of its ongoing 'war' on asylum and 'irregular migration'. Against the backdrop of explicit drives to intensify, expand and embed the parameters of immigration control in Britain, immigration raids operate ideologically as well as institutionally: utilised to sustain the material and political conditions of what is a vastly unequal form of social order. Drawing on long-standing research on immigration control and enforcement, this paper examines the raid process and its impact on individuals and families; and in doing so, it emphasises how raids are routinely experienced as a form of violence. But it further explores the logics underpinning raids and the material and ideological forces underpinning them. Raids are rationalised as facilitating removal and more broadly operate as part of attempts to generate fear and force people to leave "voluntarily." However, this paper suggests that the real purpose of raids is to dominate and oppress illegalised migrants and those who may be vulnerable to immigration control, as well as reproducing the justification for immigration enforcement itself. Raids, it is argued here, are utilised to try sever solidarities between communities; and this has particular resonance at a point where political figures are pledging to increase the volume of immigration raids, and their reach. Consequently, the paper further reflects on resistance to raids and the solidarities such resistance ferments and sustains.

Prefiguration and the post-representational politics of anti-deportation activism

Tom Kemp

This talk addresses a familiar dilemma in discussions of experimental forms of political resistance in the context of state racism. On one hand, the predominant modes of engaging with state power through strategically representing claims to state actors often re-affirm the categories of state domination, mimic the hierarchies that radical actors intend to overcome, and tend to become invested in a reformism that limits the horizon of change. On the other, prefigurative politics seeks to craft resistance practices that instantiate desired future relations in ways that can seem hopeless against the institutional power of the state and the investments in racial dominance that underpins its actions, with the danger of producing an unstrategic and naïve inversion of the state logics that activists want to oppose. Drawing on interviews and participation with grassroots anti-detention and anti-deportation activist groups, this talk argues that a third concept, that of post-representational politics, is a necessary tool for recognising and engaging with experimental forms of political practice that oppose state racism. It argues that both the practice and the notion of post-representational politics sensitise us to important aspects of radical political praxis in ways that enable responses to critics of

prefigurative politics without ever-expanding the boundaries of that concept. Finally, I argue that post-representational experimentation is key to forming networks of survival responsive to the evolving manifestations of state racism and border control.

Contemporary Environmental Activism; State Security Creep and Control of the Borders of Resistance

Laura Naegler, Amy French and Gabe Mythen, University of Liverpool, UK

In November 2019, the UK Counter Terrorism Police Southeast (CTPSE) included the environmental activist group Extinction Rebellion (XR) in a circulated list of extremist groups, suggesting that its members should be reported to Prevent, the UK's counter radicalisation strategy. The XR movement was launched in the UK in 2018 and now has a presence in 86 countries across six continents. It is widely known for its spectacular and disruptive campaigns aimed at gaining media and political attention to raise awareness of the severity of the global climate emergency. XR has commonly been presented in the mainstream media and popular political discourse as a threat to social order, formal democratic politics and the interests of business and industry. The movement's established tactics of public disruption at symbolically significant urban sites and deliberate tactics of 'mass arrest' have been condemned by the UK government. Given its appeal to younger generations, XR has also been portrayed as an unruly and disruptive organisation, and one that deliberately targets younger people susceptible to ideological inculcation and risk-taking.

This paper reflects on the recent change in XR's strategy, outlined in the Extinction Rebellion UK 2023-24 Strategy document. Here, a significant shift is endorsed in order to pause actions designed to maximise on public disruption and to simultaneously move towards "a new era of community and coalition" (XR 2023).

Accordingly, the paper explores the nature, roots and purpose of this transformation. In particular, we examine the extent to which this sizeable change in environmental activist strategy constitutes a response to creeping forms of State surveillance and draconian measures affecting the right to protest, as permitted in the 2023 Public Order Act.

Drawing on empirical data drawn from a qualitative study with XR activists in Northwest England, we consider the impacts of State surveillance and increased control on activist strategies and tactics. To this end, we raise quandaries regarding the tensions that derive from XR's aim of intentional visibility via spectacular action and dedication to non-violent civil disobedience, in a context in which the control of protests and protest movements has been intensified. Our objective is to evaluate the extent to which this shift in activist strategy constitutes a defensive response to State coercion - connected to reducing members' exposure to violence, reducing risk of exposure to criminal prosecution and loss of livelihood in a time of economic crisis - or whether it constitutes a form of creative and constructive resistance aimed at enhancing the longevity and resilience of the movement and its objectives to halt the climate emergency.

N28A Level 2 - Identity in Utopia Panel Proposal 2 - Epistemologies of Transformation and Temporalities of Utopia

Affirmative refusals and different differences: Locating untimely futures of LGBTQI rights.

Kay Lalor, Manchester Metropolitan University

This paper examines recent developments in international LGBTQI rights law and activism through lenses of time and temporality. It argues that this temporal understanding helps to illuminate the growing international recognition of, and backlash to, the protection of sexual orientation and gender identity minorities through human rights. It explores how we might think and embody sexual and gender identities differently by imagining radically different futures.

Drawing upon queer and feminist critiques of linear temporalities as well as Deleuzian temporal multiplicities, the paper suggests that international LGBTQI rights are deeply intertwined within temporal narratives of progress and linearity as well as with systems of modernity, including neoliberal capitalism and the state. It suggests that this intertwinement leads to an impasse: the way in which queer identities are conceived and represented in rights limits the possibility of their being otherwise. Rights rest upon particular institutional structures, and iterating LGBTQI identities as rights requires that we accept that these institutional structures will not undergo substantial change.

The paper therefore argues that LGBTQI rights exist in conditions in which the future is subjugated to the past and present. That is, frameworks of rights operate with an expectation that the future will reproduce the institutions, structures, forms, and habits of the present. From this perspective the paper asks what would happen if we untethered our understandings of the future from the present: if we assumed that the future could be a space of radically different practices, institutions and identities.

In so doing, the paper does not seek to outline or represent one version of the future. It instead gestures towards the possibility of 'untimely' futures, or futures as a space of 'different differences' by asking kind of legalities and politics could operate, or what kind of questions would become important, if we stopped assuming that the institutions of the present – including international institutions, state-based identities and sovereignties, or current regimes of sexuality and gender – were likely to continue in their current form. Engaging with literatures of prefigurative politics, 'immanent utopias', and with Black, feminist, and queer Deleuzian analysis the paper proposes a method for thinking such futures.

The paper concludes that simply countering linear narratives of LGBTQI progress will not escape the logics of the present or account for injustices of the past. Instead, it is necessary to escape from those logics and conceive of the present as a dimension of the future even if we do not know what that future will be. This position of openness to the future makes clear how international institutions assume their own atemporality and shows how we might 'affirmatively refuse' structures of the present that are limiting, unjust or absurd. Using this framework, the paper identifies what elements might be required to think futures of LGBTQI justice in a non-linear fashion, where the future is not tethered to the present or reliant upon a single path of progress.

The (Epistemic) Politics of Indigeneity: Why the Past Matters for a New Tomorrow

Cristina Conesa

I engage with Lisa Tuhiwai Smith's (1999) arguments in *Decolonizing Methodologies* as a framework for examining how and why and understanding of the past matters for an emancipatory politics of Indigeneity. Smith (ibid) argues that the practice of research and theory production have been colonized by the master narrative of European history. She presents tools to Indigenous scholars to decolonize the methodology of research, showing that it requires revisiting and reworking Western history through the lens of Indigenous concerns. Advancing the need to grapple with a look at the past in a simultaneously destructive and constructive way, Smith shows how the Indigenous struggle to make sense of their world is inevitably tied to the struggle to effect generative change in how the powerful makes sense of the world.

By engaging with Smith's arguments, I posit such examination in itself as an act of political theorizing that is already potentially de-colonial, and that therefore has much to show to the postcolonial political theorist. I show how these indigenous activists are eluding being categorized as subaltern, a position in which it is typically the political theorist who speaks for them (Byrd and Rothberg 2011: 9). Rather, it is by questioning what it means to be Indigenous that they dislocate the meaning of Indigeneity from being fixed in the historical weight configuring the present. This dislocation enables them to generate their own claims and concerns to examine the traditional narration of history and its power to define the epistemic limits for Indigeneity. As such, it sets both the precedent and the horizon for the quest to decolonize methodologies of knowledge production for Indigenous people.

To substantiate, I first examine the idea that the discipline of history is not only shaped by the self-asserted supremacy of Western culture but also sustains it and reproduces it: the production of theory is dominated by 'research through imperial eyes' (Smith 1999: 55). I then engage with, and problematize, the political implications of such master narrative as it regards the content and limitations of (epistemic) communities, particularly regarding how the requirements of membership can be met or challenged (Jenco 2015). I explore how such hegemony has relied on monopolizing models of theorizing by first creating and then naturalizing a hierarchical distance, when not a dichotomy, with other life-worlds. In this way, it appears how Indigenous people have become outsiders to their own history.

Finally, I turn to the Indigenous collective's attempts to produce a transformative praxis. I present it as a bi-layered decolonial strategy through which the deconstruction of history constitutes the construction of alternative ways for its practice. This also explores how Indigeneity's meaning, rather than being a naturalized and fixed entity, shifts through the Indigenous examination of precisely what it means to make sense of their world. Thus, I demonstrate how this examination itself can become a vehicle for new theorizing.

Dignity as a Utopian Methodology for Doing Difference Differently

Jen Neller

Previous research by the author has found that processes of enacting hate speech legislation reproduce the same myths about difference as those on which hatreds themselves are premised: UK parliamentary debates on such legislation included the motif of a 'clash of civilisations' (whereby hatred was presented as a foreign incursion on British traditions of tolerance) and pitted the purported interests of over-determined identity groups against each other. In a context where repealing anti-hate laws is likely to be seen as a green light for hatred, how can such legislation be reformed to better advance us towards the utopian ambition of a hate-free society?

This paper explores how a concept of dignity could be developed and applied as a utopian methodology that helps us to move past some of the long-standing challenges with legislating against hatred. In particular, I consider how new materialisms could provide a framework for embedding relationality and agency within our understanding of dignity. By centring such a concept of dignity within anti-hate law, the fixing and dichotomising of identities by the law becomes untenable. Moreover, attending to whether the hatred in question resists another's entitlement or privilege (punches up), or whether it reinforces another's structural disadvantage and oppression (punches down) becomes imperative.

Hooley Room - Productivity or Process: What is the Value of Making 1 - 'Productivity, creation, and digital technologies'

"YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT"

Ziegi Boss

In the pursuit of productivity, we are bombarded with messages urging us to optimize our time, maximize our output, and measure our worth by our economic contributions. Ziegi Boss's work "YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT", originally presented as a video art installation and now restructured as a participatory presentation, explores the implications of evaluating human value through the narrow lens of productive output and efficiency. The presentation involves two aspects: a video from the original art installation which will be playing in the background throughout the presentation, and a participatory action in which Boss will provide materials and instructions for conference attendees, and together they will perform an experiment in productivity.

In the video, Ziegi Boss presents information on topics around productivity, where every word, written or spoken, is quoted directly from ChatGPT. The exclusive use within the video of information derived from AI presents a unique vantage point into our collective digital consciousness, resulting in a harsh and stigmatising

assessment of productivity. This perhaps mirrors the amalgamation of opinions, beliefs, and narratives prevalent in online discourse from which ChatGPT sources its data. This begs the question: does ChatGPT serve as a more “honest” reflection of society’s distilled average opinions, which perhaps normally wouldn’t be expressed so directly? The conference attendees will be left to decide whether the results are an accurate or distorted reflection of implicit cultural attitudes.

While the video embodies the societal stigma and pressure around productivity, the participatory action presents a role switch - rather than the enforcer of productivity culture, Boss and the participants will take on the role of those living under it, confessing and internalising traits considered “unproductive”. In this way, Boss seeks to explore the impact of a person’s value being reduced to an assessment of their productivity, and the effects on one’s sense of identity and worth when one internalises these messages.

Aligned with the stream's focus, this presentation aims to confront the convention of valuing outcomes and efficiency above all, and by nature of its omission within the definition and assessment metrics of productivity and undervaluing of creative and innovative processes. This participatory presentation promises to provide a unique and thought-provoking experience, encouraging attendees to rethink societal norms and perceptions regarding productivity and value.

A conceptual framework for human-AI art creation: the Distributed Artificial Intelligence studies

Sun Park

Sociology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) studies have exchanged the concepts of ‘agents’. Symbolic interactionism in Sociology has benefited AI studies to examine the negotiation among computer scientists and human-computer interaction. The cognitive performance of AI has benefited Sociology to consider non-human beings as actors influencing knowledge production. However, the two disciplines have tended to lack concrete contextualisation with human-AI cooperation cases when using the term ‘agent’ (Nwana 1996; Malsch 2001). The conceptual trading zone of agents between Sociology and AI studies has remained merely as a ‘migration of metaphors’ (Malsch 1997). As a consequence, social inquiry into human-AI interaction in art creation tends to be ambiguous in examining to what extent humans and AI contribute to their collaborative artistic output. The analysis of the roles of AI in creating artefacts is more challenged by the traditional concepts of authorship based on human-based economic and legal ownership of artistic output.

A research technique to tackle the abstractness entrenched in the studies of human-AI art creation is to adopt a substrate-neural conceptual framework on agents that can empirically discuss the roles of humans and AI in art creation. The creative functions of AI algorithms beyond the copy-and-paste function of previous computational software urge research on how AI algorithms affect human artists’ creation processes. The human-AI artistic interaction is different from previous human-computer interaction as a ‘new epistemic praxis’ of human-AI intelligent interaction in Malsch’s (2001) terms. To propose a conceptual framework that can discuss both human and AI contributors to art creation, this research develops the notion of Distributed Artificial Intelligence (DAI), a Sociology-based approach to the collaboration of different human and computational agents (Bond & Gasser 1988; Malsch 2001; Strübing 1998). The research thus elaborates on the different types of human and AI agents with different expertise in creating art as a ‘distributed intelligence system’. It presents a conceptual spectrum of artistic agents including human meaning-makers, human system-makers and AI art-creators. AI-generated art cases including the ‘Next Rembrandt’ project are employed to demonstrate how the DAI-based conceptual framework of agents can examine human-AI art creation. Doing so contributes to exploring contribution-based studies of human-AI art creation, enhancing the methodological feasibility of post-human social inquiry into art creation. It thus fills in a conceptual gap of agents between traditional Science and Technology Studies and emergent human-AI art creation.

Park Your Desire in the Platform Economy: Value for your Time

Avantika Tewari

In the digital era, the mere presence of individuals in the virtual domain offers substantial advantages to tech giants. They have effectively privatised communication and exchange networks through the digital enclosure of society. This paper asserts the need to reinterpret the term "prosumer" to encompass the subtle compulsion of data production and the concealed influence of algorithms, shaping our engagement with work, desire and the imperative to consume as the paradigm of general data commodity production.

The concept of "prosumption" was first introduced by Alvin Toffler in 1980 to describe the intersection of production and consumption. In the realm of critical media studies, those who participate in both content creation and consumption on the internet and social media are often termed "prosumers." While the conventional understanding of prosumption relates to the digital content industry, highlighting the intersection of consumption and content creation, this paper extends the concept. It associates prosumers with Marx's theory of consumptive production, shedding light on the intricate connection between the generation of surplus value and the structural imperative of transforming individuals into data commodities within the virtual realm. This transformation entails extracting insights into user behaviour by harnessing their attention within the platform economy, encompassing activities such as gigs, content creation, e-commerce that posit and preserve aggregation of surplus screen time.

I will demonstrate that the objective in the digital political economy isn't solely focused on productivity. Instead, it centres on hyper-optimising unproductivity, fostering simultaneous distractions that consolidate user attention within the platform for the generation of surplus value.

Is the creative process valued, or is the value only attributed to the finished object/ outcome? Can/ should this be challenged?

Failure, Technology, and The Body

Catherine Bourne

The theme of failure, whether manifested through the human body in chronic illness or through technological systems such as AI, weaves a complex narrative that prompts examination of the fragility and resilience inherent in both realms. In chronic illness, the body becomes a locus of profound challenges, as it grapples with the failure of physiological systems. The unpredictable nature of chronic conditions introduces an element of uncertainty, where the body's own mechanisms deviate from the expected, or desired, course. This deviation can be metaphorically likened to a technological glitch, disrupting the smooth operation of bodily functions. Chronic illness, in this context, emerges as a narrative of coping with a persistent sense of failure, requiring adaptation, resilience, and a continuous negotiation of identity in the face of physical limitations. Within technological landscapes, failures of AI illustrate a different facet of vulnerability. As artificial intelligence strives to emulate human cognition, the occurrence of errors or unexpected outcomes raises questions about the limits of technological advancement. The intersection of failures in the body and technology becomes a fertile ground for artistic inquiry, offering a platform for creative expression. Art making that traverses these themes can illuminate the shared vulnerabilities, resilience, and potential for growth inherent in the face of failure, fostering a deeper understanding of the intricacies of the human experience in a technologically mediated world. As an artist, I am particularly interested in these failures of AI in the context of bodily representation and how the juxtaposition of these failures with the failures of the/my human body offers a compelling narrative on the inherent uncertainties in both organic and artificial systems. I propose to present an examination of the processes of repetition, renewal, and learning inherent both in my own digital-material art practice, its implications on the nature of experience and temporal speculation, and how technological failure may parallel this fragility, exploring the delicate balance between functionality and breakdown in our technologically mediated world as a theme for artistic inquiry.

Adams Room – Gentle Gestures 2 – Panel 2 - Embodied Spaces of Collective Care, Materialism, and Collaboration

Sojourn Project Space: subordinate labour and feminist gift practice

Assunta Ruocco with Chiara Dellerba, Zak Jones, Ellen Angus, Sumiko Eadon, Alison Lloyd

Sojourn Project Space occupies Assunta Ruocco's small artist studio at Backlit, a Nottingham arts organization. It also occupies the scraps of time that Ruocco can save from her full-time job, which she commits to making art and to the cultivation of friendship. When Ruocco first started renting the studio, artist Chiara Dellerba visited her, and she particularly loved the sliding door, including its internal construction. Dellerba opened her friend's eyes to the studio's potential and flexibility as a space for co-production and display and they started imagining it as a place of sojourn for themselves and others.

The first artist invited to Sojourn, Zak Jones, did not actually spend much time at the space. He came from London at Ruocco's invitation to run a banner making workshop at Lincoln Labour Club for the Lincoln UCU in March 2023. Jones and Ruocco spent a few hours with a group of staff and students planning and pinning a large banner, which was made from secondhand materials and acquired the beautiful colours of the Transgender Pride flag. Ruocco spent many hours sewing the pinned banner together at home so that she could finish it and donate it to Lincoln UCU.

Ellen Angus brought a collapsible plastic tube containing her paintings, oil on canvas copies of Turner's 'The Fighting Temeraire' to the studio. Angus and Ruocco talked and spent time imagining possible ways of installing them, that could connect to nautical materials and romantic attachments. But Angus was also curious about Ruocco's silk scarf making, as she thought silk scarves make good museum souvenirs. They ended up asking another artist to take a photograph of one of the paintings, nailed onto the mdf partition of Sojourn with huge nails. Ruocco got the photograph digitally printed on silk twill and gave it a hand sewn rolled hem. Angus nailed the silk scarf next to the painting. They hosted an unauthorized tea and biscuits afternoon with friends.

Sumiko Eadon taught Ruocco about silence in her sojourn at the studio. Although there was conversation also. Eadon asked her friend to engage in the slow, difficult (for Ruocco) process of cutting tiny slices off a beautiful roll of Japanese paper. It was an enormous task, and they only managed a small section in several sittings. But Ruocco tried to document their efforts with her phone. They had several afternoon sessions in July and August 2023, when the weather was mild and the studio pleasant and light. Eadon also wanted them to work on her artist statement and display strategies together.

Ruocco can't remember if it was Alison Lloyd that proposed she apply her own methodology to her friend's photography archive. Usually, Ruocco asks others to choose images from her archive, but this time, she sat with Lloyd while the artist showed her a box of negatives, she had kept for more than 40 years. Lloyd let Ruocco pick a strip that she was particularly interested in, because you could see the interior of her home and a series of photographic prints from a wedding were on the table. Ruocco scanned the negatives, printed them large at work and exhibited them in the space during the November 2023 Backlit Open Studios.

