# 1NC – Hostage Taking

## 1NC – Topicality

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#### The 1ac has extended us gracious unconditional hospitality. We accept (as if we had not always been there, reflecting them, anyway). With their guard down, we have taken their 1AC hostage.

#### Our demand: the ballot for the Red Menace from Hebron. The 2ac will meet our demands or suffer the great revenge of otherness.

#### The 1ac invites the possibility of the symbolic trap of otherness, the possibility of tricking the subject-who-acts to welcome us unconditionally so that we can rupture the metastasis of debate itself, triggering a symbolic overcoding of the 1ac that the system simply cannot respond to. The 1ac has no ability to respond because we took it, its ours, stolen away to defeat the system on its own terms, turning signs against signs and over-accelerating all symbolic distinctions between self and other as the distinction between terrorist and hostage becomes murkier and murkier. This time, we will not be defeated. Only the negative is so radically other as to collapse the fundamental metastasis of affirmative and negative.

Baudrillard, 1993.

(Baudrillard, Jean. Professor. Sociology. University of Nanterre. Professor. Institut de Recherche et d'Information Socio-Économique (IRIS). University of Paris-IX Dauphine. 1993. Professor. European Graduate School. “Symbolic Exchange and Death.” Pgs. 36-8.)

We will not destroy the system by a direct, dialectical revolution of the economic or political infrastructure. Everything produced by contradiction, by the relation of forces, or by energy in general, will only feed back into the mechanism and give it impetus, following a circular distortion similar to a Moebius strip. We will never defeat it by following its own logic of energy, calculation, reason and revolution, history and power, or some finality or counter-finality. The worst violence at this level has no purchase, and will only backfire against itself. We will never defeat the system on the plane of the real: the worst error of all our revolutionary strategies is to believe that we will put an end to the system on the plane of the real: this is their imaginary, imposed on them by the system itself, living or surviving only by always leading those who attack the system to fight amongst each other on the terrain of reality, which is always the reality of the system. This is where they throw all their energies, their imaginary violence, where an implacable logic constantly turns back into the system. We have only to do it violence or counter-violence since it thrives on symbolic violence - not in the degraded sense in which this formula has found fortune, as a violence 'of signs', from which the system draws strength, or with which it 'masks' its material violence: symbolic violence is deduced from a logic of the symbolic (which has nothing to do with the sign or with energy): reversal, the incessant reversibility of the counter-gift and, conversely, the seizing of power by the unilateral exercise of the gift. We must therefore displace everything into the sphere of the symbolic, where challenge, reversal and overbidding are the law, so that we can respond to death only by an equal or superior death. There is no question here of real violence or force, the only question concerns the challenge and the logic of the symbolic. If domination comes from the system's retention of the exclusivity of the gift without counter-gift - the gift of work which can only be responded to by destruction or sacrifice, if not in consumption, which is only a spiral of the system of surplus-gratification without result, therefore a spiral of surplus-domination, a gift of media and messages to which, due to the monopoly of the code, nothing is allowed to retort; the gift, everywhere and at every instant, of the social, of the protection agency, security, gratification and the solicitation of the social from which nothing is any longer permitted to escape - then the only solution is to turn the principle of its power back against the system itself: the impossibility of responding or retorting. To defy the system with a gift to which it cannot respond save by its own collapse and death. Nothing, not even the system, can avoid the symbolic obligation, and it is in this trap that the only chance of a catastrophe for capital remains. The system turns on itself, as a scorpion does when encircled by the challenge of death. For it is summoned to answer, if it is not to lose face, to what can only be death. The system must itself commit suicide in response to the multiplied challenge of death and suicide. So hostages are taken. On the symbolic or sacrificial plane, from which every moral consideration of the innocence of the victims is ruled out, the hostage is the substitute the alter-ego of the 'terrorist' - the hostage's death for the terrorist's. Hostage and terrorist may thereafter become confused in the same sacrificial act. The stakes are death without any possibility of negotiation, and therefore return to an inevitable overbidding. Of course, they attempt to deploy the whole system of negotiation, and the terrorists themselves often enter into this exchange scenario in terms of this calculated equivalence (the hostages' lives against some ransom or liberation, or indeed for the prestige of the operation alone). From this perspective, taking hostages is not original at all, it simply creates an unforeseen and selective relation of forces which can be resolved either by traditional violence or by negotiation. It is a tactical action. There is something else at stake, however, as we clearly saw at The Hague over the course of ten days of incredible negotiations: no-one knew what could be negotiated, nor could they agree on terms, nor on the possible equivalences of the exchange. Or again, even if they were formulated, the 'terrorists' demands' amounted to a radical denial of negotiation. It is precisely here that everything is played out, for with the impossibility of all negotiation we pass into the symbolic order, which is ignorant of this type of calculation and exchange (the system itself lives solely by negotiation, even if this takes place in the equilibrium of violence). The system can only respond to this irruption of the symbolic (the most serious thing to befall it, basically the only 'revolution') by the real, physical death of the terrorists. This, however, is its defeat, since their death was their stake, so that by bringing about their deaths the system has merely impaled itself on its own violence without really responding to the challenge that was thrown to it. Because the system can easily compute every death, even war atrocities, but cannot compute the death-challenge or symbolic death, since this death has no calculable equivalent, it opens up an inexpiable overbidding by other means than a death in exchange. Nothing corresponds to death except death. Which is precisely what happens in this case: the system itself is driven to suicide in return, which suicide is manifest in its disarray and defeat. However infinitesimal in terms of relations of forces it might be, the colossal apparatus of power is eliminated in this situation where (the very excess of its) derision is turned back against itself. The police and the army, all the institutions and mobilised violence of power whether individually or massed together, can do nothing against this lowly but symbolic death. For this death draws it onto a plane where there is no longer any response possible for it (hence the sudden structural liquefaction of power in '68, not because it was less strong, but because of the simple symbolic displacement operated by the students' practices). The system can only die in exchange, defeat itself to lift the challenge. Its death at this instant is a symbolic response, but a death which wears it out. The challenge has the efficiency of a murderer. Every society apart from ours knows that, or used to know it. Ours is in the process of rediscovering it. The routes of symbolic effectiveness are those of an alternative politics. Thus the dying ascetic challenges God ever to give him the equivalent of this death. God does all he can to give him this equivalent 'a hundred times over' , in the form of prestige , of spiritual power, indeed of global hegemony But the ascetic's secret dream is to attain such an extent of mortification that even God would be unable either to take up the challenge , or to absorb the debt . He will then have triumphed over God, and become God himself. That is why the ascetic is always close to heresy and sacrilege, and as such condemned by the Church, whose function it is merely to preserve God from this symbolic face-to-face, to protect Him from this mortal challenge where He is summoned to die, to sacrifice Himself in order to take up the challenge of the mortified ascetic. The Church will have had this role for all time, avoiding this type of catastrophic confrontation (catastrophic primarily for the Church) and substituting a rule-bound exchange of penitences and gratifications, the impressario of a system of equivalences between God and men. The same situation exists in our relation to the system of power All these institutions, all these social, economic, political and psychological mediations, are there so that no-one ever has the opportunity to issue this symbolic challenge, this challenge to the death, the irreversible gift which, like the absolute mortification of the ascetic, brings about a victory over all power, however powerful its authority may be. It is no longer necessary that the possibility of this direct symbolic confrontation ever takes place. And this is the source of our profound boredom. This is why taking hostages and other similar acts rekindle some fascination: they are at once an exorbitant mirror for the system of its own repressive violence, and the model of a symbolic violence which is always forbidden it, the only violence it cannot exert: its own death.

