

Thorpe, A. (2012) *Architecture and Design Versus Consumerism: How Design Activism Confronts Growth*. Abingdon, Oxon: Earthscan.

Haraway, D. (1988) 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective.' *Feminist Studies*, 14(3). pp. 575–599.

Rock, M. ([1996] [2009] 2013) 'Designer As Author' and 'Fuck Content.' *Multiple Signatures: On Designers, Authors, Readers and Users*. New York: Rizzoli. pp. 45–56, 91–95.

Ahmed, S. (2017) 'Introduction' in *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham: Duke University Press. pp. 1–18.

Halprin, L. (1969) *RSVP Cycles: Creative Processes in the Human Environment*. New York: George Braziller.

Thorpe (2012; p. 1) explores the relationship between 'activism, consumerism and growth,' to analyse design that aims to contribute to social change.

Thorpe (ibid.) suggests that critical and effective social change through design will need to confront infinite economic growth, the dependency on consumerism and large scale production within a system of exploited cheap labour and finite material resources.

In my work, I am exploring the connections between creative work, change-making and the capitalist conditions we find ourselves constrained within.

How might we produce 'value' that supports social change outside the confines of predatory capitalist culture? If we were to contribute meaningfully towards social causes, we can't escape commerce and monetary exchange. But perhaps the scale at which materials are produced and consumed can be controlled if they remained small?

And perhaps the value of dialogue, knowledge exchange and visualisation can also create change by leading us to formulate ideas, alternate ways of operating and future directions for us to aim towards.

Donna Haraway (1988) suggests that knowledge is created by those with unique subjective positions. Therefore such situated knowledge can potentially be incomplete, inaccurate, and biased. Total knowledge, objectivity and the ability for us to arrive at an ultimate truth doesn't necessarily exist. The purpose of this concept isn't to discourage the process of discovery or to stay within the comfort of our limited knowledges.

'Situated Knowledges,' gives us a helpful way to frame these limits (ibid.). We are moving bodies, and the knowledges we inherit as we evolve are born out of the contexts we are exposed to. *The limits and boundaries we work within must be acknowledged within our work*. Beyond this it is a bid to continue expanding and evolving as new knowledges emerge. The limits we are embedded within can expand with time, effort and asking difficult questions.

In my project, I am collecting multiple, different and open ended dialogues. In doing this I accept that I must abandon the pursuit of consensus, agreement and an objective singular narrative. How can engaging with a multiplicity of perspectives build on, stretch, and challenge existing knowledges on the subject I am exploring? How can it center situated experiences? And beyond this, how can my exploration illustrate that multiple complex, sometimes contradictory realities can overlap and be true at once?

Both 'Fuck Content' and 'Designer As Author' by Michael Rock (2013) have enhanced and challenged my understanding of the role of a designer as an authoritative voice. In 'Fuck Content,' Rock (ibid.) argues that the shaping of content has as profound of an impact on meaning and interpretation as the content itself. In addition to this, in 'Designer As Author,' Rock (ibid.) remarks that by placing the focus on the designer's voice, their 'presence becomes a limiting factor, containing and categorising the work' and it's interpretations.

While compiling dialogues that include mine and a range of other voices, my editorial and authoritative control will inevitably shape the final output. I hope however, to preserve any variance and difference that may be in contradiction to my own position; I do not want my position to be a *limiting factor*.

How might I be able to clearly communicate both, the individual positions and the collective understadnings my project will include? It will be important to leave room for multiplicity, but acknowledge that it is not entirely uninfluenced, by my authoritative intent.

Sarah Ahmed introduces the idea of sweaty concepts. She describes it as 'something that is difficult, that resists being fully comprehended in the present ... a kind of intellectual labor,' (2017, p. 12). She further expands on this definition; 'a sweaty concept might come out of a bodily experience that is trying. The task is to stay with the difficulty, to keep exploring and exposing this difficulty' (ibid. p.13). This idea highlights the labor involved in making, experiencing and interpreting our encounters with the complex systems, spaces, ideologies and worlds our bodies and minds engage with.

