

THE RHETORIC OF DESIRING-SURVEILLANCE IN THE AGE OF ELECTRACY

By

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This dissertation examines the rhetoric of surveillance as a concept and a practice, and it further uncovers how surveillance modalities can be understood, appropriated, and applied to theories and pedagogies of rhetoric and writing studies. Using Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's schizoanalysis as methodology, my dissertation argues that surveillance is a concept and practice that is desired (*desiring-surveillance*) rather than something that is or should be resisted. Couched within the context of Gregory Ulmer's electracy and Victor Vitanza's desire-aesthetics of the Third Sophistic, and staged with an operatic form, my dissertation considers the historical development and present state of subjectivity and its relationship to surveillance and rhetoric and writing studies.



CHAPTER 1  
OPERATIC INTRODUCTION, OR, PLEASE BE SEATED

**(Another Boring) Program (To Be Tossed)**

...my *Dionysian* world of the eternally self-creating, the eternally self-destroying....  
—Friedrich Nietzsche

This suggests one final approach to the Text, that of pleasure.  
—Roland Barthes

*WARNING (FROM THE CENTRAL SCRUTINIZER): Sitting too close to the Entertainment can cause the Entertainment to see you as easily as you can see the Entertainment; you may blur with and into the Entertainment, causing paranoia, self-scrutiny, narcissism, fear and trembling, vertigo. Though you might also enjoy this blurring, causing ecstasy, excess, schizoid leaps, vertigo. With fair warning, we say: either way, “a very good schizo dream. To be fully a part of the crowd and at the same time completely outside it, removed from it: to be on the edge, to take a walk like Virginia Woolf (never again will [you] say, “I am this, I am that).”<sup>1</sup> Either way, take a tip from Joe: desire-aesthetics “can get you pretty fucked up.” Do note: any and all violations will be marked on your permanent record, catalogued and stored here. (Yes, right here).<sup>2</sup> “Surveillance by the face, as Strindberg said:” We are watching you.<sup>3</sup>*

This opera intends to investigate the intersections of rhetoric and writing studies, electracy, and surveillance. As an initial point of departure, the opera will seek a recovery and rethinking of the term “surveillance” itself (not just *what* does it *mean*, but *how* does it *work*), its emerging iterations and modalities within the digital institution, and its implications for the

---

<sup>1</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 29.

<sup>2</sup> See: Frank Zappa’s *Joe’s Garage* (1979). The concept album, appropriated and remixed here as well as in the formative section of all Acts and the Intermission, follows the narrative of Joe, a fledgling rock and roll musician, caught in a dystopic world where music is criminalized. The album opens with, and repeatedly employs, the voice of the Central Scrutinizer to introduce narrative shifts and to give general warnings.

<sup>3</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 115.

theory, practice, and pedagogy of rhetoric and writing studies. We intend to broaden the concept of “surveillance” beyond its common articulation in terms exclusive to State surveillance (government) and Capital (corporate) surveillance (e.g., data-mining practices often referred to as “dataveillance”)—both of which concern vertical, top-down surveillance modalities—and extend it to everyday electracy practices in general (e.g., reality television; social media platforms, such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter; piracy and hacking, etc.), practices which concern emerging and growing horizontal surveillance modalities. Insofar as these networked practices now inform and mediate daily life, we argue that there exists a lacuna in Rhetorical Entertainment that approaches these practices as both desired/desirable and surveillance-operative (“desiring-surveillance”), and that does so in a manner that specifically focuses on rhetorical and compositional practices. To this end, the opera aims to uncover (cover children’s eyes, please!) how the field of rhetoric and composition studies might be advanced through a study of electracy and surveillance.

In order to approach the above problematic, the opera intends to use Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s schizoanalysis as the principle methodology (a method-acting instruction for the audience). We have specifically chosen schizoanalysis for several reasons. First, the shift from literacy to electracy suggests—if not demands—a commensurate shift in theoretical approach. As electracy denotes a shift from epistemology and ethics (literacy) to aesthetics and affect (electracy), schizoanalysis congruently focuses on desire. The aesthetic-desire fit between electracy and schizoanalysis will service the opera’s working use of the term “rhetoric” and its relationship to surveillance. Likewise, the schizonalytic concepts of desiring-machines, assemblages, folds, collectivities, etc. appears apt (tenor) for approaching questions of selfhood or subjectivity, still paramount to the question of rhetoric, but especially so within the context of

electracy and surveillance. *This is no tragedy, and we eschew fatalism, but we seek the death of the subject.*

(Do note: the opera sings back at any of your critiques (your *clagues*) of effective acting, staging, and/or suspension of disbelief, if only in agreement: we question your subject-positioning, too, wherever you may be seated (though we do sympathize with the cheap seats). Which reminds us: each admission comes with a free Nietzschean mask; please put them on, over the one you forgot to remove, before engaging in any of the above listed critiques.<sup>4</sup>)

In short, this opera seeks to examine the relationship between electrate rhetoric and surveillance by way of schizoanalysis and to then produce new concepts and methods that would advance the field of rhetoric and writing studies. In order to broach this larger inquiry, each chapter (ahem: we mean Act) will be threaded by a recursive focus on the electrate reconfigurations of rhetorical subjectivity, especially as treated by schizoanalysis and inflected by surveillance. Yes, this means *you*, too. We encourage audience participation—whomever or whatever you are (becoming).

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<sup>4</sup> Victor Vitanza, a key player in this Entertainment, reminds us in *Negation, Subjectivity, and the History of Rhetoric*: “We all wear masks. Remember, Nietzsche says, whoever wears a mask is profound. (Of course, I fool myself, and yet we all are fools). We all wear either proper or *impropria* persona when we write. (But this wearing of a mask does not mean that underneath or on the other side, there is a real, fixed, authentic person! I am not an essentialist of that sort). And if we are confronted with different audiences (different desires, forces) and if we have different things (forces) to express, doesn’t it follow that we need many different masks (folds)?” (19). We present a drama, a matter of choice, taste, desire. Please do not yell at or about the performance; instead, have you-yourself dance, sing, explore the restrooms (and write on the walls, if you must) in response. As Vitanza notes later, “For Nietzsche, then, the political-ethical subject is the aesthetic subject. Human beings can be represented only by masks” (106). In other words, you (the audience) function as key player’s in this Entertainment, too, so please, make the *excessive most* of it. Respond to (rhetorical) art with (rhetorical) art. Wear your mask—it at the very least makes it more difficult to see your “true” self—whatever that is.

## **Actors and Production Staff and Crew**

Electracy (Chorus): Electronic/digital media, ubicomp, play, aesthetics, style, fantasy. Son of literacy; grandson of orality. Antagonist: “Digital Literacy.”

Rhetoric and Composition (Impressario): Depends on whom you ask; takes on many faces and histories. Family history dates back to the Sophists. Antagonist: “Itself.”

Schizoanalysis (Choreographer): Desire as primary and productive. Younger sibling of psychoanalysis. Antagonist: older sibling, “Psychoanalysis.”

Surveillance (Orchestra): To see/be seen, or not to see/be seen? Shares a distant ancestry with its cousin, “Subjectivity.” Antagonist: “The Chora.”

Subjectivity (Prompter): I am, I am, I am. First-born son of Descartes; has continual, universal incest with (almost) everyone. Antagonist: “Me.”

You (Audience and Encore): You tell us. Antagonist: “They.”

Us (Composer): Us are you. Antagonist: “I.”