Inside Sojourn, Ruocco asks the question: what can I do for you? You, being another artist whose practice she is interested in, and a person she would like to spend time with and learn more about. How can she put her skills and resources at the service of their work? How can she activate her practice's methodologies to invest theirs with something new which might please them both? Ruocco uses skills developed in long years working behind the scenes in the art world, and as an artist assistant, in subordinate positions where minimizing one's contribution is a valuable skill, and in a relationship where facilitating her partner's art practice was the foundation of co-dependency. The plasticity of her methodology was forged by those experiences, and she is looking for new ways to employ it.

Sensing the Presentation in Dialogue: A Collective Wor[[]]ding of Non-Visual Culture.

Benjamin Jenner

Objectivity in language is dependent on an unwritten complicity between critical distance and semantic meaning, where the absence of the referent (object/event) is echoed through the overlooked or unheard

material trace of embodied gesture. Further, it is a complicity that is upheld through institutional channels of dissemination, such as academic presentations, whereby the presenter reifies their own authority by referring to objects that are temporally and spatially absent from the room.

Inspired by my own artistic research into the practical implications of embodied blindfolded sense-making on the functionality of critical distance, this performative presentation will demonstrate how those practicalities might disturb those channels of dissemination. In particular, it will explore how intra-action between the various interpretive bodies of the conference space (human and technological) might generatively reorientate the experience of language away from semantic sense (absent objectivities) towards dialogic sense-making (present subjectivities).

To achieve this, the presentation will draw on the fields of telematics, ritual, magic, and ANT. The aim here will not be for the presenter to author new facts about these fields, but rather to explore how participation in the articulation of these fields engenders a collective kind of subjectivity, one whose truth emerges in the space between collaborators.

By attending to the presentation as both a metaphor and enactment of the hierarchies present in writing about experience, I, we, will call on experience as the site for an illuminating, collective reading of the room, as an art work, as an important instance of wor[!]ding non-visual culture.

Flirting with fun-ing: applying a playful and embodied educational approach to a Poetry workshop

Sarah Huxley

Gentle Gestures acknowledges that there is a gap in methodologies and strategies for activating spaces of alternative learning. *Flirting with Fun-ing* will contribute towards this gap by offering a practice paper that outlines how a playful and embodied educational approach (fun-ing) was applied to an online Poetry workshop in order to foreground *qualities of learning experience*, rather than outcomes alone.

Building on my PhD research, [The Relationship Between Fun And Learning: An Online Embodied Ethnography Of Coaches Across Continents](#) this paper will firstly outline what fun-ing is through its five guiding principles, and acknowledge key theoretical and methodological influences. Secondly, it will introduce the Mobile Arts for Peace (MAP) applied arts youth peacebuilding project, and explore how embodied/sensorial research approaches can overlap with culturally situated arts-based approaches through considerations of presence, movement and mediating artefacts.

The paper then will show how one online workshop on using poetry in analysis/ dissemination on the MAP project sought to build upon the Six Guiding Principles, or practical guidance to cultivate fun learning. These consider learning spaces; novel ways of relating; spontaneity; verbal and non-verbal communication; online-offline capabilities; and alternative concepts for measuring learning. They are intended as a generative way of extending beyond the over-emphasis in many educational approaches, on skills acquisition and learning outcomes alone.

Furthermore, this paper explains an approach to poetry that play-works with performative writing (Pollock, 1998) and poetic inquiry (Penwarden and Schoone, 2021) to explore and generate ways of noticing through found poetry (Leavy, 2009) and metaphors to emote and communicate the sensory/more than verbal in the moments of specific lives. Or as embodied theorist Ellingson, celebrates, 'poetic writing is inherently sensual, playful, and immersed in the specific moments of specific lives; the genre itself is a refusal of objectivity' (Ellingson, 2017: 185).

Ultimately, I present an overview of the workshop activities, which guiding principle(s) informed them, and how this practically transfigured. As well as five key reflections:

- applying fun-ing to an online workshop can bring the feeling body (body-mind) back into a learning space;
- applying fun-ing to found poetry as a method of analysis/dissemination of research opens up alterities of knowing;
- this workshop continues to re-define 'seriousness' as authenticity (outlined in my PHD research) in learning processes;
- there are some adaptations that I might make for a future workshop, including moments of collective reading and the sounding of poetry; and

- the Six Guiding Principles have resonance in another research context (to greater/lesser degrees).

Kilpin Room - Mental Health Commons: Fantasy, Utopia & Infrastructure 3 - Figurations of Psychosis (2)

Conversations and Scraps: free clinic experience in a southern Brazilian city

Gustavo da Silva Machado, Dr, Fabiana Wolff Kogi, Isadora Sammi Clausen, Jade da Silveira Fraga, Kleriane Napp Ribas

This paper aims to present the experience of a Free Clinic developed in a professional internship at a southern Brazilian University, located in Florianópolis. Historically, Brazil's inequality plays a significant role in psychic suffering. Despite having a free Unified Health System (SUS) with a Psychosocial Care Network, challenges and gaps are found in its feasibility. This is added by the fact that mental health care is still marked by barriers to socioeconomically disadvantaged groups in Brazil. In this scenario, the clinic, and the psychoanalytical training need adaptations. The project was composed of a group consisting of a supervising professor and five undergraduate students. The activities started with a historical and theoretical incursion on the subject, parting from the experiences of the polyclinics of Berlin and Vienna from 1920. From these experiences, it was realized that a practice of public listening needs, above all, to be consistent with the needs of its time. Thus, we sought inspiration from other similar experiences in Brazil, specifically in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre and built an intervention strategy that intersected three axes: psychoanalysis, memory production and art. We start with a reconstruction approach to the clinical listening device considering its possible applicability in a public space, taking a square as a starting point. Divided into pairs, the students approached people with a triggering question, aiming to start a conversation with people passing through and using the public space. After that, they explained the project proposal and made themselves available to listen freely to the demands presented. At the end, the people who attended to listening sessions were invited to write a phrase or word that marked this clinical meeting in scraps of cloth. Then, as a collective elaboration activity and supervisory work, the words and testimonies on the scraps were read and used to discuss the cases. Later all the scraps were sewn as a patchwork quilt, producing a memorial artifact about the psychoanalytic listening act, which gave the name to the project: Conversations and Scraps. From the ongoing experience, there are some significant questions about the fluidity of the psychoanalytic technique performed in public spaces: (a) transference does not need a "traditional" setting to occur and that can be powerful to visualize paths of elaboration, (b) the collectivization of listening can be a line of escape in the face of the excess of individualization presented by the neoliberal logic, (c) the issue of payment becomes more flexible and new currencies not necessarily monetary are used, including the time spent to talk about oneself. Although in its inception and as a pilot project, the activities conducted by the group bring important reflections on professional training in psychology and, specifically, in psychoanalysis: if the clinic needs to change, what changes are we proposing in training? Currently, we have a patchwork quilt in collective construction with the words that the community has entrusted to us, and, from it, we will continue to use listening as a tool in the search for social justice.

Psychoanalysis and the politics of common.

Aline Rubin, Clarice Paulon and Augusto Coaracy

Despite the continuous criticism on the psychoanalytic clinical work as privatist and serving the elites, the historiography of psychoanalysis in Brazil reveals that since its beginnings it has been articulated to the State and its public politics, both in a more directly articulated way to the social medicine and the hygienist movement; as being more veiled and covered by the supposed analytical neutrality, conducted by some policies of institutionalised psychoanalysis. Over the last decade, the formation of dozens of the so-called "psychoanalytic collectives" in Brazil depicts a continuity in the relations between psychoanalysis and the political-social field in the country, but also some innovations and particularities of this period. Departing

from the historical reflection and the current conjuncture, which brings up the form and the pursuit on the collective, we present the challenge of conceiving the psychoanalysis as a means/as a strategy of occupation of the public sphere. As well as sustaining the material and historical perspective towards the analyst's work, considering the notion of common as ethical reflection and epistemological horizon.

The boom of 'Social Clinics' of psychoanalysis in Brazil from 2017-2022:

Current movements and their discourses

Paula Costa Camarão

From 2011 onwards, with a boom in 2018, we have witnessed in Brazil the growth of numerous groups of psychoanalysts organized spontaneously to attend typically marginalized groups of people (poor people, black people, women who suffer domestic violence, lgbtqi+, amongst others). This grassroots movement draws attention for its expressiveness. Our research so far has mapped 89 'social clinics' formed in the latest years. On the one hand, we understand that the country's political context of dismantling public policies and great social helplessness drives the movement of groups that wish to feel less hostages of the scenario and act more directly on social issues, doing what it would be, under other conditions, role of the State. But the explanation for this type of phenomenon, in the moment we live and when led by psychoanalysts, does not seem to end there.

What we see is that, in addition to an external criticism of the ways in which countless populations have been systematically excluded from government actions that recognize their demands, we also have an internal criticism of the ways in which the right to mental health has been reserved for groups better favored economically and, also, how this conjuncture affected the scientific productions in the field, leading to the production of theories and devices that may not be suitable for certain groups and social contexts. At this point, it is common to witness the call for another psychoanalysis, sometimes referred to as "decolonial", "minor", "deconstructed", "non-(cis)normative", "insurrectional", "feminist", "subversive", "implicated", "non-universal", "queer", "intersectional", "generalist", among others.

We observe, therefore, that initiatives can work on one or more of the following three fronts: 1) trying to mitigate the absence of State action in the face of the most diverse social causes, 2) fighting for the expansion of psychoanalysis to populations that historically have not had access to this type of care or 3) questioning traditional psychoanalytical knowledge and proposing reviews of clinical practice, when directed to the care of socially vulnerable populations.

The volume of groups mobilizing in this direction and the role that many of these groups have assumed as protagonists of a narrative about the contemporary psychoanalytic practice show signs of transformations in the field that deserve attention and strongly call us to reflect on the historical moment of psychoanalysis in Brazil.

In short, how to understand these movements? Can we say that they are a sign of a paradigm shift? To what extent? Would these liberation movements be capable of promoting revolutions in practice? Or would they be more at the service of particular interests?

From the reading of academic publications, the analysis of public discourses, the analysis of content presented in online symposiums, podcasts and open publications and ethnographic studies, we will seek to identify the subjectivity of the investigated movement (Ramirez, 2007), with the purpose of answering these questions.

15:30-16:00 – Break

16:00 – 17:30 – Parallel Session 4

Nz8B Level 2 - Postcolonial and Decolonial Theory and Practice 3 - Postcolonial and Decolonial Theory and Practice 3

Social justice in times of racial saturation

Gaspard Rey

This communication will ask to what extent theorizing some forms of detachment with identity-based readings of political failure opens potential grounds for political organizing. Part of a thesis in the making, it will elaborate this question following its concrete emergence in the analysis of the weight of whiteness on antiracist projects in different European contexts.

Several black feminist critiques of whiteness - understood as a colonial power formation - have outlined how forms of racial fetishism and their lethal effects lived by "subjects marked by racial difference" are getting exacerbated in the global present (Michel, 2016). A present marked by the way social hegemony has been under pressure to adapt to the postpandemic undeniable of structural violence based on race, gender, class, ability and the body. Their analyses depict how a social imaginary organized around white desires to do good, to be good, regarding antiracist agendas for social change contributes to the reiteration of the racial order (Ahmed, 2012; Michel, 2022). In this context, the weight of whiteness on antiracist projects can be found in growing demands for white 'racial literacy' and the ways they often cast the re-traumatizing of non-white subjects as a condition for social change. Indeed, asking subjects marked by racial difference to go through experiences of racial violence again and again becomes the condition of a pedagogical project of white 'antiracist awakenings' taken as a central step for social change (Sharpe, 2016). One consequence to this unsustainable situation has been an atmosphere of pessimism regarding certain possibilities of political solidarities in the struggle against multiple intersecting systems of power (Schmitt, 2023).

Working with concrete examples, this communication will propose a reading of solidarity failure which leaves more space for overdetermination and ambivalence than the pessimistic scenario. Without invalidating the latter, my proposal will ask to what extent an understanding of the reiteration of social violence centered on social energies and desires (and less framed by identity-based analytics) present some relational possibilities of solidarity. Influenced by restorative justice and psychosocial approaches, I will ask how human energies get captured by social infrastructures and (re)oriented towards a strengthening of power hierarchies in the context of capitalist democracy and the neoliberal nation-state. For instance, to work with whiteness helps identify ways the colonial, capitalist and patriarchal order of things actively produces forms of racial fetishism as a promising drive for political 'solidarity'. It thus helps interrogate how subjects are pressured to invest in aggressive forms of (non)sociality and how they ultimately end up investing in race, a lethal system of classification and ordering of the world. Analyzing the weight of whiteness leads to the following questions: to what extent the need to refer to race to target racism has been conflicting with colonial desires to affirm the existence of race? To what extent does whiteness work by posing the reproduction of an authentic version of race as the first step toward a horizon beyond racial domination?

(Re)presenting violence: a critical analysis of the desire to depict 'honour-based violence'

Hasret Cetinkaya

This paper examines the ways in which 'honour-based violence' is portrayed in human rights and media reporting. Depictions of 'honour-based violence' in both United Nations documents and media reporting are regularly detailed and dramatic in nature, deploying a theatrical language which seeks to demonstrate in graphic and visceral terms the harm suffered by victims of patriarchy and traditions of 'honour'. In this presentation, I ask what is signalled to the audience of the texts of the international legal documents and fora when these depictions of 'honour' are so violent and blood-stained. I ask, what forms of violence are implicated in the very act of describing 'honour-related violence' itself? These questions bring us back to fundamental issues of representation, or the impossibility thereof. In turn, I argue that such presentations of

'honour-based violence' (HBV) serve to reinforce and reproduce the suffering of the Muslim female subject, and in so doing, replay a number of colonial tropes and fantasies about the exposure of the violated and non-human or dehumanised body. Against this, I turn to interrogate the role of the perceiver, including the larger international community, and ask about their participation in these scenes of 'honour-based violence'. Is this a location from which the truth of the violence is confirmed or is it rather a position from which we as voyeurs are simultaneously repelled and fascinated by this suffering which cannot be understood through our dominant accounts of human rights violation and theories of subjective or interpersonal violence.

Nz8A Level 2 - Critical Political Epistemology 1

What is epistemic power? Toward a critical political epistemology

Solmu Anttila

Dotson's account of epistemic oppression as exclusion of agents from the production and communication knowledge is firmly established in social, feminist, and political epistemology (Dotson, 2014). One aspect of her account, that exclusion is enabled by a web of epistemic power relations, has seen less uptake. In this paper, I offer an account of what epistemic power conceptually entails. I begin by evaluating Dotson's own brief account of epistemic power as privileged epistemic status. I suggest that while I agree that epistemic power does manifest as privilege and epistemic status, in order to fully capture the normative scope of epistemic oppression, critical epistemologists might want a more expansive notion of epistemic power that is not limited to axes of privilege nor epistemic status

A Functionalist Approach to Ignorance and its Relevance for Critical Political Epistemology

Sonja Riegler

Current theorizing on ignorance in feminist epistemology and critical race studies stresses that ignorance is more than just a gap in knowledge. Rather, these accounts consider ignorance to be a "substantive epistemic practice" that can serve purposes of domination (Alcoff 2007, Mills 1997 & 2007). I am sympathetic towards the aims of substantive-practice accounts (SPA) since they reckon with ignorance's ties to social structures. However, I find existing SPAs insufficient in at least two respects. First, they fail to explain how precisely the practice of ignorance operates on a conceptual and social level. This is problematic since no account of ignorance as a practice is complete unless it captures their different modes of operation. Second, I believe that ignorance serves a multitude of social functions, not all of which are negative or repressive.

In this talk, I seek to address these shortcomings by introducing a "functionalist approach to ignorance". Central to my own account is what I label (1) "Craigian functionalism". In his book *Knowledge and the State of Nature* (Craig 1990), Edward Craig uses a so-called "state-of-nature" scenario to explain why it is useful for an imagined community to introduce precursors of our concept of "knowledge". The guiding idea in Craig is that instead of asking what knowledge is, we should rather ask what the term "knowledge" is for (Craig 1990, Hannon 2019, Kusch & McKenna 2018). I draw inspiration from this project and apply it to ignorance.

The first step of my genealogy of ignorance shows that to ascribe ignorance is not just the opposite of attributing knowledge; it is something more specific of a particular social situation. The second stage of my state-of-nature story introduces a social-developmental layer and asks what happens once social situations become more complex. I discern several specific mechanisms through which ignorance operates as a practice. Additionally, Craigian functionalism sheds light on the multitude of social functions of ignorance, not all of which are negative or repressive.

I submit that my account constitutes an important amendment to existing lines of inquiry on ignorance as a social and political phenomenon. I believe that once we understand ignorance in this reduced, stripped-down setting, it makes it easier to characterize it in more complex scenarios.

Our epistemic dependency on others and that we often rely on dividing up epistemic labour between different actors within and in between different epistemic communities has long been recognised in both social epistemology (Goldberg 2011) and philosophy of science (Kitcher 1990; Bird 2022). However, these divisions of epistemic labour have received relatively little explicit attention in the literature on epistemic injustice and oppression, except for in the scholarship on epistemic exploitation (Berenstain 2016; Toole 2019). This is surprising given that much of the literature on epistemic injustice and oppression is focused on the conditions under which differently situated epistemic agents are able to partake in meaningfully in shared epistemic endeavours with others. In this paper I argue that how different roles and epistemic labour are distributed is an important consideration for scholarship on epistemic injustice and oppression. In this paper I depart from my doctoral research and existing scholarship in social epistemology and philosophy of science to trace how processes that determine the division of epistemic labour within a specific epistemic community, as well as the outcome of these processes can be shaped by, and reproduce, epistemic oppression. I outline a number of cases that illustrate how epistemic oppression can reproduced and reinforced through the division of epistemic labour, as well as the result of such processes. The analysis spans processes in which epistemic labour is divided between epistemic agents, the results of such processes, and examples of how differently situated individuals can resist epistemically oppressive divisions of epistemic labour. Lastly, I conclude the paper by discussing some tentative suggestions for principles that could underlie a division of epistemic labour for ameliorative purposes to address epistemic oppression, as well as their shortcomings. In doing so this paper broadens the existing scholarship on epistemic oppression in and through the division of epistemic labour.

Hooley Room - Productivity or Process: What is the Value of Making 2 – Electronic philosophies and molecular processes

Conceptualising the Process of Philosophy

Andrew Milward

The presentation will involve an overview of two of the presenter's essays, *Content and Operation* (2017) and *Instinct and Intelligence* (2020), to show how the process of philosophy can be the subject matter of philosophical works. The first essay concerns a distinction within thought according to what it thinks (i.e. its content) and what it does (i.e. its operation): its connecting, its fabricating, its reduction and expansion, its joining and separating. In developing this duality, the duality itself creates changes – that is to say operates – within thought itself: it guides us towards the pursuit of philosophical work, not only through the creation of a new content (a new idea, concept, or theory), but also towards the pursuit of operations, i.e. the movements of thought that will allow us to prepare the ground for the creation of new content.

The second essay also discusses the nature of creative thought, where instinct concerns the intuitive formation of ideas that appear as the results of unconscious thought processes, and intelligence concerns our conscious questioning and judging of these ideas. In relation to the first essay, instinct and intelligence are forms of thinking in which operations occur: both connect, fabricate, reduce and expand, join and separate, but the former has its own intuitive, expansive quality, while the latter has its own direct, critical quality. This second essay provides a way to understand how instinct and intelligence combine within creative work, how different approaches to philosophy are possible on the basis of their combined form, and how our understanding of their nature can affect the results we are aiming for.

In these examples of conceptualising the process of philosophy, the process itself has become the content of the work: these essays are, we may say, made of process rather than only being formed through process. This change in approach allows an exploration of the value of process, of what difference an understanding of it can make. It concerns a conceptualisation that allows the structural forms of thought to go beyond their usually implicit nature, bringing them out of their silence and into speech. In making these forms explicit, we are left with an image of thought that can guide us towards making changes within the actualisation of thought's process, a process that can be formed and reformed within the developmental movements that are made according to our creative purposes.