However, we are frequently encouraged to create and conditioned to understand messages with immediacy. Anything that sits outside of this smoothness is rejected, even avoided for the difficulty and sweat it will require to engage with and respond to. This is the challenge I am faced with when dealing with sweaty subjects such as the current conditions and future speculations of Creative Labour and Digital Capitalism in Crisis.

These concepts are important to tackle, and their sweatiness shouldn't be a deterrant. Even if the attempt is small; how do we engage with concepts that are difficult, that require time and labor?

Halprin describes a score as 'a system of symbols which convey, guide or control (as you wish), the interaction between elements such as space, time, rhythm, people and their activities and the combinations which result from them,' (ibid., p. 7). It is an instruction that triggers or gives shape to an open-ended process that reveals itself over time. 'Scores are exploratory and not finite. Scores are open not closed.' (1969, p. 195). I foresee the questions, prompts and subsequent dialogues within my work as a scoring process that energises an open ended exchange.

Through the dialogues and the ways in which I communicate them (which I foresee involving text, image and diagrams) I hoep to leave space for chance and negotiation.

Additionally, as previosly stated in my project proposal; Halprin's method of scoring to trigger participation and interaction means that the outcomes are greatly impacted not only by the maker or designer, but the participants too. For an outcome of quality, participants 'must exhibit a commitment to the idea ... and be willing...' (ibid, p: 190).

I was also drawn to Lawrence Halprin's concluding text in this book, where he extends his principles as a designer beyond his design practice. He refers to the system he has formulated for creative processes as method to 'cope' with his concerns for our futures and enact positive change (ibid, p. 201). The motivations for my project, I similarly see as a method for coping with my concerns, and working towards alternatives to what feels like a bleak future of work within creative industires under capitalism.