## **Summary of Chapters/Acts**

### **Chapter 2 – Act 1: Becoming-*Las Meninas*: The Relational Birth of Modern Subjectivity, Desire-Aesthetics, and the Logic of Surveillance**

As part of the shift into what Greg Ulmer terms “electracy,” this Act rethinks the predominate, contemporary surveillance modality not as a top-down logic or method that is resisted, but rather as a horizontal expansion of aesthetic vision that is desired (desiring-surveillance). As such, this Act has a few brief aims. First, it will situate the relational birth of modern subjectivity, desire-aesthetics, and surveillance using Michel Foucault’s and Jacques Lacan’s ekphrases of Diego Velázquez’s *Las Meninas*, connecting them to the eventual logic of Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon. Second, it will establish the rhetorical shift from literate “subject” to electrate “brand,” noting the implications of such a shift for surveillance modalities

(from the epistemology of the Enlightenment construction of the subject and subject-surveillance, to the desire-aesthetics of the electrified introduction of brands and brands desiring-surveillance). Third, it will use Deleuze and Guattari's schizoanalysis and the rhetoric of the third sophistic as methods for rethinking surveillance as desiring-surveillance, using Francis Bacon's compositions as object examples. The upshot of these aims—all of which will recursively intersect—intends to reconfigure surveillance not as something imposed upon us (anymore), but rather as something rhetorically (re)created, (re)produced, desired.

### **Chapter 3 – Act 2: The Fantasy and Rhetoric of Fear: The Paranoiac Tendency of Desiring-Surveillance**

Act 2 will further extend and apply the conclusions of Act 1 to the contemporary, electrified moment, focusing on three specific objects of study: social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.); televisual and cinematic entertainment; and Hollywood star culture. Using schizoanalysis, we will treat the rhetorical engagements, employments, and productions of each object of study. With regard to social media platforms, we do not wish to trace the technical machines driving these platforms (algorithms, computer coding or programming, etc.), as appropriated by the State or Capital, to perform vertical surveillance; rather, we seek to schizoanalyze the desire-aesthetics of ubicomp's horizontal surveillance, as well as the paranoiac micro-fascisms it (re)produces (i.e., from the paranoid suburban neighbor looking out his/her blinds, to Neighborhood Watch, to the present instantiation of paranoiacs watching-each-other online). Likewise, we will schizoanalyze the rhetorical productions of television shows such as *COPS* and *America's Most Wanted*; fictional detective serials that reinforce the same rhetorical affect; and anti-terrorist campaigns, such as, "If You See Something, Say Something." We will also schizoanalyze the rhetorical import of Pete Travis's *Dredd* (2012) and its framing of surveillance as translatable to our current political condition. Lastly, we turn to Hollywood star

culture, as packaged and delivered by tabloids and paparazzi, to demonstrate the manner in which we not only seek and identify with surveillance, but further how desiring-surveillance translates into commodification and consumption.

#### **Chapter 4 – Act 3: Three Rhetorical Tactics, or, To Schiz the Paranoid Face of Rhetoric and Writing Studies in the Age of Electracy**

Following the work already done in the previous two Acts, this Act proposes three rhetorico-schizoid persona-formations as means for performing heuristics, in the context of surveillance. Each persona-formation marks a shift: from the *bricoleur* to the *electeur* (or, rhetorical tactics for walking through the architecture of surveillance of the cyber-city); from the *hero* to the *(e)cohero* (or, from the Greek hero, to the protagonist detective, to the assemblage and invention of discovery); and the *amateur/auteur* to the *aumateur* (or, the function of the everyday digital rhetor as artist, and the return to rhetoric as a productive and liberating art). The *electeur* approaches “digital persona” or “digital presence” as tactic in terms of desiring-surveillance within the digital institution. The *(e)cohero* exchanges literate interiority (Ong) and hermeneutics (Peirce) for rhetorical invention. We will typify the (e)choro with Bryan Singer’s *The Usual Suspects* (1995), and employ her with William S. Burrough’s cut-up method. The *aumateur* will look towards the potential of rhetoric as art, especially as provided by digital, electracy, ubicomp practices, such as Instagram and Photoshop.

#### **Chapter 5 – Finale: Surveillant Montage and the Rhetoric Therein**

Perhaps counter-intuitively, this concluding Act will review what songs and dances we have performed and then critique such performances. Deleuzian thought, media studies and electracy, and the notion of abandoning subjectivity will receive due interrogation. This Act will generate a bill for our schizoanalytic services. This Act will look towards the horizon. Accounts payable and receivable as infinite. (We never thought, expected, wanted you to pay up, anyway;

that's the job of that other opera, "Psychoanalysis and How Desire Went Broke"). Theatrical riots abound at the end (a most proper curtain call), so be sure your Nietzschean mask comes equipped with a hard hat.

We ask that all audience members pick up each other's partial objects on the way out.

### **Overture: A Death, Perhaps a Suicide, and the Rhetoric of How We Mourned**

*[Socrates ate hemlock for perverting the youth: a death, perhaps a suicide, and the rhetoric of how we mourned; or, Socrates ate hemlock for perverting the youth, increasing brand visibility, and the rhetoric of how we mourned a Figure that never died.]*

### **Overture, Part One: Electracy**

RHIZOMATICS = POP ANALYSIS.

—Deleuze and Guattari

The program for this evening is not new. You have seen this entertainment through and through. You've seen your birth, your life, and death. You might recall all of the rest.

—Jim Morrison

As the latter epigraph continues: "Did you have a good world when you died? Enough to base a"—rhetoric on?<sup>5</sup> The "rhetorical world" in which we presently find ourselves continues to shift from print to electronic media (television, film, advertising, internet, ubicomp, etc.)—but will we make good on this promise, at least before "we die"? (Yes, we mean "death" in operative hyperbole).

We can (arguably) map some of the beginnings of electracy to Jacques Derrida's work on grammatology and Marshall McLuhan's writings on media. In discussing the *non-essential* linearization of writing and literacy in *Of Grammatology*, Derrida remarks that, "the end of linear

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<sup>5</sup> The original quote ends with: "enough to base a film on." We find this slight remix fitting, however, as electracy would contend that a differentiation between contemporary rhetoric and media (e.g., film, television, advertising, internet) would prove difficult, if not fruitless and impossible. As Ulmer remarks in his *Teletheory* chapter, "Derrida at the Little Bighorn": it "is not in fact a book. It is a video" (18).

writing is indeed the end of the book.”<sup>6</sup> He goes on to note that, “if today the problem of reading occupies the forefront of science, it is because of this suspense between two ages of writing. Because we are beginning to write, to write differently, we must reread differently.”<sup>7</sup> Derrida does not explicitly gesture to electracy here (or anywhere, for that matter), but he does nonetheless note an “uneasiness” with the “linear model” of writing in philosophy, science, and literature in the century that precedes him and certainly in the century that will proceed him. Recognizing a slow but inevitable creep in literate writing towards “pluri-dimensionality” and “delinearized temporality,” Derrida concedes that “what is thought today cannot be written according to the line and the book.”<sup>8</sup> While Derrida’s primary concern here regards the logocentrism of the linearized text—the hyper-rational assumption that we can move from univocal term to univocal term (synchronic) in an axiomatic (uncontestable) temporal movement of linear meaning-formation (diachronic)—we cannot, and should not, rule out the potential of non-linear writing-to-come (e.g., electracy, whose dawn had already been breaking). As Derrida suggests towards the end of the section, to leave the linear model behind would also mean to “leave *man*, *science*, and the *line* behind.”<sup>9</sup> For the intents and purposes of electracy, we might consider literate man *qua* subjectivity/selfhood, literate science *qua* epistemology, and literate line *qua* literacy. In many respects, then, Derrida unintentionally prophesized a Derridean grammarology that exceeded Derridean grammarology (electracy)—which could be argued was/is the point of Derridean grammarology in the first place (and not that he ever cared much for intentionality at all, anyway).

So enter: the non-linear mark and/of the electronic image.

---

<sup>6</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 86.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 86-87.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.