You Should Be Doing It Wrong! Unintended Applied Ontology in (Sound) Art

Anthony Kroytor

Introduction

A thing's capacities for use are in principle endless. A shoe may be used apart from its intended purpose to hammer in a nail, as the evocative subject of a painting, as a means of expressing political disagreement (when thrown), or as a ritual drinking vessel (as when a bridegroom drinks champagne from the bride's shoe in certain cultures). A list of a shoe's potential uses would remain incomplete because of unforeseeable situations—the world does not stand still. It must be admitted that a shoe's uses apart from protecting the feet are mostly fringe cases, sources of amusement, or testaments to ingenuity under pressure. However, the most important capacities of some things were unknown or simply deemed important when they were first made. These capacities would not only then define these things but would—in the cases I wish to examine—open up new possibilities in art, performance, and music. A great deal of modern electronic and experimental music has resulted from the misuse of certain pieces of music-making equipment. The Roland TB-303 has spawned an entire sub-genre of music, traces of which have made their way into mainstream culture because it was not used for its intended purpose, because it was picked up secondhand without its instruction manual, and because it was a commercial failure. If it were good at its intended purpose—imitating an electric bass—and if its operation were less arcane, it may not have ended up cheaply sold in pawnshops. The 303 is good at acid, squelchy bass lines that are easily sonically pushed over the edge, turned into the screams of wild animals. If you are a professional musician who plays by the rules, figuring this out is surprisingly difficult. It takes noodling, meandering and a disregard for, or an ignorance of, using it right. Using a 303 wrong has become right.

Intentions and structure of the lecture/performance

The story of the TB-303 will be presented as a case study of applied ontology—discovering what a thing really is for via a process of play, improvisation, and general messing about. It will begin as a formal academic lecture: I will read a lecture on the subject, illustrating my point with musical examples played on an actual TB-303 synthesiser, which will be set up next to my notes. Throughout the course of the presentation, the music will intensify and take center stage. The lecture will culminate in a musical case in point.

Contemporary Molecular Politics in Creative Processes

Georgia Perkins

In the fields of art activism, social art practice and the political economy of art, contemporary art labour has often used the indiscernibility of the molecular scale as a discursive tool to describe the invisibility of creative processes that are in opposition to 'high art', that regulate artistic production, or expose the precarity of art workers in the period of neoliberal capitalism. This is exemplified through Gregory Sholette's use of the term 'dark matter,' which applies the 'missing mass problem' to the phenomenon of invisible amateur artists, art supplies, and studio work, that keep a few 'successful' artists afloat.¹ By revealing that which remains out of sight through the combined observations into the molecular scale and artistic labour, this uncovers the enforced political obfuscation and exploitation of workers in the artworld. Secondly, the collective Free/Slow University of Warsaw coined the term 'artyzol,' which combines the Polish word for artist 'artysta' with the insecticide 'Muchozol' produced in the Communist era.² Artyzol refers to the addictive substance that is released through 'creative processes,' which regulates the continual productivity of art workers, unlike paid work.³ Whilst Sholette and Kuba Szreder generate 'thought experiments' that bring together the current knowledges and applications of the molecular scale to the conditions of artworld, art practices have also combined artistic 'creative processes' with interventions into material processes in molecular politics.

Since the 1980s, the molecular political landscape has been constituted by scientists, politicians and policy makers involved in direct interventions performed as methods of molecular control, through genetically modified organisms (GMOs), biological warfare, bacteria mopping up oil spills, pharmaceutical production of drugs and designing transgenic animals.⁵ In response to this context, there has been a surgency of 'sci-artists' operating from the field of Bioart and Transgenic Art.⁶ For example, the Tactical Media Collective Critical Art Ensemble (CAE) produced a project Molecular Invasion (2002), which focused on 'reverse engineering' genetically modified organisms (GMOs) of canola, corn and soy seed products.⁷ The project critiqued artistic

demonstrations and representations of research discoveries in genetic engineering and direct applications of scientific practices, by undermining the re-construction of life through capitalist and scientific corporations.⁸ As artists adopted and 'appropriated' scientific processes in and outside of the laboratory setting, CAE questioned the binary between science/expert and artist/amateur, as well as claims over knowledge.

This paper investigates how creative processes in the political economy of art are informed by contemporary molecular politics. It examines both the regulating effect of molecular control that maintains precarity of art labour, as well as the transformative power of molecular resistance by artists to undermine the exploitation in both the cultural and natural landscape. Finally, it considers molecularity as a conceptual and material tool, that reconciles art and scientific disciplines.

Adams Room - Gentle Gestures 3 – Workshop 1

Inspired by 8 Acts of Love, an interactive exhibition

Alice Bell & Carron Little

8 Acts of Love, was an interactive exhibition experience inspired by outofsite_chi artist collective's archive <https://www.outofsitechicago.org/>. This international collective, comprising women, trans, and non-binary artists, have come together through public performance art practices, often generated collaboratively and multimodally, from diverse parts of the globe. United through the transformative practice of performance art and practice-research, the work in this outofsite_chi archive exhibition was devised in consultation with the artists presented.

Carron Little was invited as a Visiting Artist Associate Lecturer for Fall 2023 and proposed to create an exhibition as part of the residency at the University of Lincoln, U.K. In an open generative dialogue with Alice Bell, they created an interactive exhibition that hosted public performance workshops with diverse students from across the college campus. Facilitated interactive walks where students participated in engaging the public in 'gentle gestures' collecting impressions of the city landscape in clay inspired by City Souvenirs created by Liene Bosque and Nicole Seisler in 2012 for outofsite_chi. Students re-enacted Meetings encounters by ieke Trinks and Bernard Roddy in the public space of the University campus in the workshop and at the opening of the exhibition on November 30, 2023. Students explored a diversity of relational ways of being in the workshop thinking about love as artistic encounter. The workshop facilitated non-hierarchical models for collaborative learning where cross-peer groups within the context of the university could build spaces of co-learning.

The exhibition represented a diversity of artists from across the globe who had created public performances in Chicago over the last twelve years. The notion of "queering public space" (Laurence Gervais, 2020) in reference to outofsite_chi's practice-research engages in a radical redistribution of representing queer narratives, racial narratives, feminist narratives in the public realm. The fundamental re-imagining of public space to be inclusive, diverse, and embrace difference is a radical model represented in the space and time of this exhibition. The notion of love as artistic encounter, and how embodied relational practices can shift and reimagine our relation to public spaces facilitated affinities within the workshop and epiphanies for the public engaging in the 'gentle gestures'. Within the context of the exhibition in the institution it offered ways of responding to the site of the city as a relational learning experience. Looking at situated practices being a 'gentle gesture' of co-learning, in being, and as a process to develop practice-based methodologies.

For the Midlands Conference in Critical Thought I can give a performance lecture presentation that engages conference attendees in the concepts of 8 Acts of Love interactive exhibition that expands on the content of the catalogue co-written by Dr Alice Bell and Carron Little. The introductory text explores concepts of liberty in relation to public space. Alternatively, Carron can offer a performance art workshop similar to the one created in the context of the exhibition.

Contextually, outofsite_chi started in Chicago, U.S. in 2011 and now reaches across the world, interconnecting artists through live and mediated performance collaborations. The new situated and relational ecologies that emerge from these activities, connect both artists and publics trans-regionally, in new and productive co-affective dialogues. This year 2023 outofsite_chi developed the Intercity Project sharing simultaneous live experiences between Chicago, USA and Rotterdam, Netherlands, which was live streamed into the Fine Art studios at the University of Lincoln, UK and to LEPARC Research Center at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada.

About Out of Site Chicago (OoS) creates unexpected encounters in outdoor public places and has been producing a public performance art festival in Chicago since 2011. OoS has developed a methodology of working in public spaces that supports diverse ideas and representations of cutting-edge artistic practice. We are committed to a practice of social engagement with diverse publics. In 2020 Out of Site pivoted into an international network and platform engaging in bi-weekly meetings as a collective to decide on our programming. Since we've developed four strands to our current programming to support our artist community. The first is supporting artists to create public performance art in public contexts. Secondly, we organize Flow • embody in site, a public performance symposium. Thirdly, we invite artists to engage in a conversation about their work and practice in the Spring and Fall as part of the Artist Focus live broadcast program. Lastly, we facilitate practice-based workshops in public performance art practices. We've partnered with numerous organizations over the last twelve years and just completed the Intercity project in collaboration with WORM Rotterdam Experimental Sound Studio, Hyde Park Art Center, and Chicago Park District, LePARC Research Center at Concordia University, Ohio University School of Art and Design and University of Lincoln, U.K. and supported by Mondrian Foundation and the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund in September 2023. To view our archive and learn about current projects please visit our website: outofsitechicago.org

Kilpin Room - Mental Health Commons: Fantasy, Utopia & Infrastructure 4 - Reimagining Psychoanalytic Listening and the Commons

The Psychoanalytic Treatment of Psychosis: Towards a Psychosocial Ethnography and a Clinical Anthropology.

Alexander Miller

Since 1982, a psychoanalytic treatment of psychosis has been developed and refined in Quebec City at a center commonly known as "the 388." With over 600 "users" having completed treatment, the 388's results have been lauded by government commissioned reviews at the same time as it has faced consistent threats of closure due to its heterogeneous status with respect to mainstream approaches to mental illness and health. Those involved have not only developed an innovative community-based treatment but also an original psychoanalytic metapsychology that guides every dimension of this treatment, which is focused on but not limited to individual talk therapy. This Center thus offers a unique site for a psychosocial ethnography, for an interrogation of the status of psychoanalysis, its social applications, and the resistances it meets in the twenty-first century, and even more broadly, for a consideration of the relation of contemporary Western societies to psychosis, at the levels of research, treatment, and beyond.

It's a long-known fact that clinical outcomes are considerably better for persons diagnosed with psychosis in so-called developing countries than for those diagnosed in the West. Today, we can add that data suggest the prevalence of psychosis is higher in the West, while qualitative studies show the experience is more caustic. Anthropological study, as well as the common clinical experience of many, suggests that normative psychiatric practices as well psychiatric conceptions of mental illness contribute to these remarkable disparities. The same discourses and practices thought to produce these iatrogenic effects, meanwhile, have been those that have threatened the 388's right to operate, while also serving to contest or to minimize a priori the validity of any claim to success such a treatment can make. In this presentation, I will offer an overview of ongoing research into the 388 (a.k.a. the Center for the Psychoanalytic Treatment of Young Adult Psychotics), focusing on a series of questions that emerge in the effort to situate this center in relation to shifting paradigms for both research and treatment of psychosis.

The 388 offers a singular example of community-based recovery-oriented approaches to psychosis developed in recent years. In many cases, such approaches can be understood as having sought to produce the sorts of conditions that cross-cultural study has identified as facilitating recovery in non-Western settings. How does a center such as the 388 create a microculture that facilitates recovery, and how must the creation of such conditions be understood to emerge from and to exist in constant tension with more predominant discourses, practices, and cultural attitudes towards mental illness and mental health in the West? What light can the psychoanalytic perspectives developed in concert with the progressive refinement of this treatment shed on the iatrogenic effects of psychiatric approaches, for example, to diagnosis? To what extent can the successes of such a treatment be measured, in terms of "objective" and/or "subjective recovery", how can the lessons of this treatment contribute to the development of the Recovery Model, and in what ways does such a model challenge the notion of measure central to the epistemology of psychiatric research?

In Defense of Psychosis.

Kendra Terry

This paper calls into question our weaponized desire, our dehumanization, and our fascist tendency to pathologize at the expense of trying to better understand—our patients, our taxonomies of madness, and the human mind more broadly. *In Defense of Psychosis* draws a geometrical comparison between the psychical movement of madness and the movement that takes place at Anne Carson's "edge" in her discussion of Eros. Both involve a coming up against the edge, a reaching across this edge into the unknown and it is there where we find the limits of our selves. Psychosis is considered as having generative potential instead of being pathologically determined. Pathology is explored further with curiosity as opposed to examination, and the approach that is emphasized is one that is empowering instead of ostracizing with respect to understanding patients. The presenter aims to re-imagine the constructive aspects of personality that present in tandem with psychopathology; instead of being hegemonic, our practice can lead to insight and generative understanding of the individual and the workings of the mind itself. Psychosis revolves around Carson's edge at which "the soul parts on itself in desire [and] is conceived as a dilemma of body and senses." The psychotic individual reaches across this edge where breath breaches the boundary that separates internal from external, self from other, and temporarily exists in the space where metaphor conjoins the two in hallucination. Psychosis is the attempt to find a solution to the unsolvable problem of our existence. Of language, of perception, of desire, of the mind and of the self, of the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and of the Real. It sits out at the farther edges, where things get strange, strange when the limits of our perception get mixed up and truth becomes a proxy for God.

Jung's Approach to Psychosis – A Relevant Model for the Present Day

Andrew Howe

Schizophrenia and other psychotic illnesses have an incidence of 15.7 to 69.4 per 100 000 people aged 16-64 years in England. They are seen as debilitating and chronic illnesses. Further, the hallucinations and delusions characteristic of the conditions are classified as symptoms and nothing more. As per national guidance, treatment primarily uses antipsychotic medication. Analytic formulation and contribution to the treatment of psychotic disorders have little application in modern psychiatry. The medical model, largely based on psychopharmacology and biological conceptualisation of illness, particularly dominates the treatment of psychosis. This a detriment to those that experience psychotic states.

Jung spent his early working years devoted to patients with psychosis at the Burgholzli Hospital in Zurich. He suggested a depth psychology approach to theory and considered treatment is possible, supported by using creative arts and other novel, individualised treatments. Moreover, he suggested there was a great creative potential within the symptoms of psychosis that could help patients develop and learn about themselves. This novel idea could do much to alter modern perceptions of the condition.

I intend to present a summary of Jung's work and post-Jungian contributions to understanding and treating psychotic presentations. I follow with anonymised clinical examples from my personal experience across inpatient wards and the community. The positives and negatives of this approach will be discussed as well as

the difficulties in implementing these approaches. To end, I discuss potential future approaches and consider barriers to these.

17:30 – Drinks Reception (Level 2 Foyer)

Sponsored by the Centre for Policy, Citizenship and Society

Saturday 6th April

(Please note you can find a programme overview at the end of this document)

9:00-9:30 – Registration (Level 2 Foyer)

9:30 – 11:00 - Parallel Sessions 5

N27A Level 2 - Co-production in Research – The Emperor’s New Clothes? 1

Scrutinising the “trendiness” of co-produced research – a zemiological approach

Marit Hiemstra and Christopher R. Matthews

The language associated with ‘co-production’ – that is, research which is produced, or claimed to have been produced, in various ways with groups, communities and individuals has become popular within the funding, design and delivery of contemporary social research. While there are key elements in this turn towards co-production which are valuable political and academic projects, scholars have observed that co-produced research has become ‘trendy’, because funding bodies increasingly stipulate ‘co-production’ due to funding bodies increasingly requiring ‘co-production’ as a precondition for research funding (Masterson et al., 2022). This has led, as various scholars argue, to researchers adopting co-produced strategies in their plans or research processes in unconsidered, unfounded and unfaithful ways for the sake of securing funding. The study of social harm, known as zemiology, offers a valuable framework to scrutinise this phenomenon. Considering this process, wherein various scholars argue that the term and approach of ‘co-production’ are becoming ‘a mere trend’ (Masterson et al., 2022), ‘a buzzword’ (Smith et al., 2023) or ‘a game of pretend’ (Kirkegaard and Andersen, 2018), a zemiological lens gains insights into the structural aspects of ‘the academy’, where scholars may feel compelled or contractually obligated to seek research funding. With the increasing trendiness of ‘co-production’ and its problematic and uncritical application, researchers risk using the term tokenistically, potentially causing harm or appropriating community resources and jeopardising future efforts for genuine participatory research.

As a way to undermine this process, we reconsider how we were drawn to design and deliver co-produced research. This reconsideration stems from our emotional connection to the individuals, communities, and subjects we investigate. These personal accounts offer axiological insight into how we are led to value the core principles of co-production, maintain such an ethos in our work, and in so doing, work to avoid the tokenistic use and abuse of such methodological approaches. We urge our colleagues to centralise their emotional experiences as key features of the important scientific work they undertake in collaboration with individuals, groups, and communities.

Is Co-production possible in Ph.D.’s? Some reflections on a Col(l)abatory approach

Dee Yeagers

There has been a largely uncritical promotion of boxing (Matthews et al, 2022) and sport more broadly, (Coakley, 2015; Coalter, 2010; Levermore, 2008), regarding its power to incite positive change in terms of social development. A particular claim with regards to boxing is its use as a ‘hook’ to engage hard to reach individuals (Jump, 2020; Matthews et al, 2022). However, research in this area fails to capture the views and experiences of those members of community who become disengaged or who never engage at all. Given this there is much

scope for a community engaging and engaged approach, which aligned with key premises from 'co-production'. In this talk, I'll reflect on the first year of delivering such work via the Co(l) lab project. This Universities for Nottingham project was designed with the aim of co-producing research in partnership with local community groups. Done properly this means that research is completed "with" participants and not "done to" participants, thus aiming to generate data that can be used to further refine the programs offered to young service users. But Incorporating co-production into Ph.D. studies presents various challenges. For example, whilst it is possible to involve others in some stages of the project such as identifying research questions, co-delivery of activities or dissemination of findings, the nature of a Ph.D. requires the work to be produced by the post graduate researcher and as such a Ph.D. cannot be truly co-produced. In this talk I'll explore the complexities of utilising co-production in this way. If academia is to continue to give communities a voice in research then it is essential to address these challenges to ensure the quality and effectiveness of co-produced research for all involved.

Coproduction in Healthcare for People with Learning Disabilities

Bojana Daw Srdanović, Daniel Goodley & Nikita Hayden

Currently, co-production appears as a buzz word in academia. Its increasing application has, however, done little to aid clarity around what exactly co-production is. While some conceptual ambiguity is a valuable aspect of any evolving practice, we are troubled by the term co-production being routinely used as a shorthand for any research involving 'the public'. In the context of health research, where our research project is located, co-production is at times conflated with patient and public involvement and engagement (PPI/E). Such conflation projects as co-produced research that is broadly led by academics. This, in turn, creates the risk of much 'co-produced' research failing to interrogate and challenge dominant power relations, despite this being one significant aspect of co-production.

We are a team of researchers with and without learning disabilities, working on Humanising Healthcare for People with Learning Disabilities, a project that seeks to document and describe affirmative healthcare practices delivered to patients thus labelled. The original research application for this project was collaboratively written with researchers with learning disabilities who have many years experience of conducting research as members of self-advocacy groups and, in one case, a workers' cooperative. These researchers continue to be involved in, and oversee, the research project in two ways. First, they are part of the executive team, a research management group that is focused on developing inclusive models of co-produced research leadership. Second, researchers with learning disabilities contribute to the research through co-production workshops organised around the themes of theory, method, analysis and impact. The research data is collected by two research associates who will be engaging in ethnographic observation of healthcare encounters and conducting narrative interviews with participants who are NHS patients with learning disabilities and their significant others, including family members, friends and carers.

In this paper we will address some of the challenges we encounter in this process. First, we are troubled by the tendency to describe researchers with learning disabilities as experts by experience. We resist such structuring into expert researchers, i.e. academics, and experts by experience, i.e. researchers with learning disabilities, especially given that it is underpinned by inequitable access to higher education. Furthermore, as much research produced by researchers with learning disabilities sits in the category of 'grey literature', we question the ways in which the valorisation of peer reviewed papers contributes to the erasure of people with learning disabilities as researcher experts. Lastly, we challenge the notion that researchers with learning disabilities must perform the same tasks as academic researchers, if they are to be accepted as more than experts by experience.

In lieu of a definitive answer to these questions, we suggest that the term co-production precisely foregrounds a research collective where it is neither possible, nor useful, to pursue performative equality. Instead, such collectives can remain aware of members' varied areas of expertise while being committed to privileging and advocating the views and perspectives of researchers with learning disabilities

Nz8A Level 2 - Critical Political Epistemology 2

Climate change discourses in Central Asia: power dynamics in the vulnerable states

Alina Bychkova

Climate change, despite its physical character, is a politically charged issue. The present paper looks at how the environmental crisis comes as an ideological means to exert power in Central Asia, the region, where high vulnerability coincides with fossil fuel economy and authoritarian governance. To date, the studies looking at the political aspects of climate are geographically limited, while looking beyond the Western context is crucial to advance understanding of the relationship between power, knowledge and the environment (Leipold et al 2019).