<p><i>HyperNormalisation</i> (2016). Directed by Adam Curtis [Documentary Film]</p>	<p><i>View From The People Wall</i> (1964) Directed by Charles and Ray Eames. [A Multichannel Film Installation]</p>	<p>Laranjo, F. (2014) ‘Critical Graphic Design: Critical of What?’ <i>Modes of Criticism</i>.</p>	<p>Eno, B. &amp; Schmidt, P. (1975 -2001) <i>Oblique Strategies</i>. [Set of Cards].</p>	<p>Holzer, J. (1977) <i>Diagrams: A collection of diagrams from many sources</i>. [Art Book].</p>
<p>Adam Curtis is known for using found footage, intercut with interviews and an authoritative narration to make communicate his positioned arguments. In HyperNormalisation (2016) he does this to highlight how we as a society, have normalised a false understanding of the world. By crafting together found footage, the documentary connects different moments throughout history. The contents of these individual clips in context of one another are used to expose the ‘unreal’ reality we have constructed.</p>	<p>Conceptually, View From The People Wall (Eames and Eames, 1964), likens the ways in which machines function to the ways in which our brains process information function. Formally, the film is constructed from found footage, images and a voice-over narration displayed across multiple panels. It’s form mirrors its conceptual position: it forces the viewer’s eyes to move across the screen to interpret multiple fragments of audio-visual sensory cues to understand the message being conveyed.</p>	<p>What does it mean to be critical? How do I situate my practice within a critical context? And is there space for effective critique within the systems that we occupy? How do other designers, creatives and my peers situate themselves within critical practice? Do they embrace, reject or hesitate with criticality?</p>	<p>Oblique Strategies developed by Brian Eno and Peter Schmidt is a card-based method to help people navigate dilemma’s faced within creative situations. They include loose and open-ended suggestions, prompts, advice and guidance to help those stuck in a creative rut.</p>	<p>Jenny Holzer has appropriated diagrams from physics and science textbooks in her work. She, re-drew hundreds of diagrams in exact replica, along with the captions, however removed from their original context. The captions and diagrams take on a larger-than-life metaphorical shape when this is done. In my work, I too am interested in developing diagrammatic configurations of my own. Ones that are reminiscent of physics diagrams, have similar qualities of giving shape to grand ideas, questions and thoughts.</p>
<p>The film encourages a deeper engagement with the world we live in. In HyperNormalisation, each scene cohesively builds on the previous one to clearly communicate and reveal the way things are according to Curtis. There is clear intention and clarity of the director’s position.</p>	<p>In my work, I hope to similarly experiment with audio-visual material and information simultaneously juxtaposed together. We instinctively draw relationships with the contents places alongside one another. We are accustomed to inferring meaning and context from prescriptive narration and captions. I’m interested in exploring the potential of challenging the instinct of seeking direct simple connections, intentions and meaning. When complicated subjects are being dissected and discussed, I hope to preserve it’s complexity, ambiguity and abstractness.</p>	<p>To formulate meaning for the term critical when describing graphic design practice, Laranjo (2014) suggests three forms of criticality within design: it is a demonstration of a critical attitude that addresses (1) one’s own practice, (2) the wider discipline, and (3) discourse within public spheres.</p>	<p>How can I, in the second half of the unit, develop similar strategies of coping with Creative Labour under Crisis Capitalism?</p>	
<p>My project - similarly hopes to intercut dialogues, diagrams, my own musings and collected material to build a document that hopefully illustrates the state of Creative Labour under the current social and economic conditions. How can it similarly ask those that engage and participate to think deeply about the world we find ourselves within? How can such documents subsequently help us rethink and reimagine and visualise future scenarios?</p>		<p>Laranjo (ibid.) emphasises the need to raise important questions that highlight the quality and effectiveness of critique. ‘What does this poster or image add to the issues at stake? Where is the critique? How does it contribute to written modes of research?</p>		
		<p>Still, criticality within design is necessary in a time where mainstream design practice is ‘largely uncritical,’ (ibid.) And the emergence of discourse surrounding critical design begins to distinguish types of graphic design that attempt to deviate from the norm. It reveals the potential for graphic design to legitimise and expand its application of processes and research methodologies to create new forms of knowledge (ibid.).</p>		
		<p>Whatever medium a critique is posed through, its critical effectiveness must be interrogated. If not, criticality in design loses its substance and runs the risk of irrelevance. This irrelevance would be wasteful for a discipline with the potential to contribute to critical discourse.</p>		
		<p>It is unlikely that an individual designer or piece of design is going to totally reshape the systems we occupy. But I suppose this shouldn’t deter me from attempting to specify a critical purpose. Much of this also comes down to scale, specificity and the ability to involve a community and facilitate participation.</p>		
<p>ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY : UPDATED PAST REFERENCES</p>				<p>15</p>



Arvidsson, A. (2019) 'The Crisis of Digital Capitalism' in *Changemakers*. Cambridge: Polity Press. pp 1 - 38.

This book has been the starting point for my enquiry. It's hard to write about the dense nature of this text without over simplifying. But will try to abridge my main takeaways and questions that will no doubt influence my position and provide prompts for areas I will probe in my dialogues.

There is so much Arvidsson so succinctly describes about the 'Crisis of Digital Capitalism,' (2019). He details the pervasive and predatory, all consuming and ever-expanding nature of the post-digital capitalist condition. The intrinsic links to colonization, the influence on state and military power as well as control and concentration of markets, production and consumption. And post-internet, it's expansion into work, leisure, communication, social connection, hunger and even its own critique. Nothing is left untouched, everything is manipulatable and inevitably a predictable data point that can be converted to capital (ibid.).

*“The digitalisation of capitalist production and culture makes it easier and cheaper to organise complex business organisations,” yet, “digital platform labour markets can be understood as a strategy that aims at containing and controlling small-scale enterprises by owning the markets they operate on... How have[digital technologies] ended up preserving the status quo?”* (ibid. p: 6-7). He describes the contradictions and confusions; standards of living have no doubt increased and digital technology no doubt has its benefits. But, this is all while such a system will always uphold the status quo to benefit and concentrate power and capital at the

hands of a few. Social mobility is stunted. Profit has become a primary motivator for all social arrangement. Rather than producing things that we only need, innovating what would benefit the environments and the people living within them, and making culture to make life more meaningful, capital is more interested in shareholder value. (ibid.)