Derrida's *Of Grammatology* and Marshall McLuhan's *The Medium is the Message* found publication in the same year—1967. McLuhan's book reinforces in content, and actualizes in form, Derrida's prediction of non- or de-linearized writing. McLuhan's small (non-)book uses text (paragraphs, slogans, phrases, puns, lyrics, clichés, linear and non-linear), photos, drawings, images, shading (black and white coloring), repetitions, etc. to create a theoretical and rhetorical entertainment.<sup>10</sup> It mimics the logic and aesthetics of popular media (magazines, pamphlets, billboards, commercials, political advertisements), conjoining form and content to reiterate his long-standing thesis: the medium *is* the message.<sup>11</sup> Media indeed mediates, it works us over, *massages* us, and the medium (form) constitutes the “meaning” of popular media(tion) (especially electronic media) more so than the literate information (content) therein. As such, one can read the (non-)book in any order: it provides a “pluri-dimensionality” and a “delinearized temporality.” It is a rhizome book. It is multimodal writing before we had “multimodal writing.” It is an electrated turn in thought before we had “electracy.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> We use the term “(non-)book” here because, though it is a book in one sense (it appears to be a book in terms of size, has pages, has an author, etc.), it is in another sense not a book at all. As Derrida notes in *Of Grammatology*: “The end of linear writing is indeed the end of the book, even if, even today, it is within the form of a book that new writings—literary or theoretical—allow themselves to be, for better or for worse, encased” (86).

<sup>11</sup> McLuhan's thesis, “the medium is the message,” claims that the content of a given communicative medium matters less than the expression of the medium itself: television (not just as a delivery device, but also as an institution, a paradigm), for example, communicates the *televisual*.

<sup>12</sup> McLuhan's text and Ulmer's work (namely, *electracy*) share many similarities beyond a generally congruent apprehension of popular culture and electronic media. While both underscore the profound significance of electronic media (culturally, epistemologically, metaphysically, rhetorically), McLuhan's emphasis on the discovery/knowledge function of “You” (Your Family, Your Neighborhood, Your Education, Your Job, Your Government) in relation to media corresponds with Ulmer's *Mystory*. *Mystory* employs a method of epistemological and rhetorical discovery that “makes available experience as an alternative to the rule of method” (*Teletheory* 109), usually involving four categories of personal background (family, church, school, pop culture icon, school, discipline, place, ideology, etc.). Through conductive logic, patterns should emerge from the four *Mystory* categories procuring a knowledge discovery. The *Mystory* method not only inverts the traditional, unilateral pedagogy of knowledge bank (expert) to receptacle (tutee), but in doing so also imbricates the personal (micro, internal) with the social/discursive (macro, external). The method thus conflates the out-there and in-here (or as Ulmer notes, “Problems B Us”), similar to McLuhan's observation of a “global village.” We might consider Ulmer's work as the invention of practices (*praxis*) of McLuhan's media theory (*theoria*), and as the application of Derrida's (and other poststructuralists) grammatology to electronic media.

We do not mean to reduce the theoretical mapping of electracy in its eventual coinage to Derrida and McLuhan, though we do see the two as pivotal signposts. After all, “electracy” is a portmanteau of “eletronic” (see: McLuhan, et al.) and “trace” (see: Derrida, et al.). We provide Ulmer’s own table to help us move forward:

Apparatus	Orality	Literacy	Electracy
Practice	Religion	Science	Entertainment
Procedure	Ritual	Method	Style
Institution	Church	School	Internet
State of Mind	Faith	Knowledge	Fantasy
Behavior	Worship	Experiment	Play
Philosophy	Mythology	Epistemology	Aesthetics
Ground	God	Reason	Body
Ontology	Totem	Category	Chora
Mode	Narrative	Argument	Figure
Axis	Right/Wrong	True/False	Joy/Sadness

Figure 1-1. Electracy chart. Greg Ulmer, Untitled (Electracy Chart). Last accessed April 2015, Digital Chart. Ulmer’s Learning Screen Website.

Electracy might ask of Digital Literacy, “why not written orality?” —Because we rightfully distinguished the shift from orality to literacy as metaphysically significant, as a shift not just in mode of communicative or rhetorical delivery, but even more so in the very manner in which we produce and exchange knowledge (theoria), practices (praxes), and being itself. Such an indeed metaphysical shift in knowledge-production impacts and informs all cross-sections of meaningful life: science, art, culture, politics, theology/religion, history, selfhood—life, truth, and death. We argue the same for electracy: the shift in apparatus (from print to electronic media) should be understood as significant enough so as to render “digital literacy” as short on the account. After all, Ulmer explains in *Internet Invention* that,

it is a different story when it comes to teaching ‘electracy’—which is to digital media what literacy is to print. How might information stored in databases be turned into knowledge on screens hyperlinked globally and designed with graphics? There is no consensus about new media education, about what skills are needed, what practices available, for citizens to be fully empowered as native producers of digital texts, authored for the full range of private, personal, social, political purposes as well as for business or professional interests. (xii)

While we cannot provide answers to all of these questions (or at least arrive at consensus), we can nonetheless seek out the potentials and demands of electracy in terms of rhetoric/writing studies and surveillance.

Practically speaking, then, electracy presents two goals: first, “understanding an era in which technology of culture is shifting from print to video; and second that this understanding includes not only a pedagogy, but a program for popularization capable of reuniting the advanced research in the humanities disciplines with the conduct of everyday life.”<sup>13</sup> As Ulmer elaborates in *Internet Invention*, “grammatology—the history and theory of writing—uses an analogy with the literate apparatus to set up the terms for the invention of ‘electracy’ (a neologism coined to distinguish the emerging apparatus from the establishes one). What we are attempting through our projects, then, is not only a practice for the new apparatus, but the very reasoning process of that apparatus in general.”<sup>14</sup> Much as Walter Ong notes in his seminal text, *Orality and Literacy*, that “writing [literacy] from the beginning did not reduce orality but enhanced it, making it possible to organize ‘principles’ or constituents of oratory into a scientific ‘art,’” electracy does not seek to reduce or replace literacy.<sup>15</sup> Rather, electracy intends to explore how the apparatus shift from print to electronic media might enhance or augment literacy. Again,

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<sup>13</sup> Greg Ulmer, *Teletheory* (New York: Atropos Press, 2004), 7.

<sup>14</sup> Greg Ulmer, *Internet Invention: From Literacy to Electracy* (New York: Longman Press, 2002), 28.

<sup>15</sup> Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 9. Brackets and emphasis ours.

given the goals outlined above, we aim only to figure how electracy might properly inform a rhetoric/writing studies inquiry into rhetorical subjectivity and surveillance, and vice versa.

*Patter*

His composition copied a constitution of case given by case. Digitally, digging all fingers into the figure of truth-to-it rubric, he thought, Photoshop.

### **Overture, Part Two: Rhetoric and Composition**

WHAT WILL HAVE BEEN ANTI-OEDIPAL (De-Negated) HYSTERIES OF RHETORICS?  
WHAT WILL HAVE THEY LOOKED, SOUNDED, READ LIKE?

—Victor Vitanza

When the schoolmistress instructs her students on a rule of grammar or arithmetic, she is not informing them, any more than she is informing herself when she questions a student. She does not so much instruct or ‘insign,’ give orders or commands. A teacher’s commands are not external or additional to what he or she teaches us. They do not flow from primary significations or result from information: an order always and already concerns prior orders, which is why ordering is redundancy. The compulsory education machine does not communicate information; it imposes upon the child semiotic coordinates possessing all of the dual foundations of grammar (masculine-feminine, singular-plural, noun-verb, subject of the statement-subject of enunciation, etc.). The elementary unit of language—the statement—is the order-word.

—Deleuze and Guattari

We might first hark all the way back to Plato, when Socrates in *Phaedrus* asks: “Is not rhetoric in its entire nature an art which leads the soul by means of words, not only in law courts and the various other public assemblages but in private companies as well” (261d-e)? Indeed, much of *Phaedrus* approaches rhetoric as an art, explicitly (as above) and implicitly (the recursive discussions of desire, love, passion, soul, etc.). If anything, the artistic and aesthetic dimension of rhetoric has redoubled between the time of ancient Greece and our contemporary moment—to such a degree, in fact, that we can no longer reduce the artistic or aesthetic dimension of rhetoric to that of only “words” (literacy). Rhetoric and composition has developed many avenues for this: visual rhetoric, videocy, electracy, etc. *Appropriately*, we thus seek to

bring desire-aesthetics back to the forefront of rhetorical discourse, by way of schizoanalysis and electracy, especially as a proper means for exploring surveillance.