The present research project is a comparative study of the three countries, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Comprised of extensive analysis of media, official documents and expert interviews, it argues that an ideological aspect is crucial in making sense of the climate change policies in the region. Being interested in the role of power in climate change knowledge production, it departs from Foucauldian (1975) thought and applies Carvalho's (2008) iteration of Critical Discourse Analysis with its focus on the social processes 'outside' the topic, in particular, historical context.

The study finds that besides economic and global political interests known to govern climate politics across the world (Leipold et al 2019), Central Asian states approach climate change as means to strengthen national identity and to facilitate popular support to the political leaders. It also finds that the shared historical past of the post-Soviet states is still sound in the current responses to the climate crisis. Understanding the ideological and historical aspects of the discourses in Central Asia is helpful to advance domestic climate policies and to address regional conflicts, which arise from identity concerns and a scarce of natural resources (Costa Buranelli 2023).

Benjamin's "Political Characterology" as a critical reading of the Conservative Revolution

Mag.a Irene Salzmann

Ideology critique is a response to crisis-ridden modernity. Today the "New Right" is republishing authors of the "Conservative Revolution" (CR). The significance of the CR in the history of ideas is emphasized by the New Right itself. But the CR is also relevant beyond the New Right. In addition to the Identitarian "frontman" Martin Sellner, conservative politicians, such as the CSU politician Markus Söder, quote the conservative revolutionaries as well as the philosophers Alexander Dugin and Jordan Peterson. The CR is particularly compatible because it places certain "characters" at the center of its philosophy. These archetypal characters are complex and dangerous at the same time. Complex, because they address real social and political phenomena. Dangerous, because they distort reality ideologically and do not conceptually catch up with these phenomena. How can we react to these resurgent ideological figures of thought?

I propose to develop a "political characterology" based on Walter Benjamin especially in his Arcades Project (1982). Although Benjamin does not use the term "political characterology" (pC) himself, I find it particularly appropriate for his project. He develops characters as an analytical tool to criticize capitalist society at the beginning of the 20th century and at the same time responds ironically to a popular topic in the philosophy of his time: characterology. Benjamin's figures are suitable for tying the CR figures back historically and politically. What they have in common is the criticism of the capitalist-bourgeois-democratic ideology of the Weimar Republic, even if this criticism is very different. While the CR primarily attacks institutions and programs without going back to the underlying economic and production form, Benjamin's criticism is more fundamental: he is concerned with understanding how capitalism inscribes itself in bodies and produces certain bodies.

In my lecture I will first reconstruct what Benjamin's pC looks like. Benjamin was influenced by the portrait photographs of August Sanders and develops a characterology in contrast to Ludwig Klages. While Klages ontologizes the political, Benjamin politicizes the ontological. I am developing a pC against the background of

Benjamin's historical-philosophical theses and his essay on art in times of reproduction. Secondly, the pC gives me the means to analyze other political characters. In my lecture I will use the pC as an example on Ludwig Klages' character of Hysteriker. Benjamin's character of Flaneur will give me a new perspective to expose the pathology of the Hysteriker and thus catch up on political reflection.

Hooley Room - Productivity or Process: What is the Value of Making 3 - Manifesting processes

Anti-Manifesto – for successful self-doubting in art.

Melina Steiner

In response to the theme of your stream, "Productivity or Process: What is the value in making?," I, Melina, a visual artist from Austria with a deep passion for abstract painting, present an exploration of the delicate balance between productivity and process within the arts but also in daily life. This derives from questions and struggles that have personally come up in my life and my artistic work the last years which is built upon my Thesis titled Anti-Manifesto – for successful self-doubting in art.

Rules are proverbially made to be broken. But what about in painting? As a painter, am I bound by certain rules? Or are rules imposed on me by others? How do my self-doubts get in the way? These questions have occupied me over the past months and years. The result is a small artist's book that reads like an abstract diary and artist's manifesto. In the book, not only do my self-doubts as an artist find expression, but I also confront statements that repeatedly appear as external artist mantras and influence me. The idea that artists have to do so much seemed paradoxical to me in the face of the so-called freedom in art, so I wanted to make some of these statements/rules visible and reflect them back.

As an artist, I am often confronted with self-doubts and expectations—not only from myself but also from others. Ultimately, one often gets in one's own way and must learn to occasionally free oneself from self-doubt and question expectations so that one's own creative process can flow again, and new things can emerge.

Creative blocks are part of the process. But how can I possibly transform these doubts and dissolve blocks so that energy becomes available for creative work?

In this presentation, my goal is to delve into the layers of the artist's inner thoughts, navigating the struggles of self-doubt and external pressures. Together, let's explore the delicate balance required to break free from these doubts and cultivate an environment where creativity can thrive. I will share personal stories and reflections from my artistic journey, with the hope of contributing to the broader conversation about how embracing uncertainty can be an advantage in the creative process.

Throughout the presentation, I would like to welcome everyone to participate. Drawing inspiration from the themes in my thesis, I invite the audience to share their own experiences with self-doubt. Together, let's collaboratively craft some mini "Anti-Manifestos"!

A Shared Wooliness: Unearthing and propagating post-growth economic models through the Process of making with wool.

Grace Jackson

This paper looks at the process of making together with wool, and how this process can be a helpful tool to support personal reflection about habits of consumption. Internationally, research shows that consumers consider the negative socio-economic and environmental impacts of fashion and textiles to be issues of great importance (KPMG 2019). However, those same consumers believe that ethically produced fashion and textiles are inaccessible and too expensive (KPMG 2019). We continue to produce and purchase clothing at faster rates and keep our textiles for half as long, leading to more waste and allowing for unethical labour standards to proliferate (Remy, Speelman, Swartz 2016). However, accessible strategies for ethical design (Thackara 2015), and non-extractive fashion (Fletcher 2016) exist and are being practiced globally. This paper sits at the centre

of this reality with a goal of connecting those 'consumers' to the sustainable and non-extractive fashion they seek through the process of making.

The process of making with wool provides space to consider our garments, how they are made and by whom, as well as their materials and where they come from. This paper will investigate wool communities to unearth the non-extractive labour strategies and post-growth economies that thrive within them. These wool communities employ non-hierarchical structures, practice resourcefulness, and use production strategies nurture labourers and materials (Thanhauser 2022). They centre ethical labour standards and sustainable wool production, and de-prioritise growth and capital. In building their own systems of exchange, these communities have developed the post-growth economic structures that provide the basis of this research. This paper will act as the first step in a long-term research project in which I will collaborate with wool communities to develop a series of workshops where participants will experiment with wool crafts, share knowledge, and reflect on labour and consumption through the process of making. I argue that the process of making together with wool will allow for deeper consideration of consumption habits and create new ways of relating to our garments, and their manufacture, use, and disposal. It is the process, rather than the outcome, that allows us to reflect, learn, and think for ourselves. Process is an abundant ground from which to cultivate curiosity and understanding.

Is the creative process valued, or is the value only attributed to the finished object/ outcome

Oliver Cloke

This session endeavours to delve into the inherent value of the creative process by elucidating and physically creating artworks. To challenge the predominant emphasis on outcomes. The presentation aims to establish a connection between artistic creativity and productivity, bridging the gap between the two.

This experiment has the potential to challenge conventional notions of artistic creation and foster a deeper understanding of the creative process. By engaging participants in a participatory and experimental setting, where participants contribute to the evolving dialogue surrounding the value of the creative process in contemporary art. As a drawing instructor, the presenter's role is pivotal in creating a conducive environment for exploration. Encourage open dialogue and be prepared to facilitate discussions that arise from participants' experiences. By engaging participants in a structured yet experimental drawing activity, challenging the traditional role of the artist. The emphasis on process and participation challenges the idea of the artist as a solitary genius, opening up the creation of art to a collective and dynamic experience.

The value of the creative process versus the finished object/outcome is subjective and can vary among individuals and within different artistic contexts. Traditional perspectives often place more emphasis on the final result, considering the artwork as the ultimate expression of the artist's vision. However, contemporary art discourse increasingly recognises the significance of the creative process itself, acknowledging that it can be a source of innovation, exploration, and personal growth.

Challenging the emphasis on the finished product is a valid and valuable pursuit. Many contemporary artists and art movements actively challenge established norms, placing importance on the experiential aspects of creation. Highlighting the creative process can open up new possibilities for understanding and appreciating art. Participatory drawing projects contribute to this discourse by putting the process at the forefront. This experiment, with its focus on repetition, process, and performance, encourages participants to confront and reflect on their creative habits and the impact of constraints (like time limits and randomised methodologies). The fixed time limit of 90 seconds adds an element of urgency, potentially pushing participants out of their comfort zones and promoting spontaneous, unfiltered expression.

Encouraging participants to explore both similarities and differences in their drawings is a powerful way to highlight individual interpretation and the influence of process on artistic output. This can lead to insightful reflections on personal creative tendencies and the impact of external factors on the creative process. Exploring the effects of repetition and habituation on artistic output adds another layer to your investigation. This can prompt discussions about the role of routine, muscle memory, and learned behaviours in the creative process.

Adams Room – Gentle Gestures 4 – Panel 3 - Listening, Confusing, Upsetting as Performative and Disruptive Acts in Higher Education

Navigating Creative Ecologies: HE-Based Arts Providers' Role in Gentle Transitions

Burcu Güney Yılmaz

This proposal aims to unpack the unique positioning of Higher Education (HE)-based Arts Providers as dynamic intersections of teaching, learning, research, and practice within cultural ecosystems. It seeks to provoke speculation on their potential contribution to cultivating a collective culture of care and collaboration among creatives, challenging the prevalent understanding of artistic practice, which often celebrates solitude and individuality. HE-based arts providers have the opportunity to serve as 'safety nets' by providing a gentle transition between creative industries and academia. This is possible by adopting a more relational, co-emergent approach to creative ecologies, challenging the traditional, two-dimensional hierarchical structure.

The round table discussion will be initiated by a presentation from Burcu Güney Yılmaz, sharing the current progress of two HE-based Arts Providers within the University of Lincoln: Lincoln Arts Centre and the Barbican Creative Hub. By exploring the programmes, initiatives, and collaboration models these two organisations have launched and developed so far, participants will be invited to speculate on the potential of these learning and practice sites to influence a transformed collective culture of creative arts education and practice.

The key questions for this discussion will centre on how these organisations can support artists navigating a precarious position by providing a safe space to navigate academic evaluation criteria and industry expectations, negotiate the delicate balance between authenticity and demand, and build flexibility and resilience within their practice. Additionally, how their contribution can help minimise talent leakage from the sector and artistic burnout, thus fostering sustained multi-directional growth and development in the creative industries.

By integrating these research points into the narrative, this proposal aims to inspire a robust dialogue on the transformative impact of HE-based Arts Providers, positioning them as crucial contributors to a reshaped collective culture of creative arts education and practice.

Holding the line and then crossing it

Emily Orley, Katja Hilevaara, Susannah Henry, Jo Chard, Gilly Roche

We propose a performance-paper in 5 voices that will gently challenge how power is held in higher education arts institutions. Playfully exploring with the metaphor of the line, and using string telephones, we will stage a 5-way conversation, made up of speculative questions and silences. We will consider what a radically gentle learning environment might look like, all the time interrogating the real connotations of the word 'gentle', and how it might sit alongside terms like discomfort, tradition, privilege and opacity. How can listening happen in a way that matters? Drawing on thinking about response-ability (Haraway 2008, 2016, Stengers 2014), care (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017, Baan Hofman 2023), complaints (Ahmed 2021), engaged pedagogy (hooks 2003), and the current social justice work of Tema Okun, as well as our own institutional experiences, we will offer fabulations of alternative spaces for art-making, sharing and educating. How might a Higher Education Institution which prioritises listening, slow work and transparency fit within today's society? More importantly, how might educators and learners, communities and publics, who experience being listened to and who have been allowed to co-imagine their futures, then begin to shape and reconfigure society more broadly?

Confusion as Gesture: A lecture performance exploring the confusion's disruptive potential in the managed University

Joe O'Brien

As a result of increasing global shifts and political uncertainty, universities have joined other public institutions in deploying strategies for “future-proofing”. These strategies generally demand efficient, easily readable subjects in order to streamline value extraction – especially with regard to labour, identity, and prestige (Stokas, 2023; Brown, 2015; Newfield et.al., 2022). However, prioritising readability and efficiency flattens the complexities of labour and subjectivity, producing extractive and exploitative institutional-individual relationships (Bosquet, 2004; Harney and Moten, 2013). Against this paradigm, this lecture performance will draw on discourse analysis and my own practice-based research to explore how confusion – as an affective and embodied experience – might function as a disruptive gesture in response to institutional demands for legibility. Where confusion is often thought of as the limits of understanding, this lecture performance will work to contextualise it as an affective and embodied phenomena that frustrates the desire for easy readability. In contextualising this understanding of confusion as a one disruptive gesture among others, the lecture performance will look at the work of Édouard Glissant, Jack Halberstam, and Tina Campt.

The lecture performance itself will begin with a short exercise to invoke a sense of slowness and spaciousness – in contrast to the usual senses of urgency and scarcity that pervade academia. The exercise will invite attendees to locate themselves within their bodies, and in relation to each other, as a starting point from which to consider confusion. From here the lecture performance will use images, text, and video – displayed across two channels – as well as lecture narration to weave together threads of thought from Glissant, Halberstam, Campt, and my ongoing work on confusion. Through close readings and expository narration, the lecture performance will engage Glissant’s establishment of an ethical right to opacity in the face of totalizing colonial logic (2010); Halberstam’s work on willful failure as a form of critique that escapes cisheteronormative capture (2011); and Campt’s opening up of the creative potential of negation through forms of Black refusal as response to white supremacist systems (2018).

Alongside these works, the lecture performance will introduce confusion as another potential form of disruption. It will specifically explore the ways in which confusion can function as a form of disruption which does not risk the same reprisals (from institutional mechanisms) that refusal, failure, or true opacity might. Through both discursive and performative engagement, the lecture performance will aim to show that as confusion becomes a disruptive form of feeling and being, it also gestures toward the potential of radical forms of relationality that prioritise people and their needs. Here the dual discursive/performative function of the lecture performance will also allow for a final turn (Rainer, 2017). This final turn towards the ways in which confusion calls to other possible now’s – now’s beyond the reach of extractive efficiencies and now’s that are rooted in body and need – will also be a return to the opening exercise that grounded the session and the attendees in their own bodies and relationships

Kilpin Room - Mental Health Commons: Fantasy, Utopia & Infrastructure 5 - Economies of Affect and Collective Mourning

Alone Together: A Brief Inquiry into Political Economy of Affect and Emotion

Rifki Akbar Pratama

The tales about peasant resistance in social sciences are frequently epitomized in the form of aggregate, in the name of collectivities or communities. Under the same framework, various decisions tightly bound with desperation are only recognized as individual experiences. Consequently, feelings and experiences are explained away and perceived as the quintessential personal predicament. This individuation subtly escapes attention because it prevails under the disguise of collective forms, such as households or neighbourhood associations. Secretly, the infrastructure of care in the communities becomes an uncharted region, insinuating the fundamental problem of romanticizing any peasant movement. Epistemological violence tied in analysis and academic texts, which share the same logic, was prone to reproduce the same problem negligently. Therefore, resistance is constantly haunted by the idea of planned obsolescence and the vague vision of defeat. To eschew these traps, I will anchor to Denise Ferreira da Silva’s notion of affectability—to show the use and abuse of feelings in the midst of peasant resistance. In this paper, I will trace my empirical research on the peasant movement (Pratama, 2020) as a starting point for discussion and problematization. This paper will also

explore what is valorized but not valued (Dowling, 2016) that lurks and creates an uneven distribution of pain in the heart of the resistance. How the feminization of care work presents problems yet holds an answer for the different temporalities of action the movement needs to face will also be taken into account. Hence, the endeavour explored in this presentation could share some trajectory echoed by Subcomandante Galeano, "one that transforms pain into rage, rage into rebellion, and rebellion into tomorrow."

Considerations on the Popular Teaching of Psychoanalysis

Luíza Girolamo Canato Magro

This abstract aims to present fragment of an ongoing doctoral research that seeks to understand the contributions of the Freirean legacy to the process of teaching and learning in a critical-liberating psychoanalytic listening context. The work is grounded in Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968) and studies on psychoanalytic theory (Bicudo, 2019, Dunker, 2020, Ferenczi, 1990; 1992, Figueiredo, 1994; 1996; 2003, Freud, 1912; 1914; 1916-1917; 1937, Gaztambide, 2019, Nobus 2022; 2023, Pellegrino; 2006, Soreanu, 2018; 2023), among others. The research is methodologically developed through a qualitative research-training approach, offering a free course on psychoanalytic listening to contextualize and redefine the learning and the very meaning of listening in a critical-liberating perspective. This course, named "SER MAIS" - Popular Workshop of Psychoanalytic Listening," is distinctive in that it integrates activities in the realms of Teaching and Research. The interventions are rooted in an epistemological field that draws from the legacy of psychoanalysts like Sigmund Freud, Sandor Ferenczi, Donald W. Winnicott, Helio Pellegrino, and contemporary thinkers, as well as the pedagogical contributions of Paulo Freire and bell hooks, as well as philosophers and sociologists such as Karl Marx, Paul Preciado, Franz Fanon, Lélia González, among others. These authors help us guide this ongoing problematizing educational process. Therefore, this is an interdisciplinary proposal aimed at contextualizing the development of educational practices that create spaces for listening. Finally, for the Midlands Conference in Critical Thought, we intend to present an analysis of some experiences within the SER MAIS, emphasizing the importance of creating a welcoming environment guided by listening and empathy for an affective experience, essential for the educator-learner relationship and the collective production of knowledge, to help us to reflect on questions and themes such as the following:

- Limits and potentials of contemporary academic psychoanalysis teaching; • Community work; engaged and participatory research;
- Social psychoanalytic approach;
- Decolonial thinking practices;
- Social engaged practices, ethics of collaboration and learning; • Non-hierarchical approaches to knowledge exchange;

11:00-11:30 – Break

11:30 – 13:00 – Parallel Sessions 6

N28B Level 2 - Apocalypse, crisis, and constructing our endings

Aloof and flooded: Marie Redonnet's girl-places and their watery end

Maria Gil Ulldemolins

The swamp smell invades the garden of the Splendid Hotel.

Mountains are reflected on the surface of the reservoir where Forever Valley used to be.

And in the Markers Street in Ôat there are no houses left, having all been carried away in a flood.

In Marie Redonnet's triptych of fictional novels, composed of *Hôtel Splendid* (1986), *Forever Valley* (1986), and *Rose Mellie Rose* (1987) (all translations by Jordan Stump, 1994), the apocalypse does not come at once: it happens every day. And it most often is embodied by water. As the waterline comes closer and closer, or rises higher and higher, the protagonists of these stories (most often teenage girls) grow not only resigned, but busy.

Their monotone inner monologues chug along, and they carry on with their daily tasks: plunging, digging, clerking. There is always something to do, even as the worlds they inhabit change unrecognizably. Others move away, die, adapt, but Redonnet's protagonists develop complex, parous relationships with their sites, and simply plough on - heroic, foolish, or possibly both.

This creative-critical paper will study Redonnet's triptych as an alternative to the understandable and common dramatic associations with apocalyptic scenes. By following and juxtaposing these girl-places and their toils, we can learn more about the relationship between impassibility and the apocalypse. Can the apocalypse ever be normalised? What does it mean to maintain a sense of normalcy when the world around us is changing radically? Can one's normalcy and others' distress ever be reconciled? If Žižec proposes that an event does not occur "within" the world, but in our perception, what do these character's dispassionate behaviour say about the apocalyptic event and experience?

From Daytime Remnants to the Remnants of History: An Analysis of the Dreams of the Covid-19 Pandemic
Jaquelyne Rosatto Melo and Ivan Estevão Ramos

The dreams collected by Brazilian researchers during the year 2020 expose the sociocultural reality of those who experienced the COVID-19 pandemic and were subjectively marked by its effects. These dreams, to some extent, tell a story that is often left untold – the remnants of history, as Walter Benjamin argued, the history against the grain.