Cheap, large scale, low skilled work, becomes more desirable. “The chances of making a comfortable living out of a steady career, have become much slimmer. Even if you manage to enter the game, careers are much less stable. Insecurity and precarity is becoming the norm.” (ibid. p: 17). What does this mean for the future of labour? And the role of creative work and cultural production under these conditions? And are we capable of changing these conditions for a possibly more positive scenario?

The expansion of the post-digital capitalist condition has also colonized the imagination, we are unable to imagine an alternative to this way of being. But all hope is not lost. Within the condition of constant flux, “the difficulty in imagining a direction for change results from a virtually complete colonization of the imaginary on the part of commercial culture... But perhaps another reason is because it is still early days.” (ibid. p: 2).

This here is the motivation for why I want to spend this unit exploring this subject with others. To contextualise real experiences within this social condition. And to hopefully make efforts, however difficult or small, to imagine alternative ways of being.

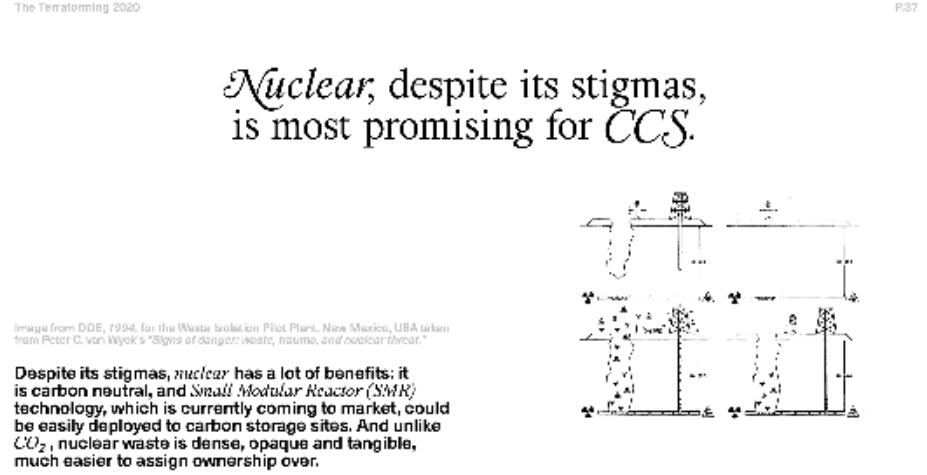
Soper, K. (2020) *Post Growth Living*. London: Verso. pp. 1-11 & pp. 77-106 & pp.157-159.

*“The market itself has become an authoritarian force - commanding people to sacrifice and marginalise everything that is not commercially viable... [We] would be better of focussing on alternative models of progress, and breaking with current ways of thinking of prosperity and well-being,”* (Soper, 2020: p. 1-2).

This is another text that has provided openings and motivations for the subject of my work. Soper (ibid.), similar to Arvidsson, details the perils of unchecked consumerist and capitalist expansion. While she does write at length about environmental degradation, she also re-emphasises, even if that weren't an imminent threat; are we really living and constructing our lives and society in satisfying ways? Soper emphasises the importance of discourse that also centres human experiences and ways of improving our material, psychological and social conditions to drive change.

In providing an alternative, she aims to re-imagine work and prosperity through a post-capitalist lens. She does this by decoupling pleasure and satisfaction from consumerism. And simultaneously rethinking prosperity from an infinite economic growth and productivity model, towards sustainable hedonism and 'fulfilling ways of meeting material needs and other sources of pleasure,' (ibid. p.159), through small scale meaningful work and skilled creativity. How might we make way for slow working, 'for small scale networks of sharing, recycling and exchanging of goods and services,' (ibid. p: 8)?