#### Transparency is generated by algorithms – an ideological system that relies on total visibility. Debate solidifies the architectures of control to formulate a hegemonic visibility that tries to interpret everything. Similar to the democracy in which they must understand people like me- and reshape our culture to better understand me

Oberg 16(Dan Öberg (2016) War, transparency and control: the military architecture of operational warfare, Cambridge Review of International Affairs, 29:3, 1132-1149, DOI: 10.1080/09557571.2016.1230733)

Already in the 1960s, French sociologist Jean Baudrillard warned of the way transparency works as an ideology of social control. In challenging transparency, Baudrillard has looked particularly at the way urban architecture combines mirroring and light with interconnected open spaces. He argues that these features stand in direct relation to what he calls “operational violence”: namely, that transparency is generated by operational modelling, algorithms, and the processing that occurs in networks and closed loops. This in turn gives rise to a type of alienation that violently circumscribes the subject from lived experience (Baudrillard 2005a, 43; 2005b, 25–38). Baudrillard spent considerable effort investigating the 1136 Dan Öberg way operational violence and transparency are generated by capitalist and techno-scientific structures of production and liberation. Such structures in turn create systemic effects in which lived experience works as an expression of an ideological system based on total visibility (Baudrillard 1975, 54–64; 1994a, 61–73; 2005b, 17, 146). Baudrillard draws upon these insights in a number of ways, claiming that transparency indicates a subtle form of censorship or even a ‘terror’ as it makes the global subject hostage to the fluid and systemic aspects of various architectures of control (Baudrillard 1994b, 58; Baudrillard and Nouvel 2002, 9, 64). Understood in this way, architectures of control help to generate a ‘hegemonic visibility’ which is best characterized as a world ‘where everything must be immediately visible and immediately interpretable’ (Baudrillard and Nouvel 2002, 9). Arguably, the problem of control through transparency centres on how to ‘invest mental and visual space’ (Baudrillard 2014, 11). Control is enabled through summoning banal appearances that are “already there”—repeating and modulating themselves to infinity, according to the nuances of a programmed operational code (Baudrillard and Nouvel 2002, 63; Baudrillard 2014, 22–23). Baudrillard aptly summarizes this ideology as construing a world in which ‘everything is to be legible’, ‘visible’, ‘measurable’, ‘said, accumulated, indexed and recorded’ (1990a, 34–35). In the wake of Baudrillard (and other thinkers like Foucault and Virilio), critical debate on the politics of transparency took off in the 1990s. Often situated as part of a critique of liberal governing, such research emphasizes three important points (see for comparison Mahmud 2012, 1196; Hansen and Flyverbom 2014, 875–876). Firstly, the notion of transparency is related to a modernist desire of democratic rationality. For example, it emphasizes displays and gives the illusion of choice, but works as an imperceptible limit which might trap subjectivity in particular organizational architectures (see Gabriel 2005; Schuman 2007; Nordin 2016). Secondly, transparency, regardless of its aims, tends to relate to surveillance, in turn making the notion strongly linked to social control. As Achille Mbembe has argued, both state and emancipatory violence has often been historically characterized by striving towards absolute transparency between the state and its people. Such a striving tends to be built on creating an open space in which ‘error’ is reduced, ‘truth’ enhanced and ‘aberrations’ eradicated (Mbembe 2003, 19). Thirdly, transparency is often considered to be a voluntary but necessary aspect of global capitalism. The insight that transparency works as a means of corporate control is evident in research which argues that media exposure and scientific progress often lead to less rather than more accountability in global capitalist structures. For example, exposure of certain issues tends to enable blind spots in other areas. Similarly, scientific discourse tends to remove ethical issues from the agenda by relying on a specialized language which is difficult for the layman to understand (Zyglidopoulos and Fleming 2011, 692–693). Arguably, these logics work as central dimensions in what we might call “an ideology of transparency” conflated with liberal core values. As Slavoj Zizek has illustrated, ‘ideology’ should not be taken to mean (as in the orthodox Marxist premise) a ‘false consciousness’. Rather it implies the formation of ‘a social reality whose very existence implies the non-knowledge of its participants as to its essence’ (Zizek 1989, 21). To outline and challenge transparency as an ideology is therefore not an attempt to unveil a “better” reality through theory. It is rather an attempt to understand, theoretically and empirically, what global liberal fantasies of making the world appear through techniques of total visibility do in terms of producing specific discourses as reality. As has been outlined, this ideology is War, transparency and control 1137 present, and indeed produced, in distinct spheres such as information technology, corporate culture or knowledge algorithms (Valentine 2000; Zyglidopoulos and Fleming 2011; Hansen and Flyverbom 2014). But it is also an inherent part of the gendered and racialized visual regimes that underlie surveillance activities and security practices in contemporary Europe, for example in the way the “colonial gaze” persists through exoticizing difference (see Vaughan-Williams 2008; Jones 2011). This is evident particularly in the way transparency helps to create an impetus for racialized othering in a world in which “all is uncovered”. Transparency and warfare As the previous parts established, the logic of global warfare is characterized by its interrelation to liberal discourses of interventionism. Moreover, transparency needs to be understood, not as “good governance” but as part of an ideology which strives to render the world visible, measurable, indexed and recorded, so as to invest it as a mental and visual space. How does this ideology of transparency relate to global warfare? One of the few thinkers who have connected warfare with transparency as a means to control a battlefield is Paul Virilio. He explicitly locates an ideology of transparency as part of the military imaginary waging war. In doing so, Virilio argues that social control over demarcated spaces has given way to global control of the environment dependent on various techniques of transparency (such as aerial imagery or radar), often enacted through military vision (Virilio 1989, 72; 2000a, 61). Tracing how the world gradually becomes more and more transparent as a result of the visualization of the battlefield, Virilio interprets historical events in warfare, such as the bombings of Belgrade by North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1999, as part of an attempt to extend a ‘matchless transparency’ to the globe (Virilio 2000b, 23). His argument mirrors other critics of liberal warfare (often drawing upon Foucault) who state that when a population is targeted the consequences go beyond injury as it aims to pacify global subjectivity. For example, Vivianne Jabri has argued that technologies that target bodies and populations are not isolated occurrences but part of liberal governing (Jabri, 2006, 55). The argument that there is a politics that unfolds on the field of battle is also evident in Shane Brighton’s urging that the study of warfare should engage directly with ‘the killing mechanism on the battlefield’ so as to better grasp its politics (2013, 663–665). The point that warfare is about killing and violence is well taken. However, it might be a mistake to think of battlefield practices as the locus of the way warfare exerts control. Arguably, thinking warfare in this way indirectly helps to create a demand for more transparency on the field of battle. This is not to say that the “terror” Baudrillard identifies in the hegemonic visibility of modern life is any less relevant when it comes to the battlefield, but simply that it extends beyond it. The “matchless transparency” that Virilio found in the Kosovo war was enacted not merely through the Belgrade bombings but also as part of the whole operational machinery which supported this effort. In fact, there is a whole subset of “supportive functions” which occur beyond the field of battle. Much of the military supporting systems can be interpreted as a design aiming to efficiently orchestrate combat.3 This design is called “operational 3   The military doctrines are under no illusion here as they emphasize the way “supporting functions” (such as logistics, command and control, or intelligence and surveillance) are crucial for the military “kill chain” and for traditional lethal effects (AFDD 2013b, 3–5; AFDD 2011a, 6; AFDD 2012, 3–4). 1138 Dan Öberg warfare” and typically deals with planning, employment and the supportive functions of war (see Vego 2007; Olsen and Creveld 2011). The idea that warfare is operational underlies all US and NATO doctrine and can be exemplified by the way it is considered an “effects-based” process which is fought by being coordinated, modelled and planned (see AFDD 2007a, 1-2, 37-40). In fact, the military itself defines the art of operational warfare as the processes which ‘visualize how best to efficiently and effectively employ military capabilities ….’ (AFDD 2007b, 70). Let us, therefore, in order to better understand the relationship between warfare, transparency and control, consider the military architecture beyond the field of battle and the way it operationalizes warfare. As Antoine Bousquet has outlined, the military has been preoccupied for centuries with eradicating friction and uncertainty from warfare. In recent times, attempts to lift the ‘fog of war’ in order to get an omniscient, real-time view of the battlefield are often associated with ‘network centric warfare’ (Bousquet 2009, 215–234). While most authors emphasize the way network-centric warfare relates to information and communication, what concerns me here is not so much the alleged shift in warfare due to new technology. Rather, I find network-centric warfare interesting as part of an attempt to extend a “matchless transparency” to the global battlefield through a logic of operational violence. In fact, the core characteristics of network-centric warfare are part and parcel of operational warfare. As Steve Niva has shown, what today is called ‘shadow wars’ is to a large degree enabled as a result of organizational changes in American bureaucratic structures which stem out of network-centric warfare (Niva 2013, 197–198). It is therefore not far-fetched to examine military discourses in accordance with a logic that aims to create “hegemonic visibility” due to administrative and bureaucratic rituals. The historical attempt to lift the fog of war and create an omniscient view of the battlefield mesh well with the way modern life is characterized by hegemonic visibility, but with one important addition. As the following parts illustrate, the military fantasy to extend a “matchless transparency” by global war is directed towards its external surroundings—the deepened and widened global battlefield—but also towards itself as an organizational form. The self-referential repetitions and modulations according to programmed codes that Baudrillard claimed characterizes an ideology of transparency therefore need to be analysed as part of a military operational coding. The rest of the article examines this, by a reading of US military doctrine documents and manuals, in order to explore and investigate the implications of transparency as a technique of control.