As Vitanza observes, “philosophers and even many rhetoricians have felt extremely uncomfortable with the third term and concept, desire-aesthetics.”<sup>16</sup> We intend to approach and employ this third term (desire-aesthetics), often qualified as the third sophistic.<sup>17</sup> But why such dis- or un-comfort? Via Vitanza, why not map “the ethico-political horizon...by way of poetic/aesthetic view of discourse”; why not “aestheticize the ethical subject?”<sup>18</sup> One clue might be found in a rhetorical symptom that, again, at least dates back to *Phaedrus*: any rhetoric, ethics, program must be grounded in truth (whatever that is).<sup>19</sup> The classic and still-persistent biunivocal character of logocentric truth (this means this or that; it is true or false; the negative, exclusive form of epistemology) historically forecloses on the rhetorical potential of desire-aesthetics as productive method of meaning-making. As Vitanza recursively notes, for too long has rhetoric exchanged the admittedly dangerous method of desire-aesthetics for the axiomatically violent method of biunivocal logocentrism. Following Nietzsche and Deleuze and Guattari, the rhetorical production of ethical “truth” (biunivocal logocentrism) comes aggressively close to, if not meets, the totalizing, fascisizing quality of morality. For Nietzsche’s *Genealogy of Morality*, this constitutes slave-morality (inverted aggression and self-repression); for Deleuze and Guattari, this constitutes molarized, segmented, overcoded, territorialized subjectification. As Deleuze and Guattari observe, “every time desire is betrayed, cursed, uprooted from its field of

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<sup>16</sup> Victor Vitanza, *Negation, Subjectivity, and the History of Rhetoric* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 75.

<sup>17</sup> While we can historically catalogue the First and Second Sophistic chronologically, the Third Sophistic constitutes an index of rhetorical thought that cannot be grouped by historical span, and instead can only be grouped by a marginalized but persistent resemblance of thought—that which evades or escapes dualisms, binaries (hence the “third”), and often falls back upon desire-aesthetics. The Third Sophistic spans the margins of classic (ancient) sophists to contemporary rhetorical theory.

<sup>18</sup> Vitanza, *Negation*, 58, 105.

<sup>19</sup> Socrates says: “there is no genuine art of speaking without a grasp of truth, and there never will be” (260e).

immanence, a priest is behind it.”<sup>20</sup> We should seek not to become better priests (e.g., administrators) but rather better rhetors and rhetoricians—i.e., we should become-other.

We can follow the traces and tracks of electracy (electraces, electracks) to better understand the emerging treatment of this rhetorical symptom: orality offers up mythology (God, gods, religion) as ethical dictate; literacy offers up epistemology (royal Science) as ethical explanation; electracy offers up aesthetics (entertainment) as ethical exploration. The rhetorical power of literacy (writing) scared Plato enough; we can only imagine how frightened he would have been of electracy (though we have plenty of “digital literacy” neo-Platonists to provide such fear-mongering). (Recall your formative Program, which you might have already tossed, and see: Warning; take Joe’s tip). Using the third sophistic, we seek only to subvert Platonic rhetoric.

Ulmer and the Florida Research Ensemble pose the following in “Miami Virtue”:

The challenge for contemporary correspondences is that the music of the spheres is now dissonance. Time is out of joint, none of the dimensions of the 'great chain of being' align to produce similitude. Correspondences between microcosm and macrocosm no longer are there to be discovered, but must be composed, designed, as a matter of collective choice. Why an ontology of aesthetic experience? Because in our transcendent epoch (literacy) we created the possibility of annihilating this very ground, the everyday material world that sustains life. (Ulmer)

Instead of using the art (desire-aesthetics) of rhetoric to reveal an essential truth, we call for the use of the art (desire-aesthetics) of rhetoric to reveal art (affect). By way of rhetorical art, and rhetorical art alone, desire revealing desire. As Alex Galloway recently explained in an interview: “From the Book of Genesis to Pygmalion and Plato, the existence of things in the world has often been bound up with notions of creativity, art, and expression. It’s no

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<sup>20</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 154.

exaggeration to say that Plato's theory of art is a theory of being, and vice versa."<sup>21</sup> As such: what else do we fundamentally have, rhetorically or otherwise?

Sarah Arroyo's *Participatory Composition*, which explores the electrated method of videocy as viable mode of composition pedagogy and invention, further investigates the third sophistic:

Deleuze and Guattari show us that there is no way to escape dualisms without resorting to negative deconstruction and thus suggest turning to the fold: that which, like holey space, gives rise to third terms and creates multiple possibilities for invention and production. Since this concept has been reinterpreted by other postmodern theorists, and reworked again and again, we want to wrestle with how the debate over dualistic invention has changed (or not) in the electrated apparatus. (69)

Wrestle away; we have Nietzschean masks for your productive, inventive, even self-affirmative amusement. Desire what you desire. Do dualisms exist in the rhetoric of electracy? Of course. Marks and traces of orality in literacy, marks and traces of literacy in electracy: we cannot just throw away biunivocality (especially subjectivity, but—*shhh!*—that is yet another Overture). But electracy always, necessarily suggests the third term. Following Deleuze and Guattari, electracy does not orbit the “either/or” binary reduction; rather, it follows the conductive, conjunctive, schizoid arrangement of “and, and, and.” *This* does not mean *that*. *This means that and that and that....* Never a univocal meaning of any image, rhetorical or otherwise—and if the meaning is lacking, simply poke the eyes out.<sup>22</sup> If we have no *essential* Oedipus, God, royal Science, then we have only this: wherever your desire takes you, us, we.

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<sup>21</sup> David Berry and Alex Galloway, “A Network is a Network is a Network: Reflections on the Computational and Societies of Control,” in *Theory, Culture & Society* 0 (0) (June 18, 2015): 1-22.

<sup>22</sup> See: Roland Barthes' work on the “punctum” in *Camera Lucida*.

Can we not yet qualify rhetoric simply as: “*There is only desire and the social*, and nothing else?”<sup>23</sup>

Diane Davis has something to say about the third sophistic, too: “We will, specifically, break up what is called ‘composition’ by engaging in third sophistic re-readings of the grounds upon which this ‘discipline’ has been built.”<sup>24</sup> Davis clarifies her qualification of the third sophistic in a footnote:

Third sophistic interest themselves not just in the supplement, the dirty underside that holds the logocentric (binary) system in tact, but also in the nonsequential and uncountable *third* that overflows and upsets any dichotomy, in the harassing other than the epistemological impulse aims to excrete. Third sophistic set their scanners to ‘static,’ to the ‘noise’ that must be silenced or appropriated for the sake of meaning-making. Third sophistic move beyond that *disso-logoi*, the privilege-flippings of negative deconstructions, and into what Vitanza has called *dissoi-paralogoi*, affirmative deconstructions that point to the excess flying around, to the leftover that’s busily shattering the border zones of thought. (262)

Davis claims here that, despite its potential for unpacking inherent tensions and contradictions, deconstruction, when used negatively, nonetheless begins and ends with binary logic (either/or). Instead, Davis endorses the over-flowing third, the excess or margins that circulate outside the field of biunivocal capture. In this way, we can move from a logic to a para-logic: from molarized and segmented biunivocal logocentrism to molecular lines of flight (desire-aesthetics) that transverse, compose, and destroy various logics.

The above appropriation of rhetoric and composition will guide our analysis of surveillance and subjectivity. Much as the scholars above did, we will use Deleuze and Guattari’s schizoanalysis within the context of electracy to *rethink* surveillance and subjectivity, and to reconsider how this might refigure rhetoric and composition (and vice versa). With our

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<sup>23</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 29.