To do this, we must acknowledge the elimination of craft, skill and intellectual labour in favour of profit driven de-skilled work and automated intelligence (AI) is in opposition to creating a meaningful human existence. Is there room for integration rather than opposition? What are the effects of infinite-growth on skilled creative work? Do people feel it is necessary to imagine alternatives to current ways of thinking about work, pleasure and prosperity?

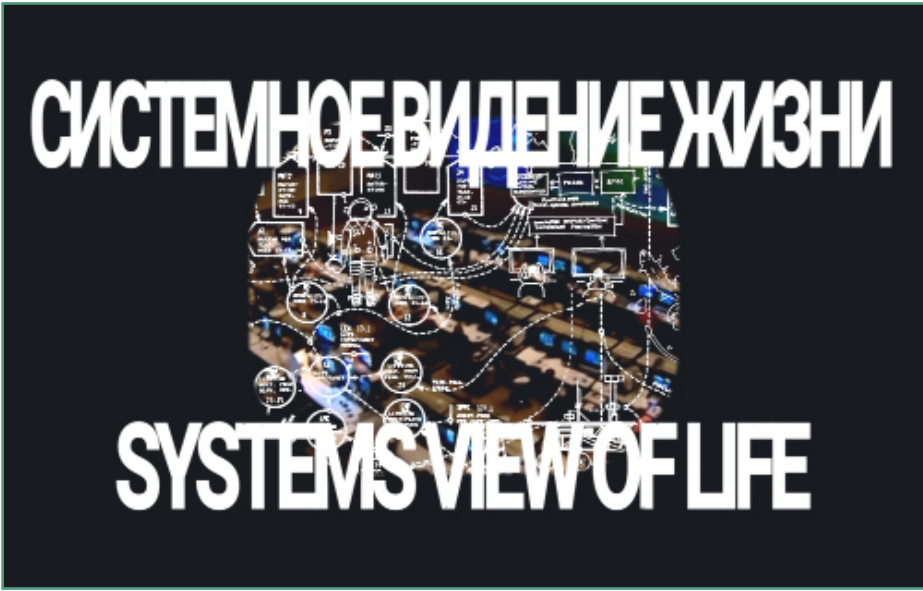


Dubova, M., Myers. P., and Wolff, B. (2020) 'To Bury - The Sky' from *Terraforming 2020*.

To Bury - The Sky was a research project aimed at the action required to tackle excess carbon in the atmosphere. It was part of The Terraforming 2020 at Strelka Institute for Media Architecture and Design.

It takes the shape of a traditional, but aesthetically well considered, research or innovation 'deck.'

However, I am drawn to the diagrammatic language that such documents use to visualise quantitative data. Similar to my project, it deals with a systemic, incredibly complex issue. The diagrams make the contents of the research more accessible. How can I apply this diagrammatic language to the qualitative collection of lived experience and thoughts of those I dialogue with? Can diagrams inform the visual form of text to mirror the quality and dynamic content of dialogues?