### 1NC

#### Premise one is that a million grains of sand is a heap of sand and premise two is that a heap of sand minus one grain is still a heap.

#### But repeated application of premise two – taking one grain of sand each time – forces the conclusion that a heap may be composed of just one grain of sand.

#### Consequently, if one grain of sand is still a heap, and a heap of sand minus one grain is still a heap of sand, then removing one grain from the one-grain heap of sand to leave no grains at all still leaves a heap of sand.

#### Therefore, the heap both exists and does not exist simultaneously.

#### This has a few implications:

#### a) Predicates cannot be defined. The heart stops beating, your skin flakes, but when does death occur? Biological notions of death rely on Western assumptions that are built on logical incoherency which means there’s no impact to voting aff

#### b) Presumption – if you remove one tension from a crisis when does it cease to be a crisis? Make them justify the epistemological basis behind the notion of “solvency”.

### 1NC

#### It is impossible to move through an infinite amount of points in a finite amount of time. Therefore, either movement is impossible and the Aff can’t solve or time doesn’t exist and their impacts are non-unique.

### 1NC

#### If you know what you’re looking for, inquiry is unnecessary. If you don’t know what you’re looking for, inquiry is impossible. Therefore, inquiry is either unnecessary or impossible.

### Case

#### Double bind – either the 1AC’s harms are indeed a reality, and they cannot resolve their impacts before they are able to regulate the institutions of power which means you can vote negative on presumption, or their harms are fractured and created only for the purpose of inducing fear, which means you can vote negative on standard.

#### Roleplaying is an addictive form of simulation steeped in slave morality and ressentiment; this politics culminates in a form of passive nihilism which paves the road to tyranny with blood.

Antonio 95

[Robert; Professor of Sociology at the University of Kansas; Nietzsche’s Antisociology: Subjectified Culture and the End of History; American Journal of Sociology; Volume 101, No. 1; July 1995]