<sup>24</sup> Diane Davis, *Breaking Up [at] Totality: A Rhetoric of Laughter* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 7.



focus on the third sophistic and desire-aesthetics, we will exchange rhetorical hermeneutics (analysis and interpretation) for rhetorical heuretics (experimentation and invention). Ulmer explains in *Heuretics* that,

as an ‘experimental’ humanities, heuretics appropriates the history of the avant-garde as a liberal arts mode of research and experimentation [.....] In teaching theory heuretically a seminar tries out some of these vanguard poetics, considered as experiments in representation, in the same way a composition course presents models of the essay to teach the poetics of academic writing. (xii-xiii)

We consider heuretics as a proper application of schizoanalysis (and the third sophistic, desire-aesthetics) within the field of rhetoric and composition, especially as a means for escaping the reproduction of our role as mere “schoolmistress” (see: first epigraph of this Overture), a potential for the unraveling of the “order-word.” Considering the common, populist response to surveillance, as well as the continued coveting of subjectivity, we do not believe, as Thomas Rickert claims, that rhetoric and composition (or the “world”) has reached a “post-Oedipal” moment.<sup>25</sup> By way of schizoanalysis, the third sophistic, desire-aesthetics, heuretics, etc., however, we might find a line of flight that moves us in that direction.

*Patter*

Did Diogenes of Sinope die or did Diogenes the schizoid dissolve? The sky *is not* blue, just as blue, he would argue, as would I, *is not* the sky.

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<sup>25</sup> See: Thomas Rickert’s “‘Hands Up, You’re Free’: Composition in a Post-Oedipal World” in *Journal of Advanced Composition* (Vol. 21, No. 2, Spring 2001, 287-320).

## Overture, Part Three: Schizoanalysis

New dreams, new dreams; there is no truth.

—W.B. Yeats

The best thing in life is a really pissed sleep on the beach.

—Arthur Rimbaud

Cat's foot iron claw/Neurosurgeons scream for more/At paranoia's poison door/Twenty first century schizoid man.

—King Crimson

Before a subject, identity, proper name, representation, prohibition or law, Oedipal complex (mommy-daddy-me), etc., “*there is only desire and the social*, and nothing else.”<sup>26</sup> With schizoanalysis, we can only begin here: desire as primary and productive. We can consider the initial formation of schizoanalysis as a (deviant?) deviation from psychoanalysis. As such, Deleuze and Guattari write that “the three errors concerning desire are called lack, law, and signifier.”<sup>27</sup> With regard to lack, Deleuze and Guattari do not consider desire as the consequence of lack (i.e., we desire because we lack); rather, they frame desire as primary (i.e., desire-desiring-desire). In this sense, “desire and its object are one and the same thing.”<sup>28</sup> Lack can only arrive afterwards, secondarily: “Lack (*manque*) is created, planned, organized in and through social production.”<sup>29</sup> Likewise, Deleuze and Guattari invert the psychoanalytic qualification of law (for Lacan, Name of the Father): one does not desire something because it is prohibited; rather, something is prohibited because it is desired. The social production of laws (planning, organizing) that prohibit certain desires thus create lack, not the other way around. As Deleuze and Guattari make clear: “if it is prohibited, this is because it is desired—there would be no need

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<sup>26</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 29.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

to prohibit what is not desired.”<sup>30</sup> Lastly, Deleuze and Guattari do not approach the unconscious as representational theater (for Freud, the myth-actors of Oedipus and Electra), as “the unconscious is totally unaware of persons as such,” nor as a language (for Lacan, metaphor and metonymy), as the unconscious knows nothing of linguistics (signifier, signified, signification).<sup>31</sup> Instead, Deleuze and Guattari frame the unconscious as a site of production: desiring-production.

Schizoanalytically, then, we can primarily think ourselves as desiring-machines, plugging into, connecting and disconnecting with other machines. Deleuze and Guattari begin *Anti-Oedipus* by explaining:

It is at work everywhere, functioning smoothly at times, at other times in fits and starts. It breathes, it heats, it eats. It shits and fucks. What a mistake to have ever said *the* id. Everywhere it is machines—real ones, not figurative ones: machines driving other machines, machines being driven by other machines, with all the necessary couplings and connections. An organ-machine is plugged into an energy-source-machine: the one produces a flow that the other interrupts. The breast is a machine that produces milk, and the mouth a machine coupled to it. The mouth of the anorexic wavers between several functions: its possessor is uncertain as to whether it is an eating-machine, an anal machine, a talking-machine, or a breathing-machine (asthma attacks). Hence we are all handymen: each with his little machines. For every organ-machine, an energy-machine: all of the time, flows and interruptions. (1-2)

Desire functions (and dysfunctions) mechanically. Our bodies are organic machines (they consume food, digest it, shit it out; they grow and shrink and age; they respire, circulate blood, send electronic pulses to keep the heart pumping, etc.) that reproduce themselves. Our bodies desire other bodies: libidinal economy expressed in the currency of fucking (one body-machine plugs into another body-machine), at times reproducing new bodies (sexual reproduction). Each of us carries a site of desiring-production (unconscious), a factory that fuels our desiring-machines. In short, “everything is a machine,” thus, “everything is production: production of

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 46.

productions, of actions and of passions; productions of recording processes, of distributions and of co-ordinates that serve as points of reference; productions of consumptions, of sensual pleasures, of anxieties and of pain”<sup>32</sup>

So far, “the schizoanalytic argument is simple: desire is a machine, a synthesis of machines, a machinic arrangement—desiring-machines.”<sup>33</sup> Schizoanalysis therefore rejects any totalizing theory (be it psychoanalytic, political, social, economic, linguistic) that does not begin with the micro-politics of desire. Because Deleuze and Guattari first conceived schizoanalysis as a theoretical response to the failure of May ’68, Oedipal psychoanalysis and dogmatic or vulgar Marxism initially figure as the main targets.<sup>34</sup> Deleuze and Guattari’s central focus, however, rests with insidious and discreet emergences of micro-fascism. Gesturing to the historical instantiation of Fascism (macro), Deleuze and Guattari argue that, “no, the masses were not innocent dupes; at a certain point, under certain conditions, they *wanted* fascism.”<sup>35</sup> In other words, “desire can never be deceived.”<sup>36</sup> Years later, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, they continue: “Desire stretches that far: desiring one’s own annihilation, or desiring the power to annihilate. Money, army, and State desire, fascist desire, even fascism is desire.”<sup>37</sup> In Deleuze and Guattari’s configuration, then, we do not encounter the repression of desire so much as desire-repressing-desire (retaining desire as primary, productive).

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 2; 4.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 296.

<sup>34</sup> For example, Oedipal psychoanalysis totalizes a subject by continually collapsing upon the Oedipal reduction, the triangulation of mommy-daddy-me. It invents a “problem” so as to arrive at an “answer” (conflating the two, psychoanalysis presents an “answer” that proclaims a “problem”): it says, yes, of course, “this *means* that.” Dogmatic or vulgar Marxism falls victim to the same program of thought: we can reductively approach exploitation and repression by revolutionizing the means of production, flattening class stratification, abolishing the money-commodity-money prime (M-C-M prime) strategy of legal theft, etc. Both models of thought jump to macro-formations and forget the primacy of the micro-politics of desire and, as such, both flirt with an insidious iteration of fascism.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 257.

<sup>37</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 165.

Deleuze and Guattari thus ask the question:

Only microfascism provides an answer to the global question: Why does desire desire its own repression, how can it desire its own repression? The masses certainly do not passively submit to power; nor do they ‘want’ to be repressed, in a kind of masochistic hysteria; nor are they tricked by an ideological lure. Desire is never separable from complex assemblages that necessarily tie into molecular levels, from microformations already shaping postures, attitudes, perceptions, expectations, semiotic systems, etc. Desire is never an undifferentiated instinctual energy, but itself results from a highly developed, engineered setup rich in interactions: a whole supple segmentarity that processes molecular energies and potentially gives desire a fascist determination. Leftist organizations will not be the last to secrete microfascisms. It’s too easy to be antifascist on the molar level, and not even see the fascist inside you, the fascist you yourself sustain and nourish and cherish with molecules both personal and collective. (215)

Deleuze and Guattari therefore make clear that anyone can easily oppose macro, molar Fascism.