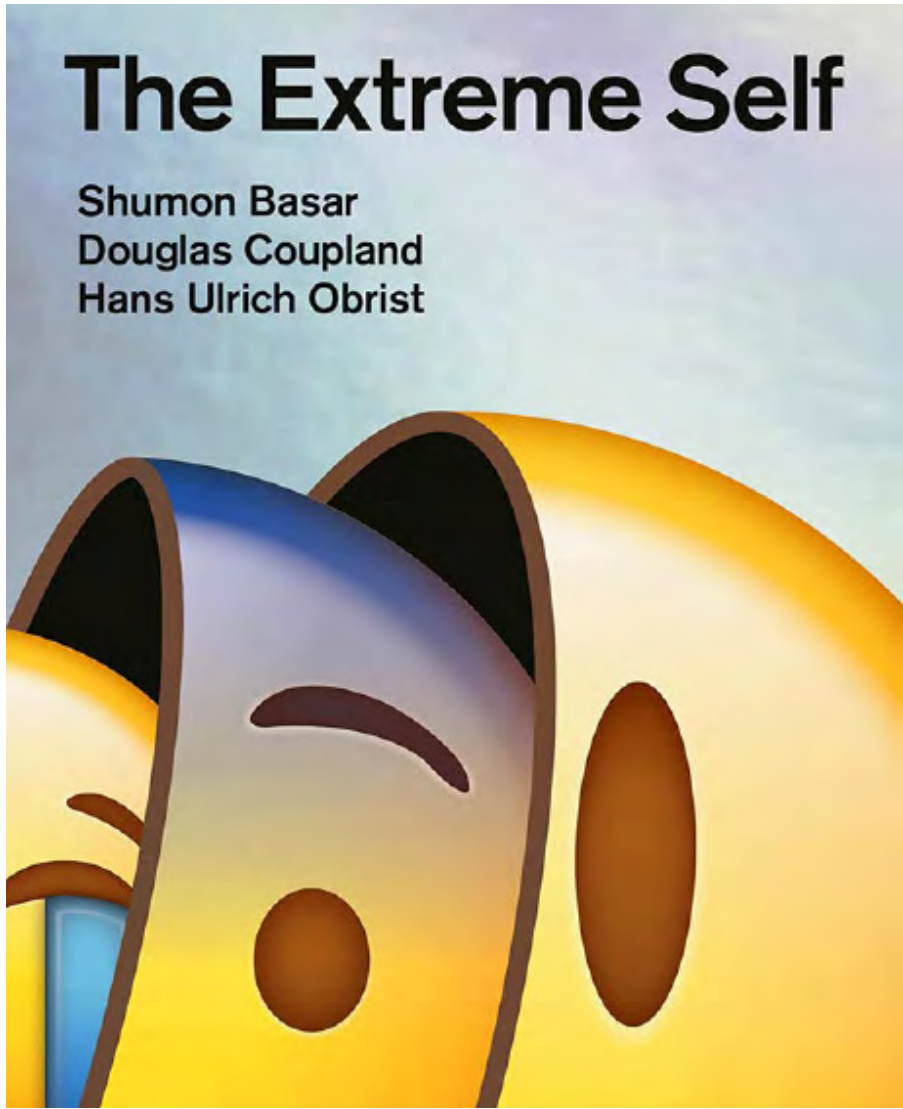


Koerner-Safrata, N., Leboho, A., Tolkacheva, V. (2021) 'Kosmos Nekros' from *Terraforming 2021*.

Kosmos Nekros was a video essay that interrogates the human experience through the lens of space, death and the limits of knowledge.

Here too, is an incredibly complicated subject matter is dealt with. It takes the form of a video essay - that is also at times very conceptual and esoteric. It has been visualised with the support of text, found image, found footage and illustrative diagrams. In the second part of this unit, using the dialogues I have collected as a starting point, how can I adopt this style of working with moving image, found imagery, material and text to speculate the future of creative work?