This work is the result of an ongoing doctoral research project at the University of São Paulo in the Clinical Psychology program. It seeks to integrate the psychoanalytic method of dream interpretation with historical and structural concepts, aiming to construct a historical narrative of the COVID-19 pandemic and its social and subjective effects based on over a thousand dreams collected by a group of researchers during the years 2020 and 2021.

The premise is that there is something structural in dreams, but also something in service to history, changing over time and revealing in its content the anxieties of its era. Thus, it becomes possible to build a historical narrative from an unconscious manifestation – in this case, dreams. We are studying the effects on history in the unconscious and, consequently, on the mental health of an era.

There is an undeniable radicality in Freudian formulations that relate to this issue – namely, that all reality is ultimately psychic, and all psychology is social. This logic cuts across the separation between "individual" and "collective," leading psychoanalysis to traverse the disciplines that sustain this separation and founding the research method used in this work. It utilizes the individual productions of the subject, dreams, to contemplate the social bond and the dialectical movement that unites them.

Dreams have proven to be a rich source of information about the effects of the pandemic, not only on the individual level, as might be supposed, but also on what occurred in the social sphere. We observe news and significant historical events replicated by various dreamers on similar dates, indicating that the communal experience strongly manifested in the dream life of individuals. Thus, by proposing a historical narrative based on dreams, we seek to shed light on the harrowing period experienced by Brazilians in 2020 and its mental health effects.

If words are the possibility of recounting a dream and thus bringing something into existence, this work, by writing about the dream productions of this humanitarian tragedy, also aims to offer words and memorialize a historical moment that causes pain and suffering. The intention is that this history is not repressed by time and does not repeat as a symptom.

At war with the future: The role of dystopias in terrorist manifestos

Andrew Fergus Wilson

This paper will show the importance of dystopias to the written justifications for terrorist attacks. The focus will be predominantly on the manifestos of white nationalists (such as Brenton Tarrant, Anders Breivik, Dylann Roof) and dystopian themes in their sources. These themes show debts to other extremists; Breivik, for example, cites Bat Ye'or and Tarrant referred to Renaud Camus' *La Grand Remplacement*, and David Lane's '14 words'. There is also clearly an intertextuality at work: Breivik borrowed from Ted Kaczynski (the Unabomber), Tarrant cites Breivik. This shared repertoire of ideas coheres around a common tendency to be mobilised by fears of a future that is typically depicted as an intense protension from the present. The dominant force in each dystopia varies – immigrants, Muslims, feminists, technology feature frequently – but the basic structure is repeated. society (national, international) is in a state of collapse and a threatening future looms but the terrorist actor will act as a catalyst for a social and cultural reaction that will remove human societies from their courses and instead return them, renewed, to a future-past state of grace.

This palingenetic tendency is a common feature of fascism (and forms the basis of Roger Griffin's 'fascist minimum'). What is less commonly recognised is the millenarian structure of these manifestos. Following Emilio Gentile's work on political religions, this paper will show the manifestos to be rooted in religious rather than political thought – as much apocalypses as manifestos. As such, they represent a fundamentalist form of political theology. The implication of this is that current approaches to countering violent extremism and deradicalisation are misguided in their framing of the issue.

N27A Level 2 - Co-production in Research – The Emperor's New Clothes? 2

The wheel of consent; a tool for refocusing on the balance of requests and benefits in the everyday of participatory research, and disrupting normative ways of thinking and working in academia (workshop proposal)

Hannah Gardiner

Recent years saw rising use of the terms co-production, co-design and participatory research (Brown, 2022; Smith et al., 2022). Although previously these types of research projects were harder to justify to universities and funding bodies (Baines, 2007; Facer and Enright, 2016), we now see some expecting this level of engagement (e.g. NIHR, 2019; UKRI, 2022). Yet delivery is highly variable, with terms like co-production and co-design and used differently by different studies, or even within the same study (Hoekstra et al., 2020; Masterson et al., 2022). There is also potential for harm to be caused through these methods (Oliver et al., 2019), and critique that their use can easily become tokenistic (Jagosh et al., 2012; Beresford, 2020). In attempting to ensure quality in delivery, many tools have been created, such as principles for delivery (e.g. Israel et al., 1998; Centre for Social Justice and Community Action, 2022), measures of the level of participation (e.g. Arnstein, 2019; Vaughn and Jacquez, 2020), and even quality measures (e.g. McLean et al., 2023). But these are all hard to apply, and also tend towards application at the 'macro' level - focusing on project design.

This misses the point that participatory research is a praxis. That is, something you must learn by doing, and by questioning your own assumptions about how research is done. For example, breaking down the separate distinct roles of researchers and participants (Lenette et al., 2019), and potentially challenging the 'expert' role researchers may have worked hard to gain (Nind, 2011; Boaz et al., 2021). There are also likely to be different priorities and ways of working for those in academia or from community or other backgrounds (Morford, 2004).

Furthermore, there are institutional and systemic dynamics driving researchers' behaviours in ways uncondusive for collaboration, such as the drive towards individualism (Burawoy, 2005; Southby, 2017) and influences from technocratic and market-fundamentalist priorities (Williams et al., 2020).

How can we address this complexity? This contribution echoes prior suggestions of focusing on the 'micro' level, on the everyday (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004; Banks et al., 2013, 2016; Banks, 2023). Taking the view that power is "a relational effect of social interaction" (Allen, 2003, p.11), the everyday is where cultural scripts can be re-written, and systemic behavioural drivers subverted. In support of this work, we have adapted the wheel of consent as a tool for critical reflection. This tool situates our work with dynamics of taking or serving, and prompts us to question who is requesting any particular action to happen and who receives the benefits. We suggest use of the tool can provide a new "decision frame" (Tversky and Kahneman, 1981), supporting resistance and disruption of patterns of thinking and working.

This practical session will include a short presentation about the tool. But will mainly focus on participants using it to reflect on a participatory or co-production project they have been part of. This will support their understanding of it, and enable feedback to the authors about its use.

N28A Level 2 - Critical Political Epistemology 3

From "transidentity" to "we are trans people"

Maelle Roussel

Our aim is to bring to light the correlation that may exist between defining oneself as a trans person, transgender identity, and the agency that this determination by this category could transform the individual. This first requires us to consider what transgender identity is (in contrast to drag or intersexuality, for example) and to highlight the diversity of its manifestations, at the risk of shattering the category (but what unity does a category assume?). The definition of transgender identity itself is not without effectiveness because it is from this definition that one can begin to define oneself as trans or not and legitimize oneself as such. This will require us to question who sets such a definition, why, and how. Different power relations come into play here in the self-determination of trans individuals: that of cisgender individuals over trans individuals in general, whether it be from relatives, doctors, or members of a state administration. Consequently, a seemingly individual, identity-related phenomenon is entangled in a collective, social, and political framework. It is important to pay attention to this, as these external determinations can condition the experiences of trans individuals. But is that all there is to transgender identity? What about definitions by trans individuals for trans individuals? For us, it will be a matter of risking the hypothesis that a collection of experiences, all equally valid, if it cannot form a category, can at least form an identity, which can be plural or pluralized. In any case, we cannot do without the term 'trans person' or 'trans identity,' even if these terms are not unifying, insofar as the term allows for the unification of political claims, even if they themselves are subject to debate.

Thus, we will question what transgender identity means and implies, and whether it is the same as being trans. To do this, we will first inquire into what allows one to know or recognize oneself as a trans person, namely the question of coming in and recognition in a category that becomes an identity, a part of our essential definition. We will show, in a second step, the interferences of medical and political powers in this coming in, but also in the coming out¹ that the person can do. Far from being only a source of difficulties, coming out allows for the forging of strong and assertive community ties. That's why we will seek to show, in a final step, how claiming to be trans can allow for the development of political agency. Nevertheless, can these struggles be unified, must we necessarily presuppose a consensus, or should we also acknowledge a plurality of claims?

Investigating Rhetorical-Epistemic Oppression by the example of trans* experiences

Flora Löffelmann

This project from the field of trans* philosophy combines epistemology (Fricker 2007, Dotson 2014, Harding 2004) and queer phenomenology (Ahmed 2006, Salamon 2018) with aspects of Foucauldian genealogy (Foucault 1978) in order to investigate the phenomenon 'rhetorical-epistemic oppression' (REO). 'Rhetorical' signals that this is a form of oppression which targets a speaker. I argue that paying attention to productive mechanisms of power can shed light on injustices that happen because someone is believed only if they present in a certain way. I am interested in the way in which speakers are forced to speak about themselves in ways that are both epistemically oppressive and epistemically productive (i.e. producing knowledge about the speaker that further contributes to their oppression). In the case at the centre of my study, the victim of REO is pressured (coerced or manipulated) to fashion statements about their embodied situatedness according to socially prevalent norms and expectations.

REO harms subjects in at least two ways. First, on a discursive level, it prevents subjects from articulating important ranges of truths about themselves. REO thus infringes upon subjects' epistemic agency. Second, on an experiential level, the coerced utterances influence subjects' embodied situatedness, thereby harming them in their ability to explore possibilities of being.

REO does not only affect trans* people. But arguably they are a particularly salient target. I will focus on trans* subjects' engagement with contexts in which cis people¹ and binary² gender norms are predominantly operative. In many medical and legal contexts, for example, trans subjects are forced to speak of their embodied situatedness in ways that conform to, and reproduce, binary ideas of gender. Non-binary trans* subjects often comply in order to get medical care or legal assistance. Their dependence upon such care is a signal that the related interactions take place in an environment permeated by power relations.

This will be a work-in-progress talk on my PhD project. It will also feature some empirical material attained through interviews with trans* people who I consider to be experts on this field. This is warranted in light of trans scholars' claim that TP ought to focus on the everyday lives of trans people (Bettcher 2017). The direct engagement through interviews will allow me to ask about an aspect of experience, to wit, embodied situatedness, which might not be recorded in literary accounts trans people give of their habitual life. It is mandated moreover by the standpoint-theoretical consideration that our specific, embodied position allows us to experience things differently depending on where and when we observe them.

Hooley Room - Productivity or Process: What is the Value of Making 4 - Processing drawing

Filling in the Gaps - A Productivity Journey

Q_plus_I

This session endeavours to delve into the inherent value of the creative process by elucidating and physically creating artworks. Our goal is to challenge the predominant emphasis on outcomes. The presentation aims to establish a connection between artistic creativity and productivity, bridging the gap between the two.

"Filling in the Gaps - A Productivity Journey" by Q_plus_I promises to be a transformative presentation that combines artistic creativity with practical insights into productivity dynamics. This two-part performance is designed to unravel the intricacies of Q_plus_I's creative process, providing the audience with tangible takeaways and inspiring them to enhance their own productivity.

The first part of the presentation, titled **"The Process - Navigating Productivity Dynamics"**, serves as a deep dive into the artistry of productivity. Q_plus_I will share their methodologies for maintaining a productive and collaborative artwork, from the initial spark of inspiration to the final execution. By offering practical insights and strategies, the duo aims to equip the audience with tools they can apply to their own creative and professional endeavours. This segment not only showcases the behind-the-scenes of Q_plus_I's work but also fosters a sense of shared exploration by inviting the audience to reflect on and contribute to the discussion of productivity.

In the second half, titled **"The Result - Transformative Productivity in Action"**, Q_plus_I build on the lessons learned in Part 1 by unveiling the tangible outcomes of their productivity journey. Through a curated experiment, the duo aims to inspire the audience to translate newfound insights into tangible results in their

own lives and work. This segment creates a visual narrative of Q_plus_'s productivity-driven accomplishments, encouraging the audience to reflect on how enhanced productivity can lead to transformative results. By establishing a connection between the creative process and tangible outcomes, Q_plus_ seek to motivate and empower the audience to approach their work with renewed vigour and a fresh perspective.

In conclusion, *"Filling in the Gaps - A Productivity Journey"* is not just a presentation; it's an immersive experience that bridges the gap between artistic creativity and productivity. Q_plus_'s unique approach promises to leave a lasting impact on attendees, motivating them to embrace productivity principles in their own lives. By sharing their experiences and catalysing a collective exploration of productivity, Q_plus_ aim to create a ripple effect that sparks renewed enthusiasm and innovation within the audience. This presentation is a must-attend for anyone seeking to unlock their creative potential and elevate their productivity to new heights.

Intervals Around the Sun

Carali McCall

Like rotations around the sun, what drove humans to draw over 40,000 years ago still drives artists today – to mark, to draw to make and to repeat. And, like an elastic band drawing has stretched and become the farthest reaches of itself; while exploring versions of oneself and the role of the body, this paper draws interest from physicality and the thresholds of materials. It showcases artworks that have been made by either carving through the landscape while running, drawing a continuous line with graphite on paper, or holding a bit of the landscape (a rock) as an act of endurance, again and again, as acts of performance and addressing the repetitious nature of drawing. Through movement and stillness, the presentation will address what it might mean to be human and expand conceptual and philosophical-based art practices.

How does drawing return to its shape after it has been expanded, stretched and altered? In the process of uncovering what drawing is, the testing of the elasticity of drawing – and questioning how the value of experience can enhance modes of consciousness; what the repetitious nature of drawing can extend to and what it might return to after. Prompted by the troubling matters confronted when making work today, such as the complexities of climate change and polarisation of social and economic upheaval and questioning – the question of what is the role of an artist and how can art-based practices shape new understandings. In presenting/performing some forms of thinking that ultimately do not shy from the large issues of importance but adopt an approach to putting in practice, an art performance, that addresses the circular systems humans find themselves part of and how drawing enables interdisciplinary dialogues.

A presentation with turning on the spotlight presenting a lecture that aims to provoke and inspire and point to an optimistic approach to considering how artworks can present the value of finding the nuances and excitement of both repetition and change.



McCall, Performing Rock (Going, going gone), Iceland 2022, documentary photographs of performance, and film clip, with a live audience.

An exploration of collaborative drawing: perfectionism, productivity, and wellbeing

Holly Mills

Mills and Payne have been exploring collaborative drawing, as a community of practice (Wenger-Trayner and

Wenger-Trayner, 2015) to improve a sense of belonging, whilst tackling issues related to confidence, perfectionism, productivity, and wellbeing. Alongside this, they seek to encourage students to draw more by hand, a skill that is often forgotten or put to one side in favour of digital drawing, particularly since the pandemic. Hand drawing enables students to explore and experiment quickly with different ideas and is an essential part of the design development process. Through producing a non-assessed collaborative drawing, the workshops aim to encourage students to relax when drawing, not worrying about the outcome, and care more about the process than the finished product (Thurlow and Ford, 2017, p.10).

This case study focuses on one session: a 'Cake & Draw' workshop hosted by the Architecture Student Society in April 2023 where seventeen students collaboratively created a banner for the NTU Architecture Degree Show.

The workshop started with a warm-up exercise, where students were asked to move around the table, drawing what they saw in front of them in outline, such as the windows, people, and furniture in the studio. This was done without looking at the paper and without taking their pens off the paper so that they drew one continuous line.



Figure 1. Warm up exercise - Note. View of the drawing workshop's warm up exercise in progress. Own work.

Following the warm-up, the students created the banner. The outline of letters spelling 'Architecture Grad Show' were written along the paper and the gaps in between filled in by the students with imaginary spaces of the future. Once again, students rotated around the paper, adding to the drawings of their peers using different pens and colours etc.

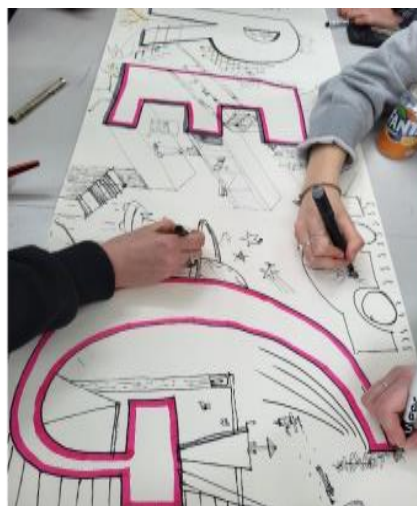


Figure 2. and 3. Creation of the Degree Show Banner. Note. Collaborative drawing workshop main exercise (degree show banner), in progress. Own work.



Figure 4. Architecture degree show banner section. Note. A section of the collaborative drawing workshop degree show banner after completion. Own work.

Using a focus group and post workshop surveys, Mills and Payne evaluated the benefits of collaborative drawing. The survey showed 82% of students found the workshop forced them to draw quickly, without overthinking and not to worry about the outcome. Overall, students agreed that the workshop helped them to be less of a 'perfectionist'.

The collaborative drawing is undertaken whilst standing. One participant commented that "the mind works better when you're standing as you're freer and more imaginative". 52% of participants felt that collaborative drawing enabled them to take risks, draw more fluently and accept 'imperfect' work.

Collaborative drawing was found to expand feelings of community and increase communication between different cohorts, which in turn benefited the student's wellbeing. It also enabled the students to express themselves and communicate non-verbally adding to the "group mind", also creating an "us" (Harty and Sawdon, 2017, pp.99-100).

Therefore, you are invited to add to the 'group mind' and take part in producing a collaborative drawing... How do you feel drawing with others? Did this help to improve your confidence and risk taking? Were you more focused on the process of drawing than the final product?

Adams Room – Gentle Gestures 5 – Workshop 2

Making bread with your feet: How do we learn to talk through gestural moments and speculative acts?

Maggie Ayliffe, Andrew Bracey, Jo Lee, Laura Onions

Call for short films showing your artistic gestures.

We are asking for academics involved with the teaching of art to send up to one-minute films showing their artistic gestures. A compilation of the films will be used in a workshop session in Gentle Gestures (GG) Stream of the Midlands Conference of Critical Thought (MCCT) at Nottingham Trent University on Friday 5th – Saturday 6th April 2024.

What we are asking for?

We would like for you and any interested colleagues to make and send us up to one-minute films that capture artistic gestures, by which we mean the acts, tools, people, and/or spaces required to activate a moment of gestural speaking in any artistic medium. We are looking for academics from across the arts, including current lectures, ex-lectures, lecturers in training, or current students engaging in artistic gestures in taught sessions.

We wonder what the 'gestures' are that are used by artists who teach in the creation of their own work. We wonder what conversations and prompts can be activated by the sharing of these gestures of artistic activity to transfer into teaching situations.

We would like the films to be in landscape 16:9 MP4 format, maximum of one minute.

Please send films to Maggie Ayliffe at maggieayliffe@btinternet.com by 1st March 2024.

Making bread with your feet: How do we learn to talk through gestural moments and speculative acts?

The films will be featured in an interactive workshop that will also explore the language and poetics of gentle gestures in Fine Art Practice and explore the pedagogic potential of bringing language to speculative acts. The films will form the backbone of and prompt to a series of tasks and questions that encourage speculative thinking and explore how they might articulate through drawn gestures what it feels: To feel, touch, activate, brush, signal, indicate, host, carry, trust, blush, disrupt.

We will ask:

- How do we create the conditions for such speculative making/thinking?
- How do we encourage students to embody their feelings through gesture?
- Can we teach students to touch with care, to be attentive to the surface, the qualities of materials, to make marks with focus, to understand their body in its relationship to making?
- Can we think critically through gesture? And if so, how do we talk to this process?

Through an active process of working with participants, we aim to pool the collective experience and knowledge of the group to articulate tacit and embodied concerns vital to speculative thought and creativity. We want to use this knowledge, alongside our findings from 'the studio' project to demonstrate the value of creative pedagogy, speculative acts and thoughts to others.

Enacting Ephemeral Places of Discovery

Touched by Sound: The Being-Together-Being in Movement Art

Lars Koens & JuJu Kusanagi

This paper proposes a set of movement and vocalisation workshops for dancers, and other movement practitioners, facilitated by a choreographer and sound artist. The purpose is for movers to coalesce through improvisation in response to ecological soundscapes and prompts. From researching and discovering connections between body-voice, and movement-sound, an inter-sensorial language involving movement and vocalisation is cultivated with the participants. This practice-based research was facilitated as rehearsals for the choreographed piece, *1:1:1* (Kusanagi, 2023), which embodies this language as the score. The workshop exploration is grounded in embodied and emplaced touch, including the feeling associated with listening and the sense of touch through sound. Using the concepts of performativity, acoustic ecology, and an ontology inspired by the Japanese language, we identify a hypostatization, denoted as being-together-being. It arises as a precarious, ontological state, a hyperobject, or landscape on the move, where the sense of belonging coincides with that of an evolving, activated space. In short, each participant aims to reach a dynamic state of being that can be expressed as: I am the space, and the space is me. We argue this state, which sustains the being-together-being, can be understood as the convergence of objecthood and eventhood. Furthermore, the being-together-being requires movers to (1) be aware of their own self, (2) to have a perspective of themselves rooted in the totality, and (3) to practice inclusivity through an awareness of the unified whole. As such, this method rejects traditional dualistic and hierarchical approaches aimed at objectification and spectacle. Instead, the role of the choreographer and sound artist is here to cultivate awareness, care, and compassion, leading to collaborative, participatory movement art; and, for sound more specifically, to create a symphonic atmosphere by tuning into soundscapes of multi-species environments, from which movers embody posthumanist modes of being.