We find greater difficulty understanding the impulse towards molecular, micro-fascisms—

desired and accepted totalizations of thought, expression, content, and activity. Deleuze and

Guattari locate elements of microfascism in psychoanalysis (lack and law *qua* desire; Oedipal

triangulation; “this means that” reduction) and Marxism (economic reduction) in *Anti-Oedipus*,

and linguistics (the “order-word”) in *A Thousand Plateaus*. But microfascisms shoot out in all

directions: subjectification, identity politics, neo-Victorian sexual repression, leftist

organizations, etc. These microfascisms do not dupe us; we desire these microfascisms. The

question, as Deleuze and Guattari note, should not be “where and what are they?” but rather

“why do we desire them?” Which is to ask: “how do they work?”

Any sensible answer to the above question returns us to the two poles of schizoanalysis:

“first, a paranoiac fascisizing (*fasciant*) type or pole [.....] and second, a schizorevolutionary

type or pole.”<sup>38</sup> The paranoiac fears, desires the repression of its own desire, seeks out easy,

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<sup>38</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 277.

totalizing answers (this means that), calls upon the Despot.<sup>39</sup> The schizorevolutionary, on the other hand, seeks the continual liberation of desire, the production of new desires, calls upon other desiring-machines. On the one pole, “the paranoiac engineers masses, he is the artist of the large molar aggregates”; on the other pole, “the schizo goes in the other direction, that of microphysics, of molecules.”<sup>40</sup> Paranoiacs reinforce and compact totalities and molar compositions; the schizoid breaks totalities up, returns them to molecular dispersion. The paranoiac preserves subjectification, identity politics, all matters and forms of repression. Abstraction aside, then, the paranoiac inside all of us emerges when we become afraid (of ourselves), insecure. It is why we rally around the flag; why, since the 9/11 attacks, we now sing in many baseball stadiums not one but two national songs (“National Anthem” before the game and “God Bless America” during the 7<sup>th</sup>-inning stretch); why we complain about TSA screenings at airports, but would not fly without them; why we (each of us) do not want to be surveilled, but support surveillance of the “bad guys” (“right guy with the gun”); why we buy “I Buy American” bumper stickers (made in other countries). In rhetoric and composition, the paranoiac inside all of us is why we cling to literacy (digital or otherwise); why we do not want to give up the familiarity of the basic, five-paragraph essay; why we produce so many textbooks; why we aim to normalize assessment by way of standardized rubrics; why we promote the inclusion of “trigger warnings.” The paranoiac inside all of us pushes us towards microfascisms.

We can thus begin to glean the function of schizoanalysis, but we might still ask, why schizo(phrenia)? First, Deleuze and Guattari do not intend to use schizophrenia in the static, clinical, diagnostic sense (such is the job of the psychoanalyst). Deleuze and Guattari appropriate

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<sup>39</sup> Deleuze and Guattari mark the “paranoiac Despot” as the first formation of Despotism, as the Birth of the Empire. Indeed, the paranoiac pole “invests the formation of central sovereignty; overinvests it by making it the final eternal cause for all other social forms of history; counterinvests the enclaves or the periphery; and disinvests every ‘free’ figure of desire—yes, I am your kind, and I belong to the superior race and class” (*Anti-Oedipus* 277).

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 279; 280.

schizophrenia as process, becoming, as the detotalizing desiring-production of “and, and, and” (rather than “either/or”). In Deleuze and Guattari’s own Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM), otherwise known as *Anti-Oedipus*: “Schizophrenia is like love: there is no specifically schizophrenic phenomenon or entity; schizophrenia is the universe of productive and reproductive desiring-machines.”<sup>41</sup> Diametrically opposed to the paranoiac (molar), the schizoid seeks lines of flight, escape, potentials. Deleuze and Guattari admit that “the schizo is not revolutionary, but the schizophrenic process—in terms of which the schizo is merely the interruption, or the continuation in the void—is the potential for revolution.”<sup>42</sup> Deleuze and Guattari do not champion the debilitating actuality of schizophrenia as we understand it as a clinical condition (La Borde clinic has seen its own failures in such a pursuit); rather, they seek to abstract certain potentials from schizophrenia, broadly conceived, as means for radically rethinking structures and paradigms of being, as means for radical becoming(-other).<sup>43</sup> To this end, “schizoanalysis merely asks what are the machinic, social, and technical indices on a socius that open to desiring-machines, that enter into the parts, wheels, and motors of these machines, as much as they cause them to enter into their own parts, wheels, and motors.”<sup>44</sup> In doing so, “the task of schizoanalysis is that of learning what a subject’s desiring-machines are, how they work, with what syntheses, what bursts of energy in the machine, what constituent misfires, with what

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<sup>41</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 5.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 341.

<sup>43</sup> Deleuze and Guattari note that, “A becoming is not a correspondence between relations. But neither is it a resemblance, an imitation, or at the limit, an identification” (*A Thousand Plateaus* 237). They go on to explain that, “Becoming is a rhizome, not a classificatory or genealogical tree. Becoming is certainly not imitating, or identifying with something; neither is it regressing-progressing; neither is it corresponding, establishing corresponding relations; neither is it producing, producing a filiation or producing through a filiation. Becoming is a verb with a consistency all its own; it does not reduce to, or lead back to, ‘appearing,’ being,’ equaling,’ or ‘producing’ (*A Thousand Plateaus* 239). In other words, becoming does not move towards metaphor or similarity, resemblance or likeness. One does not become *like* something else; one *becomes* something else.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 381.

flows, what chains, and what becomings in each case.”<sup>45</sup> We can consider this our working definition of “schizoanalysis,” though other, equally useful definitions widely exist.<sup>46</sup>

Ulmer notes that “Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s development of a ‘schizoanalysis’ ...is a...productive response to the electronic change in the apparatus.”<sup>47</sup> We will therefore scavenge for the desiring-machines of rhetoric and composition and, using a “schizzed” rhetoric and composition (an electrated impression), rethink surveillance and subjectivity. To do such, we will approach rhetoric and composition, electracy, surveillance, and subjectivity as “assemblages.” Keeping our Overture, Part Two (Rhetoric and Composition) in mind, Deleuze and Guattari remind us that, “Assemblages are passionate, they are compositions of desire. Desire has nothing to do with a natural or spontaneous determination; there is no desire but assembling, assembled, desire. The rationality, the efficiency, of an assemblage does not exist without the passions the assemblage brings into play, with the desires that constitute it as much as it constitutes them.”<sup>48</sup> We will attempt to discover how we might use schizoanalysis in

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 338.

<sup>46</sup> Other useful definitions of schizoanalysis exist. Guattari writes in *Schizoanalytic Cartographies*: “[The] provisional definition [of schizoanalysis] could be the analysis of the impact of Assemblages of enunciation on semiotic and subjective productions in a given problematic context” (18); “rather than returning constantly to the same, supposedly foundational, structures, the same archetypes, the same ‘mathemes,’ schizoanalytic meta-modeling will choose to map compositions of the unconscious, contingent topographies, evolving with social formations, technologies, arts, sciences, etc.” (22). Amy Herzog’s “Suspended Gestures: Schizoanalysis, Affect and the Face in Cinema” in *Deleuze and the Schizophrenia of Cinema* explains: “Rather than interpreting pre-constituted subjects, schizoanalysis maps the nexus of forces that work to make subject formation possible. The goal is to expose the repressive operations of such a system, dismantling them and opening them to unforeseen connections with outside elements. The tools of schizoanalysis are inconsistent and continually evolving, arising, as they must, from their unique social and historical conditions. The key, for Guattari, is to seek out, within these social contexts, those assemblages of enunciation ‘that are capable of fashion new coordinates for reading and for ‘bringing to life’ hitherto unknown representations and prepositions’” (64; qtd. from Guattari’s “Schizoanalysis” in *Yale Journal of Criticism*, 11 (2), 433-9). In the same collection, Gregg Lambert’s “Schizoanalysis and the Cinema of the Brain,” states: “The goals of schizoanalysis are two-fold: to critique the machinery by which the Unconscious is produced today under the regime of Oedipal economy, which Deleuze and Guattari define as the negative or critical goal that must always accompany a positive affirmation of Desire as innocent, in some sense, to the trappings of this economy” (38). Also in the same edited collection, Mark Riley’s “Disorientation, Duration and Tarkovsky” succinctly notes that, “*Schizoanalysis is the art of the new*” (52).