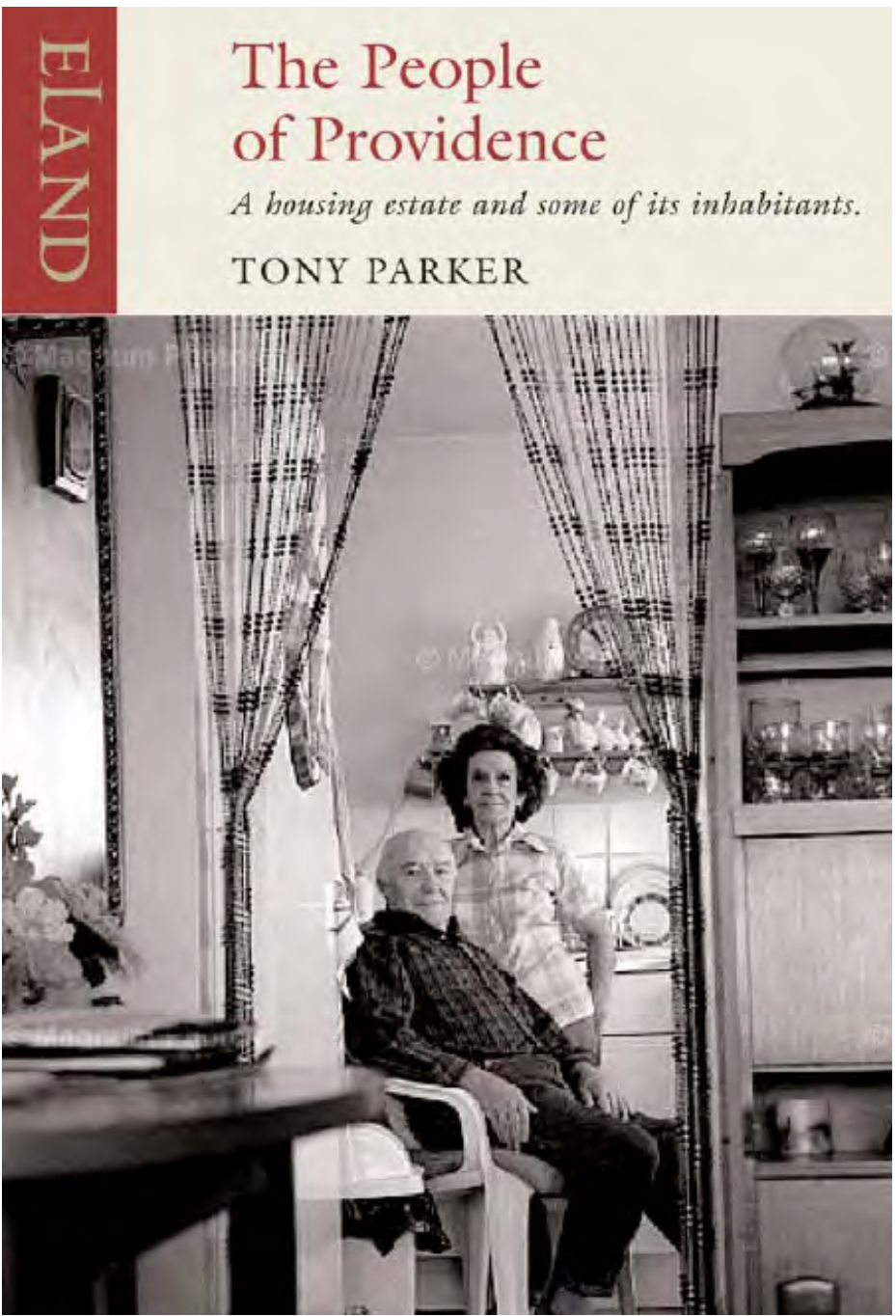
Basar, S., Coupland, D., Obrist H. U., (2021) *The Extreme Self*. Cologne: Walther König.

The Extreme Self is a commentary of our digital social and extremely online condition. Similar to how I am attempting to create a document of experiences of the conditions of creative labour; and perhaps relate this back to the wide system of tech-capitalism I find myself drawn to this project for how it juxtaposes musings, manipulated imagery and graphic collages that together build a picture of the state of hyper-identities and anxiety we find ourselves within.

Parker, T. (1983) *The People of Providence*. London: Eland Publishing.

Tony Parker interviewed an array of residents in a housing estate in London. In doing so he captured the specific experiences, musings and idiosyncrasies of the people he dialogued with. He compiles the interviews in such a way that they build a narrative of the kind of life that people at this specific place and time lived. Even in the overlooked conversations of the everyday, there is value in documenting the experiences of people, how they feel and what is says about the world they inhabit. This, in some way, is what I hope the process of conversing might bring about through my project.

How can the specific, individual yet shared experiences of those I speak to humanise the current state of creative labour?





Le Guin, U. K. [1988] (2019) *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction*. Ignota Books.