While modern theorists saw differentiated roles and professions as a matrix of autonomy and reflexivity, Nietzsche held that persons (especially male professionals) in specialized occupations overidentify with their positions and engage in gross fabrications to obtain advancement. They look hesitantly to the opinion of others, asking themselves, "How ought I feel about this?" They are so thoroughly absorbed in simulating effective role players that they have trouble being anything but actors-"The role has actually become the character." This highly subjectified social self or simulator suffers devastating inauthenticity. The powerful authority given the social greatly amplifies Socratic culture's already self-indulgent "inwardness." Integrity, decisiveness, spontaneity, and pleasure are undone by paralyzing overconcern about possible causes, meanings, and consequences of acts and unending internal dialogue about what others might think, expect, say, or do (Nietzsche 1983, pp. 83-86; 1986, pp. 39-40; 1974, pp. 302-4, 316-17). Nervous rotation of socially appropriate "masks" reduces persons to hypostatized "shadows," "abstracts," or simulacra. One adopts "many roles," playing them "badly and superficially" in the fashion of a stiff "puppet play." Nietzsche asked, "Are you genuine? Or only an actor? A representative or that which is represented? . . . [Or] no more than an imitation of an actor?" Simulation is so pervasive that it is hard to tell the copy from the genuine article; social selves "prefer the copies to the originals" (Nietzsche 1983, pp. 84-86; 1986, p. 136; 1974, pp. 232- 33, 259; 1969b, pp. 268, 300, 302; 1968a, pp. 26-27). Their inwardness and aleatory scripts foreclose genuine attachment to others. This type of actor cannot plan for the long term or participate in enduring networks of interdependence; such a person is neither willing nor able to be a "stone" in the societal "edifice" (Nietzsche 1974, pp. 302-4; 1986a, pp. 93-94). Superficiality rules in the arid subjectivized landscape. Neitzsche (1974, p. 259) stated, "One thinks with a watch in one's hand, even as one eats one's midday meal while reading the latest news of the stock market; one lives as if one always 'might miss out on something. ''Rather do anything than nothing': this principle, too, is merely a string to throttle all culture. . . . Living in a constant chase after gain compels people to expend their spirit to the point of exhaustion in continual pretense and overreaching and anticipating others." Pervasive leveling, improvising, and faking foster an inflated sense of ability and an oblivious attitude about the fortuitous circumstances that contribute to role attainment (e.g., class or ethnicity). The most mediocre people believe they can fill any position, even cultural leadership. Nietzsche respected the self-mastery of genuine ascetic priests, like Socrates, and praised their ability to redirect ressentiment creatively and to render the "sick" harmless. But he deeply feared the new simulated versions. Lacking the "born physician's" capacities, these impostors amplify the worst inclinations of the herd; they are "violent, envious, exploitative, scheming, fawning, cringing, arrogant, all according to circumstances. " Social selves are fodder for the "great man of the masses." Nietzsche held that "the less one knows how to command, the more urgently one covets someone who commands, who commands severely- a god, prince, class, physician, father confessor, dogma, or party conscience. The deadly combination of desperate conforming and overreaching and untrammeled ressentiment paves the way for a new type of tyrant (Nietzsche 1986, pp. 137, 168; 1974, pp. 117-18, 213, 288-89, 303-4).

#### The methods and technologies of the global media apparatus loses the event to the multitude of meanings it infuses within. The non-event is created and the “real” event is lost so as to be an alternative fact in favor of Trump’s anti-islamic agenda.

Artrip and Debrix, 2018.

(Artrip, Ryan E. Professor. Philosophy. Guilford College. Debrix, François. Director. Alliance for Social, Political, Ethical, and Cultural Thought (ASPECT). Professor. Political Science. Virginia Tech University. 2018. “The Viral Mediation of Terror: ISIS, Image, Implosion.” Critical Studies in Media Communication. Vol. 35. No. 1. Pgs. 82-4.)

The generalized exchange of digital/viral media, on ISIS’s side or through western media networks, renders possible what we call a principle of reversal of today’s media. Reversal here is an expression of the fungibility of meanings, truths, and facts. Reversal, or the principle of reversibility of today’s digital/viral media, is not limited to what ISIS’s own media networks and image platforms seek to unleash. It is also not just about a targeted response by the west to ISIS’s viral productions of terror/horror. Again, reversal is a generalized principle of truth’s operationality; it hints at the modalities of deployment—aleatory and unpredictable as they may be—that are available for the truth-effects and truth-claims that are produced to circulate, without a referential core, throughout the global media circuitry. Take, for example, the onslaught of responses to an interview of Kellyanne Conway wherein she referenced “the Bowling Green massacre”—a fabricated terrorist event/non-event—in an apparent effort to justify Trump’s first executive order for a travel ban on seven predominantly Muslim countries in January and February 2017 (Schmidt & Bever, 2017). Conway misspoke about, misremembered, or misunderstood a 2011 occurrence in which two Iraqi citizens were arrested in Bowling Green, Kentucky and federally charged for material support of Al-Qaeda.

In this iteration of what several of Trump’s advisors and spokespersons labeled an “alternative truth,” Conway claimed that the massacre was unfamiliar because it had not been widely covered by U.S. news media. Ironically, the Bowling Green Massacre soon gained widespread coverage as the media response to this “alternative event” became a spectacular (non-)event in itself. It was not long before people went to social media to circulate memes like “Never Forget Bowling Green” or to reproduce “Kennedy moment” types of expressions such as “where were you when you heard about the Bowling Green Massacre?”. One site (www.bowlinggreenmassacrefund.com) even appeared to solicit donations for a Bowling Green Massacre victims’ fund, although the link was redirected to the American Civil Liberties Union’s donation page (Seppala, 2017). A frenzy of reactions related to the “alternative event” swarmed the mediascape. These took the form of (social) media responses one would expect to find after an actual tragedy (supposing one could still think in terms of an “actual” tragedy). Yet, they also signified the non-eventness of the initially identified event/massacre. Moreover, the anti-immigrant and Islamophobic public relations function (intended or not) of Conway’s interview became an event in and of itself. But what might have been an “alternative” strategy to produce a media event such as this also underwent a profound and profuse reversal. At once, it became capable of shifting from fact to fake news, from non-event to viral media event, and from pro-immigrant ban strategy to a proliferation of viral/virulent media tactics aimed at deviating the possible ideological/policy intention behind Conway’s statement.

This “alternative” terrorist event is more than a simple parody of the new “alternative fact” regime of U.S. power and its media strategies and effects. The mode in which this event/non-event unfolded online and offline was nearly identical to the mediated display of the aftermath of an “actual” terrorist event or tragedy, such as the unfortunately more and more frequent attacks on civilian lives by ISIS sympathizers in places like Barcelona, Berlin, Istanbul, London, Manchester, Nice, Paris, or Turku, among others. The Bowling Green Massacre took place primarily through the mediation of its likely absence. The non-event/alternative fact, through its imminent reversal—one minute it is fake, the next minute it is real; in one instant it is about an ISIS attack, in the next it is about the US needing to adopt aggressive immigration and anti-Muslim policies to fend off such an attack—became hyper-real by way of some of the above-mentioned memes and other digital/viral expressions of its presence, but also through ceaseless political commentary and truth politics accompanied by a frenzy of images inscribing it with meaning(s) and truth(s) (some of these images in western media at the time of the Bowling Green pronouncement were arbitrarily borrowed from previous ISIS scenes of terror/horror, also).

Not unlike many reactions to beheadings by ISIS in western media, the terrorist attack and its shadow are subjected to mechanisms of potentially endless re-mediation. Thus, they are capable of (re)producing the same types of outputs, effects, and affects, including a contagion/virulence of meaning and truth. Perhaps this is, as Baudrillard might suggest, because the real of the event is always already absent, or at least rendered unknowable as a result of hyperreality. Might it be that the real of the November 2015 ISIS attacks in Paris, for example, is as inaccessible as the (un)real of the Bowling Green Massacre? By posing this question, we do not mean to be insensitive about or dismissive of the sense of loss felt by many as a result of what took place in Paris (or in any other recent terrorist tragedy). Rather, we wish to bring to the fore a puzzling yet eerily uncomfortable and disturbing commonality, the result of the principle of reversal/reversibility of media events, about contemporary modalities of mediation shared by both the event and the non-event, some- thing that may lead to their possible indistinguishability/non-differentiation.