<sup>47</sup> Ulmer, *Teleteory*, 93.

<sup>48</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 399.



order to tweak each assemblage of rhetoric and composition and, in turn, tweak the relations between each assemblage. Again, recalling *Overture, Part Two (Rhetoric and Composition)*, we advocate and call for a heurctic approach: experimentation and invention. After all, “Schizoanalysis, or pragmatics, has no other meaning: Make a rhizome. But you don’t know what you can make a rhizome with, you don’t know which subterranean stem is effectively going to make a rhizome, or enter a becoming, people your desert. So experiment.”<sup>49</sup> In the paranoid face of surveillance, of molar subjectification, how can we employ electrated rhetoric and composition as means to shift the interactions of all said assemblages? —Schizoanalysis, heuristics, desire-aesthetics, the third sophistic, experimentation.... Make a rhizome.

*Patter*

Who is watching who: is you watching you are we watching we to see what we see is watching for clues? Does the machine mean to seem to see a paranoid disease: police dreams?

#### **Overture, Part Four: Surveillance**

I always feel like/Sombody’s watching me/And I have no privacy/Somebody’s watching me.  
—Michael Jackson

Have you seen this boy?  
—T-1000

Let us again go back in time, before satellites, data-mining, drones, cell phone records; before binoculars, espionage spies, Kafkaesque State documentation of citizens in stacks of paper files; before even the distant sight of the castle look-out, the artistic representation of subjectivity for the sovereign, or the idea of an ever-watching, vengeful God (omnipresent Eye in the sky). Before that we had faces and vision: faces that could see other faces seeing them—faces desiring to see other faces, desiring to be seen by other faces. *Re-cognition*. The emergence

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 251.

of the recognizable face—recognizable via the eyes of one’s own face—indicates the inauguration of desiring-to-see and desiring-to-be-seen. *Desiring-surveillance*.<sup>50</sup>

According to Deleuze and Guattari, in contrast to the body, the face organizes the semiotics of subjectification and identity, brings into cohesive unity the *site/cite* of a given self. We coordinate a proper name with a face, not with a body. We find the semiotic regime of faciality in everyday, colloquial discourse (such as when trying to remember a name, we say, “what’s her face?”) as well as in emerging methods of State surveillance (for example, facial recognition software, which has also been employed by social media platforms, such as Facebook). The primary relation between faciality and surveillance, then, goes back quite a way: “Faciality undergoes a profound transformation. The god averts his face, which must be seen by no one; and the subject, gripped by a veritable fear of the god, averts his or her face in turn.”<sup>51</sup> Not much has changed: when one considers one’s self as being-seen, one still actually considers one’s face-as-self as being-seen. For example, within the contemporary, digital institution, embarrassment of identification with regard to, say, a post photograph stems from the inclusion of the face (not the body) and the attachment of a proper name. Dating all the way back to the age of orality, faciality has organized the signification of subjectification—whether a subject of God, the sovereign/State, a company/corporation, or between each other. A certain regime of signs (signification) engenders subjectification; faciality organizes the semiotics of an identifiable subject; surveillance in any shape or form (organic, technical, abstract)—and our desire for, and anxiety towards, it—thus uses the face as its central means of operation.

As Nietzsche, Deleuze and Guattari, electracy, the third sophistic, etc. remind us, however, there is nothing essential or *a priori* about this facial-subject-signifier coordination,

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<sup>50</sup> As the opera will explain in later Acts, our “desiring-surveillance” differs from Mark Andrejevic’s “lateral surveillance” and Anders Albrechtslund’s “participatory surveillance.”

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 123.

especially its appropriation by various surveillance modalities. (Remember your Nietzschean masks, as noted in the Program, which we all wear, always). The signification of subjectification, especially via faciality, constitutes only a given assemblage, a territorialization of marks, a segment or stratification. Signification-subjectification by way of facialization uses an abstract machine of a regime of signs, appropriated by other machines (technical ones, such as software recognition software, political ones, such as the State, and (extra-)economic ones, such as Facebook). This does not mean, however, that there does not exist another (third) way, a line of flight or escape. Following the para-logic of the third sophistic, for example we can deterritorialize the face by way of excess. Deleuze notes in *Cinema 1: The Movement Image* that “the affection-image is the close-up, and the close-up is the face.”<sup>52</sup> An extreme close-up, however, can asubjectify (deterritorialize) the face, nonetheless retaining the affective quality of the shot. In this manner, “subjectification carries desire to such a point of excess and unloosening that it must either annihilate itself in a black hole or change planes.”<sup>53</sup> The rhetorical move: asubjectification by way of subjectification by way of desire-aesthetics.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, by way of electracy, we can “(re)brand” ourselves by selecting certain faces, deleting the face, manipulating or glitching the face (Photoshop).

In short, surveillance (desired or otherwise) can be traced back to, and around, the rhetoric of the face (self). As Deleuze and Guattari explain in *What Is Philosophy?*, the problem might be the framing of the problem itself (the question). Asking the wrong question inevitably provides an inadequate concept (answer). Instead of asking, “how do we resist surveillance” (assuming we want to), or even, “what is surveillance,” we might first ask, “how does

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<sup>52</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 87.

<sup>53</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 134.

<sup>54</sup> Gregory Flaxman and Elena Oxman’s “Losing Face” in *Deleuze and the Schizoanalysis of Cinema* provides an example: “With gentle timidity, the boy moves his silhouetted hand across the modulating face, as if to grasp a becoming that cannot be grasped but only felt, cannot be apprehended but only intuited” (51).

surveillance work?” A productive rhetoric (or theory, philosophy) of surveillance, then, will schizoanalyze the face-subject, retaining the desire-aesthetics therein.

We thus started this Overture by explaining (singing) that surveillance does not necessitate State or Capital (corporations), just as desire does not necessitate lack or law. This does not mean, however, that the State (government) or Capital (corporations) do not inflect and inform surveillance, especially in the practical sense, much as lack and law practically inflect and inform desire. Social organization and planning—State and capitalism, lack and law—appropriate and ubiquitously employ surveillance in such an *actual*, macro and molar sense that an exclusive focus on the *virtual*, micro or molecular properties of surveillance would prove overly abstract and fruitless. After all, there is desire *and* the social—and nothing else—and this includes the territorializations, codings, segmentations, and stratifications of social planning and organization. A schizoanalysis of the rhetorical face and of desire does not explain, let alone negate, the pervasion of State and corporate surveillance in everyday life. This perhaps calls for a more practical rhetoric.

Zygmunt Baumann and David Lyon begin *Liquid Surveillance* by explicitly noting that “surveillance is a key dimension of the modern world.”<sup>55</sup> Unlike previous surveillance modalities (such as the panopticon, which we will explore in Act 1), however, contemporary surveillance has taken on a liquid quality—fluid, shifting, mobile. Ubicomp, they argue, has created “human hyperlinks” that allow “power [to] move with the speed of an electronic signal,” affording a hyper-efficient method of “social sorting.”<sup>56</sup> In short, ubicomp affords ubiquitous surveillance. Nonetheless, Baumann and Lyon recursively highlight that the possibility and

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<sup>55</sup> Zygmunt Bauman and David Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance* (Malden: Polity Press, 2013), 1.