Le Guin disputes the importance of murderous tools in our histories such as the spear, the swords and the arrows in favour of the carrier bag. She retells a story of our history as early humans; as gatherers before hunters. While it emphasises a less violent story of our histories, unfortunately, even this imagination does not go untainted within our present condition. As what tool is more abundant today than the plastic carrier bag? The ones that fill up our oceans and landfills. Well. Let’s keep that to one side for now.

Unlike the singular trajectories that spears and arrows represent, the carrier bag symbolises a variety of things, all tangled with one another, all existing at the same time. Rejecting the linear, slick, streamlined ways in which we conceive time, history and the stories we tell, ‘The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction’ doesn’t aim to tell stories of heroes in a series of conflicts, victories and neat conclusions. Instead, it leaves room for the messy simultaneous contradictions we find ourselves faced with in our realities, our day to day experiences and our conversations.

Like it does for Le Guin herself, the carrier bag approach is an attempt to ground myself in our shared existence, ‘in human culture in a way I never felt grounded before.’ The process of understanding the state of our realities needs to be grounded in collective understanding. And that requires us to relinquish simple narratives, satisfying conclusions and solutions in favour of a multiplicity of trajectories and possibilities.

Through conversation, I construct an entangled - admittedly limited - carrier bag to record the chaotic condition we find ourselves in. This is a continuous process that may not necessarily neatly tie up every loose end. It is an excerpt of a permanently ongoing discussion of what is and what could be.

Krishnamurthy, P. (2021) *On Bumpiness, In Letters*. [Recorded Lecture].

Prem Krishnamurthy puts forth the idea of bumpiness. describing it as: ‘*A productive friction that slows you down, that encourages reflection and reconsideration. I often position such bumpiness on a spectrum of “smoothness” to “jaggedness”, with smoothness representing the self-evident speed and frictionless-ness of contemporary consumer culture and jaggedness representing the self-consciously anti-attitude of dogmatic resistance. Perhaps bumpiness is somewhere in the middle, something that exists just under the threshold of overtness, like a slightly different letter every page or two that makes you wonder.*’ (2021)

Krishnamurthy challenges the state of smoothness and efficiency in communication design, which has been deemed desirable due to communication design’s designated role within globalization, capitalism and commodification. Aesthetic ‘discomfort can also be a position of liberation,’ (ibid.). In a project aiming to critique the state of creative labour under capitalism, I hope to introduce such friction and bumpiness in the treatment of the dialogues and textual layouts in my publication. One: to reject the capitalist desirability of frictionless communion. And two: to reflect the complexity of the subject at hand, to enable the viewer to pause, engage and take their time with the complex conversations on a difficult subject matter.

Drucker, J. (2013) *Diagrammatic Writing*. Onomatopoe.

Drucker’s visual, poetic essay ‘Diagrammatic Writing’ emphasises the importance of the visual format of text and it’s appearance on the page. And the ability for the way text is arranged to impart meaning that supplements the content.

It can superimpose a rhythm, cadence and tone to the writing. It can control the pace at which information is absorbed.

The spatial organisation of text on each page of the publication I have created is therefore informed by diagrammatic compositions that mirror the dynamic cadence of the ongoing, unresolved nature of thoughts and words shared through dialogue.

Woolf, V. (1929) *A Room of One’s Own*. London: Hogarth Press.

‘A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction.’ (ibid.)

Woolf’s extended essay describes the limiting conditions within which women are able to engage in creative pursuits. Her work here is often thought of as a feminist manifesto and critique of the barriers to entry to become a professional writer. One must be able to afford a room of their own, have money, access to opportunities, networks and education - all of which are not easily accessible.

In my project, I am exploring the conditions under which we find ourselves attempting to pursue creative careers through a more modern lens. What happens under crisis capitalism to accessing opportunity, education and space that enables creative pursuit? The limits to being able to produce creative work are only getting tighter according to the dialogues and experiences I have come across through my project. So, how do we create spaces, rooms of our own, with the limited resources we actually have access to? How can community, connection and conversation help us to cope? And allow us to be mutually supported and heard?

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