At the moment when a terrorist attack irrupts into the western mediascape and, often, into a western cityscape too, its immediacy has already virtually disappeared. The instantaneous global mediation of such an event—driven, perhaps, by some impossible will to articulate its irreducible horror—provokes a mass desire/need to capture the atrocity. Yet it also helps to render such a capture virtually impossible. The phenomenon is caught in/by real time (media time), virulently disseminated across the global informational circulatory system, all the while exponentially amassing a collection of content in the form of news and social media commentary, visual media documenting the terror/ horror, and various other hyper-reactive inputs and outputs of networked sharing (all of this often before the violence has even ceased). Again, as we intimated in the previous section of this article, this is something that ISIS’s own images of terror/horror count on. Diffusion and, indeed, profusion, and their likely pathway onto reversal/reversibility of meanings and truths, are more urgent than precision or accuracy about ideological claims and messages. ISIS’s work gets done by taking advantage of the virality/virulence offered by the prevalent global media circuitry and by what, within and through it, the principle of reversal/reversibility (with its truth-effects, fact-checks, and meaning- claims) does to the event.

Thus, suffocated by the weight of its own image reflected back, the event becomes engorged with meanings. Its reality becomes indeterminable. And, in this fourth order simulacrum (going back to Baudrillard’s theory of simulation), the media system’s own response to the image of terror is to (re)circulate it in infinite exchange, that is to say, to subject it to the constant gauntlet of semiotic profusion. The sum of effects from the (re)mediation of the violent terrorist (non-)event enables an almost cinematic proliferation of images of terror/horror also. This may explain, in part, the well-documented sentiment that the 9/11 attacks somehow appeared to be staged. Indeed, the 9/11 terrorist event itself seemed too unreal, too much “like a movie,” as the attacks took place in (tele)- visual real time (Debrix, 2008; Rickli, 2009). Thus, what characterized the hyper-mediation of 9/11, as Baudrillard (2005) once remarked, was “the feeling that seizes us when faced with the occurrence of something that happens without having been possible” (p. 130). One might suggest that the choreographed or stylized (as some have argued; see Stern & Berger, 2015) effects of ISIS’s videotaped beheadings of westerners in Syria or Iraq around 2014 and 2015 may also be one of those “somethings” (perhaps “something” is a better term than event today) that “happen[ed] without having been possible.”

The media operations involved in the capture, processing, and transmission of meaning via the terrorist event or image produce effects well beyond their representational functions. Thus, like terrorist attacks perhaps, they explode the event’s meaning/truth into image-fragments scattered throughout a global mediascape of interminable and indeterminable exchange, throughout the global media circuitry. Image fragments, the “some-thing” of a terrorist event as we suggested above, are “upvoted,” “retweeted,” and “status updated” on the same networked interfaces as cat memes, online TV series and films, YouTube videos, or corporate advertising. Images of mediated terror and horror, radically abstracted from what little originality or immediacy of the event might have been possible in the first place, become globally fungible, fused and confused with all other types of digitally and virally mediated images. The irruption of the terrorist attack/act/fact is reduced to a series of infinitely reversible yet still exchangeable/distributable meanings and images that are folded into the very functions and processes of the west’s globally mediatized (and mediatically globalized) meaning and value systems. This is perhaps what the principle of reversibility of the “event” (and its truth-effects) is meant to achieve: an effort to flood the system to the point of the collapse of meaning/ truth. Reversibility and oversaturation feed each other’s energies.

#### Academic knowledge production capitulates to structures of cybernetic control inherent within the mandate of the university – the subsequent proliferation of information results in non-thought.

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(Ingrid M. Hoofd. Professor of New Media and Communications at the University of Singapore. (2010). The accelerated university: Activist-academic alliances and simulation of thought. *Ephemera, 10*(1), 7-24. Retrieved October 20, 2017, from <http://www.ephemerajournal.org/contribution/accelerated-university-activist-academic-alliances-and-simulation-thought>)

It may be useful here to remember once again that the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ArpaNet) – the predecessor of the current Internet – was largely developed in Western universities from military monies. The Internet then signifies a more aggressive and ubiquitous involvement of new technologies in the stratification of contemporary society, its individuals, and its various forms of exchange. It also signifies the ongoing faith in the supposed transparency of such forms of communication, as well as the desire to transcend institutional borders, even though such faith is increasingly a delusion brought about by the circular logic of such a system of knowing (the other).

In ‘The Academic Speed-up’, Fred Moten and Stefano Harney address precisely the way contemporary academia is engaged in what they call ‘the internalization of a cybernetics of production’ (Moten and Harney, 1999: 18) and its background in an imperialist Cold War logic. Moten and Harney are rightly wary of crisis-talk that assumes crisis is unique to the contemporary moment – rather, they claim, crisis is always part and parcel of capitalism, and hence of any academic project that needs to justify and re-produce itself within such an economic logic. Nostalgia for some lost ‘golden age’ of academia is therefore not only misplaced, but also dangerous, as it seeks to mobilize grounds for resistance in the illusions of academic independence, equal collaboration and autonomy. Instead, these illusions are themselves effects of the academic mode of production and of how the latter engenders new forms of in- and exclusion, creating a ‘way to organize hopeful ideas, and ... real rewards’ (1999: 12, italics mine). According to Moten and Harney, the progression from the assembly-line type of academic work towards the contemporary speed-up involves newer and more efficient ways of extracting academic surplus labour through out-sourcing, just-in-time production and flexibility in which academics are asking to ‘link a series of sites of production’ (1999: 13).

While they suggest that this ‘recombination of time and space discourage[s] the formation of alliance with alternatives’ (1999: 16), I instead conclude from their lucid analysis that the academic speed-up precisely encourages the formation of connections ‘outside’ its former institutional walls, especially since many of these activities are unsalaried. Such alliances namely facilitate capitalist acceleration – and therefore ‘relative immisseration’ (1999: 17) – because the cybernetic space signifies the imaginary potential for ‘pure and radical thought’ under neoliberal capitalism. In ‘Doing Academic Work’, Harney and Moten ask the crucial question: whom or what the increase of knowledge production, which ‘would always seem to be a good thing’, (Harney and Moten, 1998: 165, italics mine) finally serves. This enquiry leads them to conclude that within post-war academia, ‘newly produced knowledge contributes to the force of production’ (1998: 166) and hence, I would claim, to accelerated exploitation, not only within academia itself, but especially through those spaces that double its mandate.