The gesture of push in drawing – a tango with other

Sarah Tutt

We now live in, or are impacted by, a world where frictionlessness and immateriality are becoming synonymous with technological advancement. Our entanglements with the material world are shifting as we encounter the virtual. Indeed, our contemporary experience of the world today 'may be related with a certain pathology of the senses' (Pallasmaa, 2012).

My research considers how the gesture of push in a material drawing practice might operate as a reparative, affirmative critical agent through which to respond to a contemporary experience of frictionlessness, immateriality and desensitisation. Through the creation of a series of drawing processes, my research explores how entanglements within the gesture of push enable a haptic and relational journey through line, time and

space. The act of drawing is the critical focus for investigation, building on research that postulates the power of drawing is in the act.

In this presentation, I propose a critical approach to the gesture of push formed from a parallel enquiry into learning tango - a personal research journey through intimate encounter. The presentation considers how insights from learning tango might be brought to labour in a material drawing practice. In what ways might learning tango operate as method or methodology within drawing?

Tango and drawing can offer uncertain sites of encounter - moving, entangled journeys that are frictive, close and haptic. In tango and drawing the gesture of push has affective and fragile interdependencies, and innate states of awayness and orientation towards other. This parallel enquiry considers how these inter-relationalities, orientations and uncertainties might be embraced and mediated, with the aim of suggesting how drawing might operate as a micro-political practice.

I also propose a short performative intervention to compliment, but not necessarily accompany, this presentation.

Beyond Words: Exploring the Silent Dialogue Between a Musicalized Body and Linguistic Expression

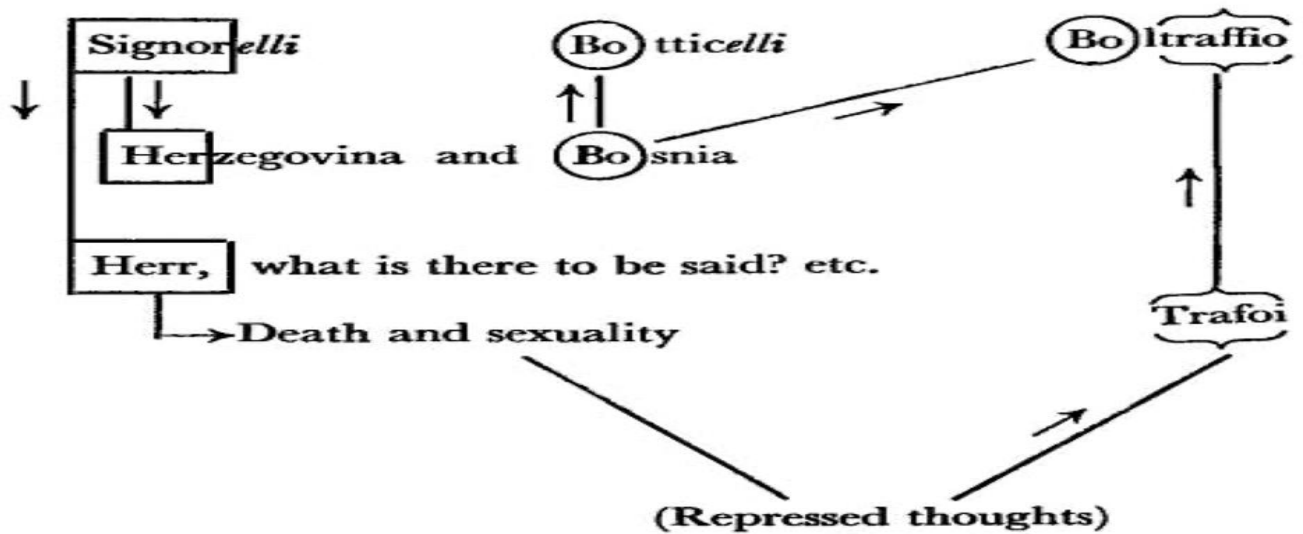
Yuchen Li,

This paper explores a crucial silent moment in an interview with a musician, revealing the revolutionary impact of the "feeling body" on language's power structures. The interview, conducted in July 2023, featured an experienced musician discussing her creative journey while working on her first solo album. Struggling to articulate details about her inspiration and writing process, she fell into silence, grappling with the challenge of putting her memories into words.

In this silence, two significant events unfolded: 1) the co-emergence of her feeling body and the musical instrument, back in moments of her songwriting, and 2) her inability to express her musicalized body through language. In this instance, an alternative form of knowledge originated within the feeling body is dismissed in a world with the hegemony of language.

The value of this alternative knowledge lies in its ahistorical and materialist essence, which is an important source to attain shared experience of our bodies and the world without being discriminated by socio-symbolic power dynamics. In contrast to approaches influenced by market trends or existing music symbols, my interviewee's creative process begins with the feelings emerges within body. To further illustrate its importance, I will examine how existing symbols in language interrupt her chaotic dwell within the body, structure her feelings and reproduce discriminable representations in accordance to established norms in music industry, and thus reducing the infinity of intuitive creative outcomes to a definite position in the discourse.

The interviewee's silence during our conversation is interpreted as a powerful disruption within the music industry's discourse, bringing attention to the events concealed by silence. The intersection of her feeling body and language—the rupture—encourages an alternative but important way of listening and learning. This involves tuning in to the unnamable representation of a feeling body in the event, going beyond reliance on symbolic language – in this paper, tuning to her music to alternatively understand her creative journey instead of by talking about it. This alternative type of learning reawakens the feeling body that yields transformation of the "thinking body", bringing a more creative and revolutionary change than learning within the thinking body. With dynamics in the interview analyzed in poststructuralist psychoanalytic framework (Lacan, Kristeva) and Ettingerian psychoanalysis, this case study provides a paradigm to uncover aspects of the world and ourselves often filtered out by symbolic lenses, delving into a more intimate form of knowledge that goes beyond reproduction of power structure.



Sigmund Freud, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901)

This paper will present current design research work by the rooms+cities architectural design research unit at the University of Dundee, whose aim is to develop new formal spatial and social typologies for the periphery of cities. The paper will also situate this work within current critical thought on cities and subjectivity. Freud wrote, 'psyche extended, knows nothing of it'. Our city centres are built out; for better or worse, the periphery of cities is where most development will happen – hence either the site of the worst future environmental damage or the place where we can most effectively develop new typologies for sustainable forms of collective life. It is here therefore that we should look if we want to develop new urban forms for addressing the problems of the Anthropocene.

Peripheries do not conform to our expectations of what Lynch called good city form, and consequently our attachments to them are loosened. Typically, they are post- or pre- industrial landscapes. Either labour, capital, and planning policy have been withdrawn from them, or they have not yet got there. The periphery is where we can still experiment with the line where city block meets farmer's field. This transition is not only a change in how we parcellate land – street curb to field boundary. It also represents a difference in economic drivers. The block is a unit of sale, a way to commodify the surface of the earth. The agricultural field is a unit of production, a way to productify (sic) it.

LC said 'The plan is the generator.' We need to develop a plan language for working in the periphery which will draw the periphery into architectural discourse. Publications on the periphery tend to be descriptive. They are based on photographic studies. As compelling as these studies may be to the public eye, photographs do not have the analytic rigour and precision necessary for intervening in the periphery and for evaluating and judging these interventions, of the type that we are familiar with in studies that employ architectural drawings. The plan is where architectural thinking is most precise spatially, and where it is most strategic, and where it can assimilate economic and social planning.

Drawing towards the periphery is about developing a graphic language adequate to representing the spatial and social and psychic conditions of the periphery so that these conditions can be brought into human architectural discourse where they can be shared, studied, and subjected to speculation and invention. The plan language of the city centre and the plan language of the countryside, the traditional languages of urbanism invented by Nolli in the 18th Century, are not adequate. We need a new language adequate to representing these new spaces and new forms of attachment.

These typological studies of the periphery will be accompanied by speculations about possibility that our psychic apparatus is extended by the environments we build in order to live well in them.

Re-defining the Generic City Today

Andrea Canclini

Modern architectural historiography has begun to distinguish between the activities of comment and criticism conceptualising this transition since Walter Benjamin, in particular from his "Epistemo-Critical Prologue" to "The Origin of German Tragic Drama" (1928).

If this distinction is initially seen as a return to the architectural disciplinary utopia in search of a meaning, it is Foucault, both in "Les mots et les choses" (1966) and in "L'ordre du discours" (1971), who later describes the moment of transition from classicism to modernity: in the first phase, language is used in a perpetual repetition of meaning, while in the second phase, language also uses itself in a self-critical function, considering itself as an object of possible investigation.

In Foucault's terms, it is precisely in the emergence of modern critique that the historical impossibility of narrating something original lies, so that the only possibility left is to use language always in relation to something else.

During the postmodern period, especially in the United States, many new towns were built according to a compositional language based on a kind of nostalgic utopia of the American small town of the 1930s, with an allusive reference to its social and communal content.

These archetypal models and the myth of an ideal past left no room for a modern language, intruding into a kind of poetics that felt comfortable confirming the symbolic dominance of a nostalgic memory, with both an operational role and an aesthetic function.

In this design regression, it was contextualism and historicism that were the main theoretical basis of the rhetorical/stylistic pluralism that was passed off as compositional freedom; it was proposed as a reaction to the modern concept of language, i.e. that incomplete and inadequate form of representing reality that was already clear to Benjamin and Foucault, in the certainty that, on the contrary, a stable and unique design language would also lead to an ethical and social form that would necessarily include social and communitarian results, with scientific determinism.

The desire to revive these socio-spatial relations, typical of a generic and nostalgic rural social world, in opposition to society based on industrial modes of production, is both social and aesthetic; if we consider the models described by Ferdinand Tönnies, when he describes the opposing models of social relations of *Gemeinschaft* in critical opposition to those of *Gesellschaft*; this is evident and in action in urban interventions such as Poundbury, where form should assume the role of deterministic generator of the expected social relations.

Thus the desire to base a design language on a determinism that would link a spatial form to a social form still seems relevant: if we design using a specific architectural and urban language drawn from history, we will also, and again, receive the society that inhabited those spaces.

How does the generic contemporary city continue to define itself, if only in parts, through these urban fantasies, which would also define social relations, community conformations, forms of life?

Does it still make sense to apply political categories when the city of shopping and tourism once again modifies the relations between space and citizen, between space and society?

13:00-14:00 – Break for lunch (food and drink not provided)

14:00 – 15:30 – Parallel Sessions 7

**N28B Level 2 - Rethinking Work and Career: Continued resistance to the neoliberal order
2- Work and identity**

Constructing informal work and care(e)rs

Louise Oldridge

Work has largely been regarded as essential in establishing our 'worthiness' (O'Connor, 2018). However, over time, conceptualisations have narrowed to primarily those deemed valuable, such as paid employment, while unpaid activities have been largely undervalued (Taylor, 2004). By employing Glucksmann's (1995) Total Social Organisation of Labour, work can be reconceptualised in a more inclusive manner as activities that involve the provision of goods or services for others, such as the act of caring for a family member or friend (Taylor, 2004).

The latest UK census (ONS, 2023) reveals that women between the ages of 45 and 64 provide the highest amount of unpaid care, at a time when it has been suggested they could be at the peak of their careers. Yet, literature also recognises the often unplanned and unpredictable nature of women's careers compared to men's, but even those models which directly address women's careers (such as Mainiero and Sullivan, 2005) focus narrowly on formal careers, leaving little room for considering non-linear career patterns (Richardson, 2012), or women undertaking unpaid work. If the drive for work centrality in careerism is the ideology of 'progress' represented by accumulating responsibility, status and rewards (Hall and Mirvis, 1995; Gee, 2022), how can different components of women's lives be considered integral to career-making, challenging the notion that paid work is the only source of career development (Cohen et al, 2004; Kirton, 2006)? Reconceptualising unpaid care as an act of service, and thus a form of work, is it then career informing?

Decolonising career and employability and the part it plays in structural racism – a focus on the Health and Social Care Sectors

Ricky Gee, Amy Allen, Adam Barnard

The 'employability' of graduates leaving Higher Education (HE) is becoming a major focus for the sector, shaped by the recent Education and Research Act (2017) and Augar review. The Graduate Outcomes Survey in the UK, policed by the Office for Students with an emphasis on 'high skilled' destinations, is placing pressure on academics to provide a practical, uncritical and skills focused curriculum. Much of 'employability' has its roots within the career development and guidance literature which tends to have a focus on individual agency as opposed to the social, economic and political structures in which agency is immersed. This presentation provides a decolonial approach to scrutinise the foundational concepts and mechanisms that employability embeds itself upon. The presentation provides insight into how such concepts and mechanisms are based upon a colonial logic of 'othering' and the myth of 'enlightened' European progress. The paper utilises a case study of the Health and Social Care sector to connect with the empirical world, to illustrate how such logic still permeates today, providing and reproducing structural disadvantage for minoritised groups. It then considers the pedagogical impact of such conceptions and how this is likely to reinforce modalities of oppression found within the neoliberal university and discusses how research into this area provides a tension between reinforcing the mechanisms of the neoliberal university and subverting such practices. It concludes that HE promotes a smokescreen of social mobility and meritocracy to students whilst maintaining societal status quo via its filtering processes that feed the precarious labour market.

Why should we want to abolish work?

Critical responses to work vary greatly, ranging from an appreciation of and commitment to its necessity, all the way to calling for its abolition. The first pushes for better working conditions in order to recover an inherently valuable concept and activity, rescuing it from its corrupted state, while the second advocates for the rejection of the institution of work itself. In *The Problem with Work* (2011), Kathi Weeks acknowledged that the demands for both better working conditions and the refusal of work (resulting in less work) are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and at times, may even overlap. In blurring the distinction between the two, especially in highlighting their disdain for meaningless, exploitative, and alienating work, one can then validly raise a plausible thesis that the divide between better-work and antiwork constitutes a 'false dichotomy.' While the merits of this argument can be acknowledged, this presentation seeks to highlight an alternative perspective by arguing that conflating the two might risk dampening the radically critical demands of antiwork. Weeks warned that while lobbying for better working conditions can address the 'misrecognition and devaluation' of labour, it falls short in struggling against work's ideological centrality, through its appeals to work's social necessity and value. Even the inauguration of a more humane work ethic, moreover, affirms the inherent value of work, which is not immune from capitalist and neoliberal resignifications. Weeks was thus right to point out that the improvement of labour conditions can, more often than not, insidiously function as strategies of intensifying work. By focusing on the complexities of the relationship between better-work and antiwork, I seek to highlight the latter's radical import, that is, its commitment to address the problem at its root. In contrast to seeking better working conditions, antiwork envisions a dismantling of the 'labour metaphysic', that is, the centrality of work in human life. How might this look like? Why, moreover, should we take interest in antiwork politics?

N27A Level 2 - Gentle Gestures 6 -Workshop 3

Touching Clay Workshop

Christine Stevens

I have worked as a Gestalt Psychotherapist for many years, and in the last 10 years studied visual arts at degree level. I am Director of Clay Studio Nottingham as part of Primary artists' organisation. I identify as a transdisciplinary practitioner, whereby my Gestalt therapy influences my artistic work, and my artistic research and practice impacts on my work as a therapist.

This workshop is deeply embedded in Gestalt theory and principles as a way of activating new forms of awareness. It draws on phenomenological focussing, paying attention to embodied sensations, staying radically in the present moment and paying attention to the unfolding of meaning through relationship. It offers a safe container for learning about ourselves and the world through paying attention to touching and being touched by a simple material, which is essentially the earth itself and which contains the building-blocks of life.

Participants will be each given a lump of clay and a board to work on. They will be invited to simply hold the clay and to pay attention to their breathing as a way of drawing their attention to being 'now' and 'with'. To disrupt the natural tendency to make intentional objects, I will read out a list of touch-based gestures, *Fifty Forms of Touch*. These descriptors arose out of an extended period of clay-handling by refugees, asylum-seekers and strangers responding to workshops and gallery-based work held in Nottingham and Stoke-on-Trent. Participants will be invited to hold an open attitude of not-knowing and explore their clay with curiosity, paying attention to whatever sensations, thoughts, and feelings that emerge for them. They will be invited to share as much as they wish of their experiences and discoveries with a partner, and then to feed back in the whole group.

This proposal relates to the conference stream of *Gentle Gestures* by suggesting a trans-disciplinary process-based pedagogy that opens up contacting (touching/with) as a form of non-hierarchical knowledge production.

N28A Level 2 - Transgressive Thought in the 21st century: Thinking the thought of the outside, the thought beyond the Law

The Law of 'the Human', de-humanism and possibility of political theory otherwise

Dr Liam Farrell

Confounded, brutalized, and facing the collapse of the systems and institutions that support a particular "way of life" on the earth, "we" are in need of a transgressive thought. This is a thought that is simultaneously improper and (in)sensible, as well as being traversal of the constitutive metaphysics of presence that haunts our most radical and emancipatory of political theories. Refusing in a sense, the concept of the "outside", as fundamental to a colonial ontoepistemology of the non-sensical (da Silva) and the unthinkable abyss (Santos), whilst thinking across a nexus of political crises that mark the present — crises that include new forms of apartheid and dehumanization, climate breakdown, economic crises and the transmutation of capitalism, as well ethical and political questions about technologies of the human body and its plasticity — this paper, proposes a thought that goes for the jugular. This demands a de-humanist move (Singh) for political theorizing — transgressing the Law, in a particular sense, through the figure of what Samera Esmeir describes as 'juridical humanity'. Modern law and the projects of European colonialism stand together at the partial yet overrepresented basis of our received universalist ideas about what it means to be human — rational, individuated, at a remove from nature, tied to the technology of law as a relationship-defining onto-political force — and leaves us committed to particular but universalizing visions of sovereignty, domination, and mastery: Sovereign self-ownership scaling up as the source of legitimation; domination over nature through reason and technology; and mastery as the horizon of our relation to ourselves and our bodies.

Inspired by posthuman theorizing on the plasticity of the human, developments in decolonial theory, the deconstruction of the human/animal relation and its politicization in contemporary afro-pessimist thought, as well as Julietta Singh's provocative invitation to feel and think the world through the de-humanist practice of undoing mastery, this paper traces the aesthetic and conceptual "outside", or limit, of the human and its Others, through what Jacques Derrida names a 'limitographic' mode of writing. Mapping the decomposition of this figure, the juridical human, and its colonial entanglement within our repertoires of radical political thought, this paper problematises the impotence of political theory, and the disintegration of its constitutive objects and subject. As such, the Law of the Human, is found in a state of deconstruction, revealing perhaps in its transgression a new thought. Such a new thought, however, is by no means novel, but a thought that learns from other ways of relating and being, through what Vivieros de Castro calls *resistência* (resistance is existence), and which strives to escape the fascism that characterises the politics of our times, as well as our received Eurocentric traditions of thought.

From Transgressive Acts to Artistic Transgression: Theorising Transgression in a Cultural Context

Oliver Kenny

In work on cultural artefacts, from fine art to cinema to novels to poetry, the concept of transgression is simultaneously over-used and under-discussed. A cursory glance at the breadth of scholarship on artistic transgression shows that the term 'transgressive' is often applied vaguely to designate something deviant or different, but in an unspecified way, as well as to signal some unspecified form of political, aesthetic or ethical subversion. Such 'weak' usages of transgression are applied to any kind of limit, boundary or border that has been crossed in any way, and indeed can become detached from any agent or artwork completely. Transgression is effectively thrust into the passive: a boundary is transgressed. But which boundary exactly? And how can we tell? In what ways? To what extent? By whom? Moreover, the significant literature on transgression rarely forms a systematic part of discussions about artistic transgression.

By contrast, I favour a 'strong' definition of transgression, which is clear about the boundaries and the kind of transgression under discussion. In doing so I distinguish between breaking laws, images of transgressive acts,

norm violations, aesthetic innovations and artistic discourse around transgression. Transgressive acts and artistic transgressions are quite distinct and must be addressed in different ways. Nonetheless, key elements of sociological theories of transgressive acts, such as limited transgressions and transgression as normative, are helpful for theorising artistic transgression. Artistic transgression is mainly about recuperating and legitimising non-art practices within the domain of art, although it is important to acknowledge that the limits of art are heavily influenced by censorship rules.

In this paper, I distinguish between transgressive acts and artistic transgression, highlighting the key writing on transgression (Durkheim, Bataille, Bakhtin, Douglas, Foucault, Becker) in order to suggest which elements of it are useful for thinking about artistic transgression. I argue that the main lesson to be drawn from this work is that type and degree of transgression matter, as well as the context of the transgression, and the identity of the transgressor. Drawing on work in art history, aesthetics and the sociology of art (especially Paul Ardenne and Nathalie Heinich) as well as analysis of contemporary censorship regimes, I propose a way of theorising artistic transgression that is attentive to classic sociological approaches whilst also accounting for the particularities of how transgression is understood in a cultural context.

Hooley Room - Media Epistemologies 1

Notes on a Deflationary Media Theory

Rob Coley

Drawing on debates in ecocriticism and environmental activism, this paper offers a modest provocation in response to what John Durham Peters has called the 'inflationary tendencies of media theory.' These tendencies are explicitly identifiable in an expansive and ongoing reappraisal of the media concept, and in a concern with the organizational powers of media, powers variously conceived as infrastructural, environing and elemental, conditioning human knowledge and human being rather than simply extending human agency. There is, in short, great interest today in the worlding processes of media and mediation. It is though also apparent that the stabilizing epistemological capacity of such processes is prone to malfunction, a precarity revealed by the breakdown of climatological and ecological 'systems'. And yet, even against this backdrop of accelerating infrastructural collapse, the mediation of media theory itself largely foregoes scrutiny.

What are we to make of media theory's assumption of communicational sufficiency, its increasing commitment to what Peters characterizes as the 'uncontainable relevance' of its ongoing growth? After all, its politically and ethically invigorated response to eco-crisis, its burgeoning rejection of dualism and rediscovery of immanence, nevertheless sustains what François Laruelle calls the World-form, a technology of thought that permits both totalizing investigation and limitless extraction, uncomfortably consonant with the principles of Prometheism and accumulation that stimulate 'green' capitalism. Beyond sustainability then, how might media theory better respond to an encounter with the finitude of a malfunctioning world, with material infrastructures that disable as much as they sustain knowledge production, diminishing rather than shoring up communicational powers? What would it mean for contemporary media theory to commit to degrowth instead?

Taking, as a starting point, Alexander Galloway's call to recognize Laruelle as a media theorist, these questions will be explored by surveying different ways to conceptualize a 'flattening' of knowledge production, concepts that can prove instructional for a more deflationary media theory. For Laruelle, degrowth is an ethical mode of thought appropriate to conditions of crisis rather than a programme of austerity; to adapt the carbon emission focused terminology of climate justice, it involves a shift from 'luxury' to 'subsistence' theory in an attempt to secede from the productivist sufficiency of mediation and the way it inhibits environmental politics. This paper will argue, however, that any such withdrawal demands epistemological adaptation, a radical and subtractive form of adaptation that can be understood, firstly, in terms of Malcolm Ferdinand's decolonial 'off-world', which recognizes that, for many peoples of the Earth, eco-material infrastructures of knowledge production have long been subject to violent destabilization, and, secondly, according to Gilles Grelet's insistence on the need to sabotage the world rather than simply cultivate indifference toward it, employing 'theorism' to

maintain another kind of violence against mediation. Here, the paper will also address communicational debates about eco-anxiety, cautioning against the impulse to dismiss what Sianne Ngai has called 'ugly feelings', precisely because thinking in a deflationary and disaster mode demands an epistemological modesty, a condition that can in turn provide the basis for more materialist forms of media literacy.

The qi of Cinema: Film Epistemology through Daoism

Kiki Tianqi Yu

The metaphysical concept of qi (chi) in Chinese, literally meaning 'breath' and 'air', is translated as 'vital energy'. Qi is the basic element that forms and connects all kinds of things, either liquid or solid, and is the underlying substance that reality consists of. It is neither equivalent to 'matter' nor 'spirit', and the closest analogue to Western philosophy is the term 'energy'. Qi also resonates with the Hindu word 'prana' (invisible 'breath of life') and the ancient Greek notion of 'pneuma'. Though qi is not uniquely a Daoist concept, Daoist interpretation of qi as the basic element that composes and connects everything penetrates Chinese cultural imagination.

While exploring how cinema makes the seemingly invisible and intangible qi, vital energy, seen, felt and sensed on screen, to evoke an embodied trans-sensory experience of qi, I also encounter the questions of what enables such a phenomenological and physical-psychological connection between the pervasive qi captured and circulated in the cinematic realm and the qi of the audience? Is it possible that cinema itself also contains qi? These questions lead me to explore film epistemology through the method of qi, or qi as epistemology to understand what cinema is.

In this paper, I argue for the existence of the qi of cinema. First, it is how cinema 'breathes', i.e. the rhythm of moving image created in shooting and editing as the blood and breath that channel the flow of qi. This echoes what the 1920s French avant-garde filmmakers recognised 'the internal and the external' cinematic rhythm. Second, the qi of cinema is also the 'rhythmic vitality' of cinema, following the Chinese and Japanese traditional aesthetic concept of qiyun. In cinema, the 'rhythmic vitality' is how film creates trans-sensory moving image textures as material forms of qi, which also responds to what Epstein calls photogenicie. Finally, the rhythm and 'rhythmic vitality' of films contribute to their unique temperament, qizhi, the nature of one's qi, occupying a space that affectively transmits the qi captured and circulated on screen to the space of viewing. I propose that qi as a method to approach film epistemology opens a new way to understand the vitality of cinema as things and as art. Exploring our engagement with cinema through the perspective of ubiquitous and connective qi, rather than simply emphasising an embodied viewing experience, challenges anthropocentric sensory studies of cinema, in that it directs the attention to qi itself and how cinema can cultivate what James Miller calls an 'aesthetic transformation' that changes how we sense, position and cognise humans' position in the world, working towards 'human-nature-oneness'.

Between epistemology and ascesis: Media theory as ritual

Thomas Sutherland

Looking at three key scholars in the early history of media theory – Roland Barthes, Marshall McLuhan, and Raymond Williams – this paper will contend that all three attempt to induct their readership into particular modes of ascetic inner labour, holding out the prospect of an increasing autonomy, either that of the individual or of humanity more broadly, in the face of media determination, enjoining the cultivation of an aesthetic sensibility and a continual problematization of one's self and circumstances. This metaphysical pathos, striving to reshape its audience in line with a certain subject position, it will be argued, is not only indicative of an oft-overlooked ritual or paraenetic aspect to media theorization (situating it within a long tradition of aesthetic-ethical criticism that strives to reconcile the divisions that leave so-called 'man' alienated), but tells us as much

about the circumstances of the scholars themselves (in particular, the changing cultural position of literature in the wake of new forms of mass media) as the media they purport to study.

Adams Room - Post-human social inquiry: ontology to method and back again 1

Rhizomatic review, minor science and materialist research evaluation

Nick J Fox

This paper sets out an innovative rhizomatic approach to evidence and literature review. While primarily designed to complement the methodologies and methods of data collection, analysis and writing that have been devised within new materialist and posthuman research, this rhizomatic review methodology is amenable to a range of applications by those uncomfortable with the residual positivism that underpins some other review methodologies.

Rhizomes are a form of underground plant root system that branch and multiply in all directions: a phenomenon all too well-known to gardeners grappling with 'weeds' such as couch grass, stinging nettles and horsetail. A rhizome contrasts with arborescent and hierarchical systems: characterised in plant morphology by a singular tap root or radicle that extends vertically downwards. For Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 5), an arborescent mode of thought (and of scientific inquiry) imitates and seeks to represent or reflect the world it sets out to explore; furthermore, it is hierarchical, and operates along pre-established paths (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988: 16). While mainstream social science has often modelled a hierarchical and highly structured or ordered *socius*, in an alternative rhizomatic perspective the world is continually becoming-other. Research informed by these rhizomatic perspectives is non-linear and open-ended, and emphasises connections, heterogeneity and fluidity.

While this rhizomatic perspective has led to a flowering of research methodologies among new materialist and posthuman social science scholars, one standard element in the research process – literature and evidence review – has not been addressed explicitly. This paper addresses this lacuna, suggesting how the rhizomatic social inquiry approaches of new materialist and posthuman theory may be extended to address literature and evidence review methodologies.

To situate this objective within the broader ontological and epistemological commitments of the new materialisms, the paper outlines the broader context of rhizomatic theory, and the distinction made by Deleuze and Guattari between a 'major' science that seeks immutable 'laws' or 'truths', and an alternative form of rhizomatic scientific inquiry which they termed 'minor science'. In this latter minor science practice, the aim is not to represent or reproduce the world through axioms or mathematical equations, but to 'follow the action' in order to make sense of phenomena. The paper explores how a minor science ontology of social inquiry might inform some principles guidelines for how rhizomatic review can be used to 'follow the action' within a literature or body of evidence, though in the spirit of minor science and rhizomatics, it stops short of attempting to translate these principles guidelines into prescriptive or definitive methods for this approach to review.

Bodied assemblages in research and performance: a rhizomatic anthology of practice-led adventures through creative bodies

Amanda (Millie) Light

Neoliberal politics places an emphasis on the production of the quantified self and its cultural fixation with clean, functional, and healthy bodies (Braidotti, 2019), which is 'interrupted' at the moment of a serious health diagnosis.

This research revisits the point of interruption, and its aftermath, through theoretical and empirical application of Braidotti's post-human concept of affirmative ethics. Within this concept, ethics is the force that fosters the

conditions of affirmative becoming, emphasising the power of affect as 'a dynamic articulation' (Lloyd, 1996: 31) rather than simply passive reflection.

As a collective practice, affirmative ethics generates different perspectives of knowledge and subjectivity in a post-human, post-anthropocentric world (Braidotti, 2019). In January to April 2024, I am conducting research with a small group of embodiment practitioners, whose lives (including my own) have each been 'interrupted' by a cancer diagnosis. Through the critical posthuman framework of affirmative ethics, the process of turning pain into knowledge is practised through an assemblage of creative methods, including movement practices, creative writing, and shared conversations.

Analysis of the process draws attention to the differentially embedded, embodied, affective and relational assemblages that become part of living with and beyond cancer. The research questions whether that moment of interruption (a temporary pause) might become a form of disruption (a major disturbance), affecting how 'we' perform our lives as knowing subjects, immanent to the very conditions within which we become known as cancer "survivors".

At this stage, there are no findings to report here, however the conference will be an opportunity to explore the research process from conception to analysis. The aim is to contribute to discussions about the value and difficulties of applying posthuman theory to empirical work, within a socio-materialist health perspective.

This research is earmarked for a chapter in a Routledge anthology (first draft due April 2024), with a working title of *Bodied assemblages in research and performance: a rhizomatic anthology of practice-led adventures through creative bodies*, due for publication in 2025.

Kilpin Room - Critical Thought on Cities 3 - images and film

The Blind Spot of the 'Smart' City

George Themistokleous

The emergence of 'smart' city is becoming increasingly prevalent in the discourse on cities. Readings on 'smart' cities encapsulate the controlled organization of people in physical and digital environments that are more 'efficiently' managed via information technologies. In this paper I will consider the notion of 'smart' city through the concept of utopia in its dual meaning: eu-topia, an image of 'happy' place and ou-topia, a 'no'-place. With the informational age, the notion of a prescribed idealized image from without (an eu-topia) thus shifts to the space of ubiquitous technologies and the wider notion of 'smartness', where 'the decentered self is 'repositioned as the locus of techno-institutional forces pushing and pulling to achieve maximal efficiencies'.¹ But it is mainly through a subversive use of these 'smart' technologies that we are able to encounter virtual possibilities of a no-place i.e. the ou-topic.

No-place suggests another reading of utopia. No-place implies an indeterminate and virtual image of place. The virtual image of no-place always operates beyond any actualized form, thus implying a manifold of multiple potential trajectories. The eu-topia is not simply an image that germinates from the ou-topic, but it operates with respect to the Lacanian gaze. However, the ou-topic image is similar to Lacan's writings on anamorphic painting and the trompe l'oeil. In these instances, the image dislodges the subject from space. The illusionistic image of the trompe l'oeil, because of its double register, diffuses the subjective grasp of the gaze. And, according to Lacan, this is what delights us, this moment 'when we are able to realize that the representation does not move with the gaze'.² It becomes important to revise such a reading of the image today, because with the proliferation of media, we are witnessing a 'control of bodies through forms of emerging technologies that are, as David Bell claims, 'more nebulous'.³ It is therefore crucial to re-think the role of another mediated image in today's discourse on the city: the 'real' time photograph. Lacan's writings on painting will be instructive to think of a visuality implicit with-in emerging technologies and how they re-form the mediatization of image in

relation to the thinking of cities. In order to reverse the gaze of the 'smart' city it is important to re-claim this subjective interval.

Slumdog Millionaire Cities- Evoking the Urban Through Cinema

Vishnu Prakash

The cities of the Global South are epistemically, methodologically and empirically different, and this is widely acknowledged by scholars in the South. Despite these differences, the theorisation of these cities is considered outside mainstream urban theory (Chakrabarti, 2023). Moreover, due to the imbalance arising from the predominance of Western scholarship on Southern urbanism, there is an imminent need to produce knowledge for and by the South. While the mainstream interdisciplinary approach of employing art, film, media studies and architecture to the enquiry of the city has been long established, the utilization of movies in urban studies is still nascent. Goharipour (2020) attributes this lack of an urban-oriented methodology as the reason why urban studies has not paid sufficient attention to the cinema.

Based on this, I embarked on an exploration of Bangalore, a rapidly rising metropolis in Southern India, sometimes referred to as India's Silicon Valley. The way that Bangalore is portrayed in films and how it connects to the city's rapidly expanding urbanization agenda will provide insight into how contemporary Visual Culture may be used to both conjure and solidify our perception of the urban in the Global South. I call these kinds of cities the 'Re-el City'. Taking a step-by-step approach to analyzing, interpreting, and re-presenting city representation would help define cities in the Global South in ways that explore the mutually dependent relationship between urban histories and their cinematic constructs. AlSayyad's argument that urban cinema is not just a genre representative of space but also "a powerful analytical tool of urban discourse" is key to this form of analysis.

15:30-16:00 – Break

16:00 – 17:30 – Parallel Sessions 8

N27A Level 2 - Addressing the Underbellies of Neoliberal Academia Stream 2 – Equality and Freedom in Academia

Academic freedom in Europe

Susanna Zellini

Education and freedom are deeply interconnected concepts. In the philosophical tradition of Bildung, freedom is indeed a central value. It refers to the freedom of every individual to pursue their own education, the critical aptitude (Mündigkeit) that each person must cultivate through this journey, and the space of academic freedom (of teaching, research, learning) which the university should guarantee. Traditionally linked to a modern and specifically European idea of the university, heir to the Platonic academy, freedom was synonymous with 'independence': an expression of the "distance and isolation" (Humboldt) that the dimension of Bildung must guarantee with respect to the logics operating in ordinary social dynamics.

However, in the new global scenario of late capitalism, thinking in terms of the relationship between freedom and isolation has become outdated. This is particularly evident in the European policies of the last thirty years, which have embraced a dominant narrative of a 'knowledge economy', that views the idea of a free education solely for the purpose of his spiritual maturation (Kultur) of the individual as obsolete, elitist and individualist. Alongside values such as 'equity' and 'inclusion', 'freedom' has increasingly become synonymous with the openness of education to the needs of society and the labour market (see: 'open disclosure', 'open university',

'open science', etc.). Knowledge appears all the more free when it is more accessible, usable and expendable for objectives deemed useful to society ('life-long learning', 'micro-credits', 'knowledge management' respond to this objective). Similarly, the more the university appears to be a guarantor of academic freedom, the more it responds to a criterion of responsibility ('accountability') towards these objectives.

But is such 'openness' really synonymous with greater freedom, or does it subordinate education to instruments and norms 'external' to it? And if so, to what extent do such instruments or norms limit academic freedom precisely when they claim to promote it?

The purpose of this paper is twofold. First of all, I discuss some aspects of the conceptual history of 'academic freedom' in the transition from the traditional idea of *Bildung* to the current model of the 'Learning society'. By doing so, I argue that the dichotomy between 'openness' of the current model, and 'closure' of the *Bildung* tradition is in fact a simplistic opposition, on which a rather ideological and abstract idea of freedom is based. Secondly, I propose a different conceptualisation of 'freedom' by reflecting on the concept of *Bildung* as it appears in the work of the Frankfurt School, particularly in that of Adorno and Horkheimer. They emphasize the need to definitively overcome the dichotomy between 'openness' and 'closure' and define freedom as the relationship of difference between isolation and the social dimension. In conclusion, I argue that this thesis might today again gain particular relevance, as it allows us to rethink the paradigm of academic freedom, in a way that combines the advantage of equal educational opportunities with the protection of an independent and genuinely democratic academic space.

The neoliberal process in the Portuguese higher education system: causes and consequences

Luís Valentim Pereira Monteiro

The evolution of the Portuguese higher education system (hereinafter referred to as the University) has taken place in a double movement in opposite directions. In one sense, the exponential growth in the number of graduates - most significantly in bachelor's degrees and, more recently, master's degrees and doctorates - represents a significant advance in advanced training in Portugal and its impact on Portuguese society is positive both economically and socially. However, in the opposite direction, this supposed "democratisation", with the outlines of massification of the system, has been based on a set of neoliberal premises. The first of these is the user-pays logic, the best example of which is the increase in tuition fees. The second is based on the deregulation and tendency towards precariousness of labour relations within the University, with a special focus on a model for the growth of the scientific system anchored in the use of grants and the lack of medium and long-term planning regarding the integration of these new PhD graduates into academic teaching and/or research careers. The third is the gradual transformation of the democratic management of higher education institutions towards a paradigm with characteristics similar to the governance of the private business sector.

These three movements constitute a process of commercialisation of a public service that has been, since the early 1990s, a laboratory for neoliberal experimentation, at a time when the other public services were still entirely in the public sphere and fulfilling their duty to provide a universal and free service.

The impact of neoliberalism on the Portuguese university is not measured separately in each of these spheres: the funding model, changes in labour relations, the governance of its institutions. More than anything else, neoliberalism constitutes an institutional architecture that has been transforming the mission of the University in Portugal towards a business model with increasingly economic and short-term objectives, in which the role of knowledge is only taken into account if it represents a product that can be quickly transferred to the companies that make up the current Portuguese economy. The university no longer acts on the world, it reacts to its impulses and determines its role according to the wishes of the private market.

It is therefore important to raise some questions for a necessary debate. What is the University for? And what should its mission be? Who does this overly useful university serve? Is there something so utilitarian about the way the University functions in Portugal that it can't take on a mission that projects a different future?

Academic freedom under siege - how the social justice dogma is undermining science towards a new totalitarianism

Marta Nunes da Costa

In John J. DiGioia's words, president of Georgetown University, academic freedom is the necessary and sufficient condition to pursue the truth, i.e., to break progress in knowledge in the different fields. Truth, understood as authoritative knowledge, is the work of universities; their mission is to find and disseminate better explanations for what happens in the world. And for this to happen scholars must be free.

When Robert Maynard Hutchins, first President of the University of Chicago, says that a university is a "community of scholars" it means that freedom is the supreme value of the institution and it is not negotiable. Under this light, the purpose of the university is to assure academic freedom and to protect scholars to follow the arguments where they may lead, regardless of the moral or political implications and without constraints or fear of punishment. A university understood in this classical liberal sense exists, not to place Socrates on trial for his opinions, even if they are upsetting, but instead to allow Socrates to speak freely and to debate and exchange ideas with him in an ample and robust manner.