The way in which I argue that many new university and activist-research projects paradoxically contribute to this global re-stratification of otherness through technological acceleration, also connects well with Bill Readings’ work on the contemporary university. In The University in Ruins, Readings argues that the change from the ‘university of reason and culture’ to the present-day ‘university of excellence’ means that the centre of power has shifted largely away from the nation-state (Readings, 1996: 22). To read power as residing primarily in the sum of ideological and repressive state apparatuses hence no longer makes sense. It would therefore not suffice to critique the university simply as an institution that functions as the nurturer of national culture and the cultured elites for the nation-state. Readings points out that it is telling that strong oppositional critiques of the university seem to become possible precisely at the moment where its centralising power and knowledge have vacated its premises. More importantly, the function of the university of excellence – one that successfully transforms it into yet another trans-national corporation – relies on the fantasy that the university is or should be still that university of reason and culture, and that it originally did pursue universal truth, justice and knowledge.

So the invocation of the fantasy of an originary university of knowledge and truth to which Edu-Factory’s and other similar activist-academics carefully seek to be responsible, facilitates the doubling of the production of information – as if it were still knowledge and culture – into speed-spaces outside the university walls proper. According to Bernard Stiegler in Technics and Time 2: Disorientation, new technologies of acceleration therefore lead to a tension in contemporary university practices under neoliberalism: they make possible thought through continuous differentiation into the virtual, but likewise reduce and manage thought to its calculable double – thus creating non-thought. The point for Stiegler is then to bring about ‘epochal redoubling’ which synthesises the current tension into an affirmation of technology as well as humanity (Stiegler, 2009: 7). While I agree with Stiegler on the ambiguity and doubling at the heart of acceleration, his imagined solution is nonetheless suspect. This is due to his narrative of the heroic overcoming of this tension in which an analysis of the complicities of a politics of difference is glaringly absent – in other words, the conceptual problem in Stiegler, activist-research, and eventually also in this article, is one of discerning (or thinking) ‘good’ from ‘bad’ doubling.

#### Reading the same aff is a weak will to power produces a life-denying ossification of debate—the world is composed of constant change and contradictions, which means reading an old aff is not only life denying, but that the 1ac is a negative speech, which makes the aff both anti- and extra-T—independent reason to vote neg

Grimm 77 (Ruediger Hermann, art historian and Goethe scholar, *Nietzsche's Theory of Knowledge*, ed. M. Montinari, W. Miiller-Lauter & H. Wenzel, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, pg. 30-33, Gender modified

Western logic and metaphysics have been traditionally founded upon a handful of principles which were regarded as being self-evidently true, and therefore neither requiring nor admitting of any further proof40• One of these principles we have already dealt with at some length, the notion that truth must be unchanging. Rather than further belabor the whole question of truth, we shall now turn to Nietzsche's analysis of why it is that truth should be regarded as necessarily unchanging in the first place. Nietzsche's view of reality (the will to power) is such that all that exists is an ever-changing chaos of power-quanta, continually struggling with one another for hegemony. Nothing remains the same from one instant to the next. Consequently there are no stable objects, no "identical cases," no facts, and no order. Whatever order we see in the world, we ourselves have projected into it. By itself, the world has no order : there is no intrinsically stable "world order," no "nature." Yet metaphysics, logic, and language indeed, our whole conceptual scheme is grounded in the assumption that there is such a stable order. Why? . • . die Annahme des seienden ist nothig, um denken und schliessen zu konnen : die Logik handhabt our Formeln fiir Gleichbleibendes deshalb ware diese Annahme noch ohne Beweiskraft fiir die Reali tat : ,,das Seiende" gehort zu unserer Optik48• This can perhaps be best clarified by anticipating our discussion of Nietzsche's perspectivism. Even if reality is a chaos of power-quanta, about which any statement is already an interpretation and "falsification," we nevertheless must assume some sort of order and continuity in order to function at all. But the assumption of order and continuity even if it is a necessary assumption is certainly not any sort of proof. We ourselves, as will to power, gain control over our environment by "interpreting" it, by simplifying and adapting it to our requirements. Life itself is an ongoing process of interpretation, a process of imposing a superficial order upon a chaotic reality. In Wahrheit ist Interpretation ein Mittel selbst, um Herr iiber etwas zu werden. (Der organische Prozess setzt fortwahrendes /nterpretieren voraus42• Thus we create for ourselves a world in which we can live and function and further enhance and increase our will to power. Even our perceptual apparatus is not geared to gleaning "truth" from the objects of our experience. Rather, it arranges, structures, and interprets these objects so that we can gain control over them and utilize them for our own ends. The "truth" about things is something we ourselves have projected onto them purely for the purpose of furthering our own power. Thus Nietzsche can say Wahrheit ist die Art von Irrthum, ohne welche eine bestimmte Art von lebendigen Wesen nicht leben konnte. Der Werth fiir das Leben entscheidet zuletzt43. Thus the "truth" about reality is simply a variety of error, a convenient fiction which is nevertheless necessary for our maintenance. In the last analysis it is not a question of "truth" at all, but rather, a matter of which "fiction," which interpretation of reality best enables me to survive and increase my power. In an absolute sense, the traditional standard of unchanging truth is no more true or false than Nietzsche's own. But on the basis of Nietzsche's criterion for truth we can make a vital distinction. All statements about the truth or falsity of our experiential world are functions of the will to power, and in this sense, all equally true (or false). The difference lies in the degree to which any particular interpretation increases or decreases our power. The notion that truth is unchanging is the interpretation of a comparatively weak will to power, which demands that the world be simple, reliable, predictable, i. e. "true." Constant change, ambiguity, contradiction, paradox, etc. are much more difficult to cope with, and require a comparatively high degree of will to power to be organized (i. e. interpreted) into a manageable environment. The ambiguous and contradictory the unknown is frightening and threatening. Therefore we have constructed for ourselves a model of reality which is eminently "knowable," and consequently subject to our control. Pain and suffering have traditionally been held to stem from "ignorance" about the way the world "really" is : the more predictable and reliable the world is, the less our chances are of suffering through error, of being unpleasantly surprised. However, " darin driickt sich eine gedriickte Seele aus, voller MIBtrauen und schlimmer Erfahrung . . . 44." The demand that reality and truth be stable, reliable, predictable, and conveniently at our disposal is a symptom of weakness. The glossing over of the chaotic, contradictory, changing aspect of reality is the sign of a will to power which must reduce the conflict and competition in the world to a minimum. Yet resistance and competition are the very factors which enable any particular power-constellation to express itself and grow in power. As we saw earlier, the will to power can only express itself by meeting resistance, and any interpretation of reality which attempts to minimize these factors is profoundly anti-life (since life is will to power). Furthermore, a person embodying a strong and vigorous will to power will "interpret" the "threatening" aspect of the world the chaos, ambiguity, contradiction, danger, etc. as stimuli, which continually offer [them] a high degree of resistance which [they] must meet and overcome if [they are] to survive and grow. Rather than negate change and make the world predictable, a "strong" person would, according to Nietzsche, welcome the threat and challenge of a constantly changing world. Referring to those who require a world as changeless as possible in order to survive, Nietzsche says . . . (eine umgekehrte Art Mensch wiirde diesen Wechsel zum Reiz rechnen) Eine mit Kraft iiberladene und spielende Art W esen wiirde gerade die Aff ekte, die Unvernunft und den Wechsel in eudamonistischem Sinne gutheissen, sammt ihren Consequenzen, Gefahr, Contrast, Zu-Grunde-gehn usw-45. A large part of the intellectual energy of the West has been spent in trying to discover "facts," "laws of nature," etc., all of which are conceived to be "truths" and which, therefore, do not change**. For Nietzsche,** this conceptualization of our experience is tantamount to a "mummification" : when an experience is conceptualized, it is wrenched from the everchanging stream of becoming which is the world. By turning our experiences into facts, concepts, truths, statistics, etc. we "kill" them, rob them of their immediacy and vitality and embalm them, thus transforming them into the convenient bits of knowledge which furnish our comfortable, predictable, smug existences46• Der Mensch sucht ,,die Wahrheit" : eine Welt, die nicht sich widerspricht, nicht tiiuscht, nicht wechselt, eine wahre Welt, eine Welt, in der man nicht leidet : Widerspruch, Tauschung, Wechsel Ursachen des Leidens l47 For Nietzsche, this whole tendency to negate change which is so intimately connected with the presupposition that "truth" always means "unchanging, eternal truth," is a symptom of decadence, a symptom of the weakening and disruption of the will to power. This outlook says, in effect, "This far shall you go, and this much shall you learn, but no more than this . . . . " In the absence of any fixed and ultimate standard for truth, of course, this outlook is no more true or false than Nietzsche's own. Yet it is not a question here of rightness or wrongness, but a question of power. More specifically, it is a matter of vital power. "Der Werth fur das Leben entscheidet zuletzt48." Nietzsche's conclusion is that this static world interpretation has a negative, depressing effect on a person's vital energies (will to power). It constricts growth, it sets limits and hampers the self-assertion of the will to power. The strong individual, whom Nietzsche so much admires, flourishes only in an environment of change, ambiguity, contradiction, and danger. The chaotic and threatening aspect of the world is a stimulus for such individuals, demanding that they constantly grow and increase their power, or perish49• It demands that they constantly exceed their previous limits, realize their creative potential and surpass it, become more than they were. In the absence of any stability in the world, the strong individual who can flourish in such an environment is radically free from any constraint, radically free to create. It need scarcely be said that this world-interpretation is immeasurably more conducive to the growth and enhancement of the will to power than the static worldview. And the increase of will to power is Nietzsche's only criterion : Alles Geschehen, alle Bewegung, alles Werden als ein Feststellen von Gradund Kraftverhaltnissen, als ein Kampf . . .0 0

#### Their affirmation of the University’s technotransparency shrouded in a productive crossover of activism and academia only sustains the liberal promise of the University that promises only more death and destruction as well as accelerating the very education that leads to all of their impacts- turns case

Hoofd 10. Ingrid M. Hoofd, Assistant Professor in the Communications and New Media Programme at the National University of Singapore (NUS). The accelerated university: Activist academic alliances and the simulation of thought, ephemera, Feb 2010, 2010 ephemera 10(1): 7-24)

But far from an ‘a-disciplinary self-constitution’ that supposedly overcomes any fictitious distinction, Investigacció for one relies heavily on the common fictitious distinction between activism and academia to validate their praxis. By contrasting their initiative to the false objectivity of academicism, they validate their own knowledge production by claiming to be in the margins as opposed to the ‘ivory tower’, as if the latter is a stable area from which one can detach oneself from the outside world and hence objectively analyse. Also, one could wonder to what extent one is actually speaking from the margins when one has the time, technologies, spaces and connections to organise an event like Investigacció. The desire to generate knowledge from ‘one’s own subjectivity, without limitations’ (2005: 3) is analogous to the mythical humanist narrative of breaking with and improving upon previous knowledge – a form of knowledge-innovation that the academic institution is also infused with. The university of excellence as well as its doublings into projects like Investigacció are therefore an effect of its repetitions (with a difference) into the neo-liberal mythical space of progress and acceleration. The creation of more and more ‘spaces and mechanisms of production, exchange and collective reflection’ (2005: 3) is indeed precisely what late-capitalism seeks to forge, as long as such reflection generates an intensification of production. The idea that subjectivities from social movements are in any way less produced by neo-liberal globalisation is highly problematic. In fact, such an idea suggests a rather positivist notion of the subject – similar to that supposedly objective academic individual Investigacció seeks to dethrone. Investigacció then somewhat nostalgically narrates a subject untainted by power structures and technologies. In fact, the Investigaccióinitiative displays how the subject of activist research empowers her- or himself throughrecreating the fictitious distinction between activism and academia. S/he does so by reproducing this opposition, which in turn co-creates and accelerates these ‘new spaces’ – spaces that were created with the goal of facilitating global capitalism and its speed-elite, and that allow for the perfection of military power through technologies of surveillance. The call for participants to become active and productive in co-organising the international event – of course, without any monetary remuneration – is also much present in Investigacció’s rhetoric. They suggest that participants should engage with one another not only at the meeting, but especially through the online spaces Investigacció has created for the purpose of generating activist research. ‘Take action!’ says their flyer, ‘[...] make it so the conference is yours!’ This seductive appeal to the subject-individual as the centre of creative production is very common to neo-liberal consumerism and its emphasis on cybernetic interactivity. But it is also false in that it gives the participants a sense of control over Investigacció that they actually do not have – eventually, the main organisers (have already) set the agenda and handed out the stakes. In short, the organisers fail to situate themselves by pretending everyone is on the same level of privilege – for example, not requiring monetary compensation – in this project, and this failure is strangely an effect of their attempt at reviving a more democratic academic structure. Information Initially, one could think that Baudrillard’s assessment confirms my analytical suspicion regarding activist-research projects. In ‘The Implosion’, Baudrillard starts from the premise that the increase of information in our media-saturated society results in a loss of meaning because it ‘exhausts itself in the act of staging communication’. New media technologies exacerbate the subject’s fantasy of transparent communication, while increasingly what are communicated are mere copies of the same, a ‘recycling in the negative of the traditional institution’ (Baudrillard, 1994: 80). New technologies are simply the materialisation of that fantasy of communication, and the ‘lure’ (1994: 81) of such a technocratic system resides in the requirement of active political engagement to uphold that fantasy. This translates in a call to subjectivise oneself – to be vocal, participate, and to ‘play the [...] liberating claim of subjecthood’ (1994: 85). The result of the intensifying circular logic of this system, he says, is that meaning not only implodes in the media, but also that the social implodes in the masses – the construction of a ‘hyperreal’ (1994: 81). Contra the claim of Glocal Research Space that such praxes of alliance are ‘without an object’ (Glocal Research Space, 2003: 19), this does not mean that objectification does not take place at all. Instead, and in line with Baudrillard’s argument, the urge to subjectivise oneself and the objectification of the individual go hand in hand under speed-elitism – a double bind that locks the individual firmly into her or his technocratic conditions. Indeed, the argument in ‘Activist Research’ that ‘research [should be] like an effective procedure [which is] in itself already a result’ (2003: 19) describes the conditions of Readings’ ‘university of excellence’ where any research activity, thanks to technological instantaneity, translates immediately into the capitalist result of increased information flow (Readings, 1996: 22). Active subjects and their others become the cybernetic objects of such a system of information flow. The insistence in ‘Activist Research’ on free, travelling and nomadic research simply makes sure that this logic of increased flow is repeated. Because of this desire for increased flow and connection, activist-research projects are paradoxically highly exclusivist in advocating the discourses and tools of the speed-elite. The problem with projects like Edu-Factory or the productive cross-over of activism and academia is therefore not only that their political counter-information means just more information (and loss of meaning) as well as more capitalist production, but that it puts its faith in precisely those technologies and fantasies of control, communication and of ‘being political’ that underlie the current logic of overproduction. It is at this point that John Armitage