What happens when freedom is replaced by some other value, say, social justice or equality? Confronted with a dilemma - for it is only against dilemmas that we appeal to first principles - which value ought to prevail?

For the past decades, specially since the late 1990's early 2000's, one could observe an ideological displacement in most universities of the West. This ideological displacement put forward for the sake of social justice allowed for a redefinition of the purposes of the universities. Steaming from the critical tradition, the social justice ideology converges a series of premisses that contradict the originally spirit of the university as such: when social justice becomes the goal and when identity politics become the means through which individuals are understood - under the collective spell - the purpose of knowledge (transmission and production) becomes secondary, leading us to a subversion of concept of science as such.

At the same time, universities are pressured to function as "neoliberal enterprises" and they impose a multiplicity of diverse tasks upon its members. The imperative of production per se is not, however, our greatest problem; instead, the problem lies in the fact that our production - i.e., the topics of our research, the way we design our syllabuses, the means we chose to engage in public debate - is predefined and limited by the ideological mantra that now rules the academic world. Insofar our "work" has to have "social impact" and may not contradict the dogma of social justice, one cannot dare to think otherwise, and if one dares to think and to speak it may well be the case that s/he will be invited to leave the university and certainly s/he will be cancelled, censored and socially ostracized.

My presentation has two main goals: first, I want to explore the tension between neoliberal imperatives of production and the dogma of social justice as normative horizon where this production happens; second, I want to name and clarify the costs of erasing academic freedom from Universities: on the one hand, in terms of sacrificing truth and knowledge and thinking its impacts outside the university (negation of reality); on the other hand, costs in terms of reinforcing a one-dimensional thought which is typical of totalitarian forms of life.

N28A Level 2 - Cultural Resistance in a Time of Economic Stagnation

Data, resistance, and the global information crisis: a case study

Thomas A Wright

Many of the ways in which our increasingly digital society is governed and administered are contingent upon the use of 'ubiquitous' algorithmic technologies (Lash, 2007). A range of academic disciplines have consequently problematised how algorithms are used inequitably to make life-altering decisions in almost

every realm of contemporary digital life. These important critical interventions have foregrounded the often-deleterious effects of algorithmic power in society (Noble, 2018; Benjamin, 2019), framing algorithms as pervasive digital objects that control human behaviour, with little interest in the potential for agency among human actors (Kitchin, 2017).

The nascent field of algorithmic resistance studies has emerged out of critical data studies' engagement with algorithms. This has generated new research into the algorithmically governed milieu with the intention of reintroducing explorations of human agency and autonomy into explorations of algorithmically governed contexts. Whilst the growing body of algorithmic resistance literature has invaluable illustrated how different communities work with algorithms through gaming and manipulation to resist modes of governance, its focus has generally been delimited to investigating employment and labour conditions experienced by the 'precariat' class (Standing, 2011). This has ultimately foreclosed opportunities to explore a wider range of engagement practices with algorithms in a wider range of different contexts, including what could be learned from them (Kennedy, 2018; Velkova and Kaun, 2021).

This paper extends the critical focus of algorithmic resistance studies towards communities and contexts in which critical engagements with algorithmic technologies are emerging; contexts that have remained thus far unexplored in spite of their increasing importance. This is achieved by drawing from ongoing PhD research, and the subsequent analysis of new empirical data that has been collected in collaboration with a single case study organisation, Tournesol. By exploring this data, this paper outlines how the construction of alternative data governance models, developed in response to the global information crisis, can be conceptualised as an example of cultural resistance that is borne out of the economic landscape of late capitalism, and the current era of algorithmic governmentality (Rouvroy and Berns, 2013).

Immaterial Labour and its Discontents

Phil Burton-Cartledge

Italian post-Marxism's theorisation of immaterial labour has proven influential and has been the object of trenchant critique and spirited defence. However, its application to an understanding of political dynamics has tended toward abstraction. For example, Negri's (2018) pronouncements on cognitive capitalism, the city, and "exodus" confined itself to sketching out in theoretical terms the broad trajectory of the class politics of immaterial labour. Case studies Negri employed to illustrate the utility of this approach were relatively superficial. Using the British political scene, I operationalise this contribution of post-Marxist critical theory to address the contours of resistance in the 2020s. Drawing on previous work that has theorised the close relationship between values and the lived experience of immaterial/"social" workers to explain the rise and fall of Jeremy Corbyn and the long-term decline of the Conservative Party, it considers how the contemporary Labour Party is actively working against the new modes of political collectivity forged by immaterial labour and what kind of opposition Keir Starmer's leadership, knowingly or not, is cultivating.

Navigating Resistance: Digital Realms, Urban Dynamics, and Embodied Struggles in the Tehran Protests

Nikoo Nikkar Esfahani

This paper explores the multifaceted effects of the digital, global, and transnational realms on resistance, drawing from Lefebvre's (1991) perspective that cities are complex social products serving as both a tool for action and a tool of control and dominance. The city has been crucial in enabling people to express themselves. As Jahanshad (2021) suggests, we must understand whether neoliberal urban policies for the modernisation of Tehran are intended to give the city an identity or if these policies are implemented to control people and their movements. The *Production of Space* (1991) adds to this argument by exploring the role of space in social life to better understand these factors and policies ostensibly supporting the modernization of Tehran but needing re-evaluation in the context of the digital age.

With this, there is a recognition that digital technologies have affected all aspects of our lives, and social and political movements have become more dependent on the Internet for the sharing of information (Petray, 2011).

Indeed, Baladi (2016) argues that recording events by taking pictures or videos during the revolt is participation in the revolt. These images and videos are archival documents that make the physical and virtual spaces collapse into each other. This paper delves into the transformative role of digital technologies in social and political movements, emphasising the dependence on the Internet for information sharing during the protests. The discussion encompasses the role of rogue media and archive in resisting censorship, revealing the interconnectedness of social media and urban space.

This paper delves into the social, political, and performative dimensions of the Tehran protests by using the body as an analytical entry point. By connecting the personal to the political, the body serves as a nexus that intertwines local, extra-local, and even global forces. Building on Sutton's (2010) concept, the paper emphasises the crucial aspect of the body's locality, defining both the 'political' and the grounds for political struggle. Thus, the paper employs the body as an analytical lens, linking personal and political dimensions in the context of the Tehran protests and conceptualising women's bodies as global sites that connect local and global forces within the resistance narrative.

Hooley Room - Media epistemologies 2

Immersive Media and the Horizons of Ocularcentrism

Mandy Rose & Tom Livingstone

Tacit within many media-epistemological frameworks is the dominance of the audio-visual. The media landscape is saturated by technologies that enshrine an ocularcentric experience of the world, and the attendant media-epistemological thinking has, historically, extended this. Even contemporary discussions of digital media tend to reflect the dominance of lens-based imaging technologies and audio-recording. Despite impacting us on a presubjective and affective level digital media are persistently understood principally via their visual and auditory interfaces.

However, emergent technologies within the field of immersive media and human-computer interactions are moving beyond the audio-visual paradigm and addressing immersants through a range of techniques across a multi-sensory spectrum. This paper will highlight innovative technologies from wearable haptic feedback devices, to magnetic muscle stimulation, as well as olfactory and taste modulating technologies, to gesture beyond the horizon of an ocularcentric media regime.

Of particular interest are the creative and cultural affordances of such technologies. The recent history of immersive media features a number of nonfiction experiences that use an expanded sensorial address to explore more-than-human and ecological themes. Taking as case studies some celebrated Virtual and Mixed Reality works (XR) of the past few years, this paper will argue that these artworks are particularly well-equipped to tackle such themes, given their technical propensity to operate beyond the audio-visual paradigm. That said: as with multi-sensory HCI, whilst the audio-visual may not be the exclusive sensory register of XR, it remains the primary one, with the vast majority of immersive media continuing to address our eyes and ears.

Bringing these two strands of technical and cultural innovation together, this paper will assess the adequacy of the ocular-centric, lens based, perspectively organised media-epistemological paradigm. As an emergent property of both HCI and story-telling, multi-sensory media require an epistemic reckoning that goes beyond the horizon of the ocularcentric. This paper will conclude with an overview of media-epistemic thinking that acknowledges the limits of ocularcentrism, asking how concepts such as Haraway's "situated knowledges" and Laura Marks' "tactile epistemologies," Denson's work on Post-Cinematic Bodies (2023) and thinking around Universal Design in XR might contribute to this task.

Valves, tubes, and transistors. Flows of electricity as cultural techniques

Michał Dawid Żmuda

When dealing with contemporary technologies, academic discourse often resorts to notions of information flows, selection of data, algorithmic work, and networked media. These notions are modelled on the electrical processes, thus the conductivity not only materially foregrounds how contemporary media work, but also became enmeshed with the discourse about those media. This is in line with Friedrich Kittler's recognition that epistemologies are shaped by material qualities and functions of technologies. Following Bernhard Siegert's theory, I propose to look at electrical conductivity as a cultural technique. The term stands for operations, activities, skills, or processes that create cultural meanings, establish material foundations for scientific methods and instruments, and influence perceptual and cognitive abilities of humans. To prove the point, I inspect the discursive relationship between such inventions as John Ambrose Fleming's vacuum tube, Thomas Edison's (fictional) valve for communication with the dead, Norbert Wiener's notion of the mechanical brain, and Alan Turing's test. These inventions provide an opportunity to look at early conceptualizations that used experiments with semiconductors to explain not just communication through electrical flows but any form of communication in general. During the analysis, I identify four basic notions embedded in both the operations of electrical conductivity and the scientific theory. First, the technical operation of charge carrying generates the epistemology of transfer, amplification, and inhibition. The analyzed cases treat flow techniques as operations that make communication possible. What is more, cognition is interpreted as an exchange between the environment, the senses, and the brain. Second, the technical construction of integrated circuits generates the epistemology of distinctive nodes connected by channels. The analyzed inventions presuppose that the processes of communication, and thus also thinking and living, can be mapped in the same way media systems are, as chains of distinctive elements. This recognition allows researchers to think of distinct elements and operations as interchangeable and subject to modification. Third, the technical process of energy conversion brings about the notion of equivalence. The logics and operations of one system can be replicated by another system, even if their material basis is different. Communication becomes immaterial. As a consequence, cognition and living are also interpreted as immaterial. The idea that a human brain can be converted to or replicated by an artificial one is born. Fourth, the technical problem of energy emission generates a fear of information entropy. Because cognition and living are seen as a process akin to flowing energy, the loss of information in such a circuit becomes a matter of life and death. The analysis shows how electrical conductivity creates a discursive difference between flowing and stasis, and how this difference becomes a blueprint for the understanding of communication, cognition, and even life itself.

Beyond Black-Boxing: Exploring Techno-Epistemic Unfolding

Giulio Galimberti

My paper investigates the epistemological factors embedded in specific instances of media, particularly those represented by technoscientific tools (Haraway 1997). The recognition of tools from technoscience as a form of media is a relatively recent development, progressing from Hacking (1982) to Braid (2004) and Rheinberger (2016). Scholars increasingly acknowledge the transformative capacity of each instrument in shaping both the material and discursive dimensions of the scientific object or phenomenon under scrutiny—something Bachelard (1938) referred to as “phenomenotechnique”.

In the realm of Science and Technology Studies (STS), Latour's concept of “black-boxing” (1999) has gained prominence. This notion involves the concealment of calibration processes, theoretical assumptions, and the technical functioning of a media under a seemingly ‘transparent’ interface. The black-boxing phenomenon tends to render our interaction with each device habitual, unthematic, and impedes critical reflection on its effects.

Rheinberger critiques the one-sided perspective of black-boxing. Utilizing his conceptual framework of “epistemic things” and “technical conditions” (1997), I will demonstrate the presence of another mechanism in the formation of new media-epistemic devices. I term this second mechanism ‘unfolding’ and illustrate how each medium establishes a network of theoretical, aesthetic, operational, and experimental dependencies that underpin the construction of knowledge.

The Empty Form of Content: A Media-Epistemological Critique of Online Cultural Production

Scott Wark

'Content' is the collective term we use to describe the media we produce, circulate, reproduce, and consume online. But what does this term actually mean? Using this question as a point of departure, this paper develops a media-epistemological approach to analysing and critiquing online cultural production. Rather than seeing 'content' as coterminous with 'media', it argues that content is a concept that is embedded into the technical infrastructures that support and facilitate online culture. 'Content' is not just media, but rather a set of technical specifications that define what kinds of media can be produced and circulated online. As a concept, then, content has no content but is, instead, what this paper will call an empty form. Conceived in this way, 'content production' can be construed as an imperative to circulate 'content' to fill this empty form. By referring to media as content, then, is to risk conflating media with the parameters of the technical infrastructures that make their production and circulation possible. The paper will conclude by discussing the implications of this conception of 'content' for media studies more generally, by presenting an analysis of Generative Artificial Intelligence's possible impacts on online culture's media ecology – and, indeed, by advocating for adopting media-epistemological critique for thinking about the influence media exert on our theories of them.

Adams Room - Post-human social inquiry: ontology to method and back again 2 - The research assemblage

Using Posthuman concepts of multiplicity and becoming as a means to further the methodological potential of intersectionality.

Victoria Cluley

In this presentation I will present some first thoughts about a posthuman understanding of intersectionality and how this thinking might work to extend the methodological potential of intersectionality. Intersectionality is often referred to in inclusive methodological approaches, particularly in approaches to sampling and now increasingly as an analytic framework for statistical analysis. First developed by the Black Feminist, Kimberlé Crenshaw to critique the exclusion of Black female experience from first and second wave feminism, intersectionality has now been applied to further the understanding of a wide range of marginalised experience. Intersectionality recognises the role of relational characteristics, situated in systems of power that serve to oppress. Human characteristics and social identities such as age, gender, ability, social class, religion and sexuality tend to be addressed. These characteristics, for the most part, are positioned anthropocentrically; resulting in the exclusion of the potential agential role of other phenomena in the creation of intersectional experience such as technology, animals/nature and material objects. Where intersectionality first functioned to question the notion of gender as the exclusive site of female oppression, in this presentation I will apply the posthuman concepts of multiplicity and becoming to extend the methodological potential of intersectionality. In doing so, I will argue that intersectional experience is fluid, ambiguous and is created through the intersection of both human and nonhuman factors operating as a unique ongoing, unfolding, becoming.

Quilting new materialist inquiry: entangling tools from systems thinking and realist evaluation into the research assemblage

Hannah Gardiner & Rebecca Sarah Ciarla

Faced with the complexity of non-linear situations which resist being tamed into the submission of simple representations, we found ourselves grasping onto the structures of Realist Evaluation (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) and Causal Loop Mapping (Sterman, 2000). These offered direction, but felt too rigid. The philosophy of new materialism resonated with our experiences of both life and connections we were tasked with researching. Yet it is veiled in enigmatic language with explicit aversion to conforming to systematisation (St. Pierre, 2021) or integration within the knowledge tree of established academic methods (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 42–45).

Amidst the tensions of this entanglement, which extends beyond academic theorisations to funders and practical transferability to other sectors, we started to identify points of similarity and differences amongst the underlying philosophies. For example, all discuss complexity and emergence from the interactions of entwined

phenomena (Barad, 2007; Flood and Carson, 1993; Juelskjær and Schwennesen, 2012; Mingers, 2011; Sayer, 2000: 13). There are also commonalities in the dynamics described of assemblages and of systems thinking concepts, including non-linear (rhizomic) change and connectivity (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 7–11; Flood and Carson, 1993; Ison, 2010). Although this is not to discount the differences, such as the stratified ontology of critical realism (Bukowska, 2021), as opposed to the flat ontology of New Materialism (Fox and Alldred, 2016: 154). Or the reductionist and essentialist ontological assumptions underlying much of systems thinking versus the relational and contingent ontology deployed in new materialism (Briassouli, 2022).

Pondering the need for a methodological-pluralism argument (Norgaard, 1989), and drawing from the idea of diffraction (Barad, 2007), we asked ourselves how we could uncover new insights by layering these elements together? To inquire with one through another and observe the patterns of disruption. Could we identify points of orientation enabling us to put new materialism in conversation (Bozalek and Zembylas, 2017) with realist evaluation and systems methods? Can this allow us to harness the strengths of each to overcome the weaknesses of others and craft research assemblages (Fox and Alldred, 2016) within which we can entangle ourselves along with the matter of our inquiries to find provisional endings?

In this paper, we will start by sharing the results of our pluralist investigations. Each of us has taken a slightly different path, acting in mirrored concert and approaching from opposite sides towards the same point. One will share what has been uncovered by applying the structuring of realist evaluation and systems mapping to provide form to a new materialist inquiry. The other will share learning from bringing new materialist sensitivities to a realist evaluation, which also draws from system concepts of theories of change. Finally, we will draw together what we have learnt about the touchpoints of the underlying philosophies of new materialism, critical realism, and systems thinking; and how this approach can help operationalising complexity theories into empirical applications. Offering re-imagined analytical methodologies to decipher systemically interconnected issues; and support the design, monitor, and evaluation of multi-partnered solutions and co-produced interventions.

17:30 – Post-Conference Drinks, Playwright, Nottingham

MCCT – Program Overview

Hosted by Centre for Policy, Citizenship and Society + Department of Social and Political Sciences, Nottingham Trent University

Nottingham

Friday 5th April

	N28B Level 2	N27A Level 2	N28A Level 2	Hooley Room	Adams Room	Kilpin Room
9:00 am - Registration (Level 2 Foyer)						
09:30 – 11:00	Rethinking Work and Career: Continued resistance to the neoliberal order 1	Addressing the Underbellies of Neoliberal Academia Stream 1		Neoliberalism & Digital Societies	Gentle Gestures 1	Mental Health Commons: Fantasy, Utopia & Infrastructure 1
11:00-11:30 – Break						
11:30 – 13:00	Postcolonial and Decolonial Theory and Practice 1	War, State Harm and Resistance 1	Identity in Utopia Panel Proposal 1	Critical Thought on Cities 1		Mental Health Commons: Fantasy, Utopia & Infrastructure 2
13:00-14:00 – Break for lunch (food and drink not provided)						
14:00 – 15:30	Postcolonial and Decolonial Theory and Practice 2	War, State Harm and Resistance 2	Identity in Utopia Panel Proposal 2	Productivity or Process: What is the Value of Making 1	Gentle Gestures 3	Mental Health Commons: Fantasy, Utopia & Infrastructure 3
15:30-16:00 – Break						
16:00 – 17:30	Postcolonial and Decolonial Theory and Practice 3		Critical Political Epistemology - 1	Productivity or Process: What is the Value of Making 2	Gentle Gestures 4	Mental Health Commons: Fantasy, Utopia & Infrastructure 4
17:30 – Drinks Reception (Level 2 Foyer) Sponsored by the Centre for Policy, Citizenship and Society						

MCCT – Program Overview

Hosted by Centre for Policy, Citizenship and Society + Department of Social and Political Sciences, Nottingham Trent University

Nottingham

Saturday 6th April

	N28B Level 2	N27A Level 2	N28A Level 2	Hooley Room	Adams Room	Kilpin Room
9:00 am - Registration (Level 2 Foyer)						
09:30 - 11:00		Co-production in Research – The Emperor’s New Clothes? 1	Critical Political Epistemology 2	Productivity or Process: What is the Value of Making 3	Gentle Gestures 5	Mental Health Commons: Fantasy, Utopia & Infrastructure 5
11:00-11:30 – Break						
11:30 – 13:00	Apocalypse, crisis, and constructing our endings.	Co-production in Research – The Emperor’s New Clothes? 2	Critical Political Epistemology 3	Productivity or Process: What is the Value of Making 4	Gentle Gestures 6	Critical Thought on Cities 2
13:00-14:00 – Break for lunch (food and drink not provided)						
14:00 – 15:30	Rethinking Work and Career: Continued resistance to the neoliberal order 2	Gentle Gestures 6	Transgressive Thought in the 21st century: Thinking the thought of the outside, the thought beyond the Law	Media Epistemologies 1	Post-human social inquiry: ontology to method and back again 1	Critical Thought on Cities 3
15:30-16:00 – Break						
16:00 – 17:30		Addressing the Underbellies of Neoliberal Academia Stream 2	Cultural Resistance in a Time of Economic Stagnation	Media epistemologies 2	Post-human social inquiry: ontology to method and back again 2	
17:30 – Post-Conference Drinks – Playwright, Nottingham						