and Joanne Roberts in ‘Chronotopia’ contend that such a ‘cyclical repetition’ (Armitage and Roberts, 2002: 52) is particularly dangerous because the fantasy of control remains exactly that, a fantasy. At the same time, this increasingly forceful repetition can only eventually give way to ‘the accident’ because chronotopian speed-spaces are fundamentally and exponentially unstable. Armitage and Roberts’ idea of ‘cyclical repetition’ through chronotopianism does thus not mean an exact repetition of the speed-elite’s quest for mastery – instead, I would argue that it is this immanent quality of difference in repetition, of the ‘essential drifting due to [a technology’s] iterative structure cut off from […] consciousness as the authority of the last analysis’ as Derrida calls it in ‘Signature Event Context’ (Derrida, 1982: 316) that allows for the accident or true event to appear. The difference through technologically sped-up repetition appears then perhaps as a potential, but only precisely as a growing potential that cannot be willed – in this sense, it will be an unanticipated event indeed. One could then speak of an intensification of politics in what is perhaps too hastily called the neo-liberal university, opening up unexpected spaces for critique in the face of its neo-liberalisation, which in turn points to the fundamental instability of its enterprise. Activist-research projects add to this intensification by virtue of their techno-acceleration. This intensification of politics is no ground for univocal celebration, since it remains also the hallmark of the neo-liberal mode of production of knowledge through the new tele-technologies as excellent, regardless of its critical content. The current university’s instability mirrors and aggravates the volatility of a capitalism marked by non-sustainability, a growing feminisation of poverty, the rise of a new global upper class, and highly mediated illusions of cybernetic mastery. This nonetheless also opens up new forms of thought, if only appearing as ‘accidents’. Derrida hints at this, but also at the university’s elusiveness, in ‘Mochlos, or: the Conflict of the Faculties’, when he claims that he ‘would almost call [the university] the child of an inseparable couple, metaphysics and technology’ (Derrida, 1993: 5, emphasis mine). Almost, but never quite – here then emerges the possibility of truly subversive change. But this change will not be brought about by the mere content of the critique, but by the way it pushes acceleration to the point of systemic disintegration or implosion. In Fatal Strategies, Baudrillard calls this the ‘fatal strategy’ that contemporary theory must adopt: a sort of conceptual suicide attack which aims at pulling the rug out from under the speed-elitist mobilisation of semiotic oppositions, and which shows the paradox behind any attempt at structural predictions. In ‘The Final Solution’, Baudrillard relates this intensification of the humanist obsession with dialectics, mastery, and transparency – the quest for immortality that is at the basis of techno-scientific research – to destruction and the death drive through the metaphor of and actual research around cloning, which strangely resonates well with Derrida’s investigation of the tele-technological archive in Archive Fever. I read Baudrillard’s ‘Final Solution’ here as a metaphor for the duplication (cloning) of thought into virtual spaces outside the university walls proper. If contemporary research seeks to make human cloning possible, argues Baudrillard, then this endeavour is equivalent to cancer: after all, cancer is simply automatic cloning, a deadly form of multiplication. It is of interest here to note that the possibility of creating an army of clones has likewise garnered much military interest, just as academia today more and more serves military ends. As the logic of cloning as automatic multiplication is typical of all current technological and humanist advancements, the exacerbation of this logic can only mean more promise and death. At this point my argument mirrors the apocalyptic tone of the activist-research projects. In the final analysis, the problem with Edu-Factory, Facoltà di Fuga, Investigacció, Universidad Nómada, Ricercatori Precari, and Glocal Research Space is that these projects entail a very specific form of subjugation with dire consequences for the slower and less techno-genic classes. Techno-scientific progress entails a regress into immortality, epitomised by a nostalgia typical of the current socio-technical situation, for when we were ‘undivided’ (Baudrillard, 2000: 6). I contend that Baudrillard refers not only to the lifeless stage before humans became sexed life forms, but also makes an allusion to psycho-analytic readings of the ‘subject divided in language’ and its nostalgia for wholeness and transparent communication. The desire for immortality, like archive fever, is therefore the same as the Freudian death drive, and we ourselves ultimately become the object of our technologies of scrutiny and nostalgia. The humanist quest of totally transparency of oneself and of the world to oneself that grounds the idea of the modern techno-scientific university, is ultimately an attempt at (self-)destruction, or in any case an attempted destruction of (one’s) radical difference [alterity]. The urgent political question, which Stiegler problematically avoided in Disorientation, then becomes: which selves are and will become caught up in the delusion of total self-transparency and self-justification, and which selves will be destroyed? And how may we conceive of an ‘ethic of intellectual inquiry or aesthetic contemplation’ that ‘resists the imperatives of speed’, as Jon Cook likewise wonders in ‘The Techno-University and the Future of Knowledge’ (Cook, 1999: 323)? It is of particular importance to note here that the very inception of this question and its possible analysis, like the conception of the speed-elite, is itself again a performative repetition of the grounding myth of the university of independent truth, justice and reason. Therefore, in carrying forward the humanist promise, this analysis is itself bound up in the intensification of the logic of acceleration and destruction, and that is then also equally tenuous. This complicity of thought in the violence of acceleration itself in turn quickens the machine of the humanist promise, and can only manifest itself in the prediction of a coming apocalypse – whether it concerns a narrative of the death of thought and the university, or of a technological acceleration engendering the Freudian death drive. We are then simply the next target in the technological realisation of complete γνωθι σαυτον (know thyself) – or so it seems. Because after all, a clone is never an exact copy, as Baudrillard very well knows; and therefore, the extent to which activist-research projects hopefully invite alterity can thankfully not yet be thought.