<sup>56</sup> Bauman and Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance*, 9; 12; 13. The method of “social sorting” can be used by the State (identifying threats, creating lists, acquiring security information) as well as Capital (tracking purchases, data-mining, using algorithms to determine search-engine patterns).

efficacy of liquid surveillance, within and through the digital institution, necessarily depends upon a desire for such surveillance. Citing the explosive success and growth of social media platforms, they claim that “the condition of being watched and seen has thereby been reclassified from a menace into a temptation.”<sup>57</sup> We thus arrive at the populist political irony: many of the same individuals who use social media as a means by which to see and be seen (horizontal surveillance) also complain about being seen or tracked by the State or Capital (vertical surveillance). Lest we forget, social media platforms are predicated upon the desire-aesthetics of horizontal surveillance (posting thoughts and pictures; indicating what “events” we plan to attend or have attended; “checking in” to locations when we arrive at various places); it would be irrational to think the State and Capital would not appropriate the same platforms in the service of vertical surveillance. In other words: “Facebook doesn’t just use people; people use Facebook.”<sup>58</sup>

Baumann and Lyon therefore conclude that “surveillance is growing and welcomed,” that there is a “desire for more and more surveillance.”<sup>59</sup> *Desiring-surveillance*. While the desire-aesthetics of horizontal surveillance, such as social media platforms, serve as obvious examples of desiring-surveillance, we find desiring-surveillance in less conspicuous arenas of life, too. For example, many might complain about the invasive nature of TSA screenings at airports, but how many people would fly without them? Many might complain about the State’s ability to tap their own phones, but many of the same individuals rally around (or did rally around) the State’s tracking of “terrorists” by “any means necessary.” In these latter examples, we begin to glean the potential of micro-fascism in desiring-surveillance, of *desire-repressing-desire*.

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<sup>57</sup> Bauman and Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance*, 23.

<sup>58</sup> Bauman and Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance*, 44. As they later note: “it is the ‘users’ of the services of Google and Facebook who produce the database” (73).

<sup>59</sup> Bauman and Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance*, vi-viii; 116.

UbiComp's facilitation of the growth of horizontal surveillance (the desire-aesthetics of seeing and being seen) for Baumann and Lyon indicates the birth of a "confessional society," wherein "we seem to experience no joy in having secrets."<sup>60</sup> And if so, who cares? As Deleuze and Guattari indicate, the secret always ends up taking on a "virile paranoid form"—whether it be the secrets the paranoid thinks the State is hiding, for example, or the secrets a subject keeps by way of the over-determined and over-glorified interiority of subjectivity, arranged as such by signification-subjectification in the first place.<sup>61</sup> In any case, Baumann and Lyon thus remix the Cartesian cogito: "I am seen (watched, noted, recorded) therefore I am."<sup>62</sup> We can consider such an ontological shift as one from *Being* to *Beseen*.

Yet, should we not take certain pains to distinguish the ontological difference between having a secret (juridical; proprietary; subjective tracing) and being seen (facial; sensory; spatial extension/mapping)? Deleuze and Guattari make clear that, "*it is in vain that we say what we see; what we see never resides in what we say.*" This marks the division between seeing and saying, between affective sense and the regime of linguistics (signification), between desiring-surveillance of the schizoid variety (desire-aesthetics) and desiring-surveillance of the paranoid variety (micro-fascism, secrecy, myth of the encased subjective interior). Deleuze and Guattari thus level their own critique of the Cartesian cogito: "When Descartes says, I can infer 'I think therefore I am' but not 'I walk therefore I am,' he is initiating the distinction between two subjects."<sup>63</sup> For Deleuze and Guattari, this does not constitute a mind-body split (epistemology and diagrammatic space), but rather a desire-machinic-body interaction (intensity and extension of space)—the primacy of the latter necessarily precedes the former.

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<sup>60</sup> Bauman and Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance*, 30; 28.

<sup>61</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 288.

<sup>62</sup> Bauman and Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance*, 130.

<sup>63</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 128.

So who's afraid of the surveillance wolf? We cannot—should not, at least—fear ubicomp-cum-ubisurveillance any more than we desire it. Just as the State appropriates the war machine, it also appropriates the surveillance machine: “a knife can be used to cut bread and slice throats.”<sup>64</sup> The paranoiac's wolf can also be the schizoid's lover: the subject-politics of fear and secrecy and privacy vs. desire-aesthetics. Do not lie down on the shrink's couch; *stand up*: let us schizoanalyze our desiring-machines of desiring-surveillance.

*Patter*

What will be the new face of the Rhetor when we ask a few rhetor-bettors how they wish to handle the gamble of the face of the new Rhetor.

### **Overture, Part Five: Subjectivity**

You see, in this world there's two kinds of people, my friend: Those with loaded guns, and those who dig. You dig.

—The Man With No Name

I say, let the old guns rot. Get new ones, and shoot straight.

—Herman Melville

The recursive death of “subjectivity” also marks its perennial birth: a ghost, a haunting, a specter, it never quite goes away. Like a demon (daemon?) or a shadow, subjectivity finds a way to tag along, even (and perhaps especially) when it is behind us. The *absence* or erasure of subjectivity, whether emergent or *a priori* (*qua* myth), marks its *presence*: discursively, we can only ever get so far as to discuss healthy mourning and unhealthy melancholia over the supposed death of subjectivity. Subjectivity thus dog-ears the birth of tragedy: we love it so much, with such *primal* force, we cannot wholly let it go. Hamlet's famous soliloquy approaches this fear of post-subject abyss (the death of the subject as subject put to sleep, perchance to dream, and to then dream of what?); Rimbaud spent a season in Hell deranging all his senses so as to return to,

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<sup>64</sup> Bauman and Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance*, 45.

and then move away from, his subjective; Van Gogh knows, cutting himself up into pieces, as offering of gift; and Leonardo DiCaprio spent time on Martin Scorsese's *Shutter Island* (2010), in a fever-pitch psychosis, because he refused to let go of his subject-position. *Ad infinitum*. There seems no end—not then, not now, maybe never. If the “end of subjectivity” only constitutes the endless midnight wake of the “end of subjectivity,” then at what ends have we actually arrived?

As we have covered much of this ground already, we will jump right into the mapping. As desiring-machines in the primary sense, rather than subjects, we each of us constitute multiplicities: “A multiplicity has neither subject nor object, only determinations, magnitudes, and dimensions that cannot increase in number without the multiplicity changing in nature.”<sup>65</sup> We have only desire, multiplying, changing and shifting, becoming-other, grafting onto and rejecting partial objects. We have a machinic body and machinic desire, connecting with other machines, partial objects—beyond that, we have only signification-subjectification, a regime of signs (*I am this* face, *I am this* proper name). Deleuze and Guattari caution that:

You will be organized, you will be an organism, you will articulate your body—otherwise you're just depraved. You will be signifier and signified, interpreter and interpreted—otherwise you're just a deviant. You will be a subject, nailed down as one, a subject of the enunciation recoiled into a subject of the statement—otherwise you're just a tramp. (163)

Articulation of self, as proper means of signifying self, as move towards rendering one's self a subject (*sub-ject: thrown under* the regime of signs)—this constitutes the formation and metastasis of subjectivity (subjectification). The totalization of linguistics leads the capture of subjectivity: *I am* Scott Sundvall. I am this or that, properly, this or that molar aggregate (identity

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<sup>65</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 8.



politics), this or that stratified figure of resemblance. But we are not; we are many. *We* indeed agree: “There is no individual enunciation. There is not even a subject of enunciation.”<sup>66</sup>

How can *we* not agree: “Above all, it should not be thought that it suffices to distinguish the masses and exterior groups someone belongs to or participates in from the internal aggregates that person envelops in himself or herself.”<sup>67</sup> This does not mean that one is *guilty* by association; it means that one *is* by way of association, connection, linkage. One desiring-machine always plugging into another desiring-machine: the currents of a grouping mutually cross with the currents of a “single” desiring-machine plugged into it. Brian Massumi makes it simple enough: “Deleuze and Guattari short-circuit the entire debate. They don’t add yet another synthesis of the individual and society, with still more mediations. They abolish both terms and all mediations in one simple move: by saying that the individual *is* a group.”<sup>68</sup> What more can *we* say?

How can *we* not agree:

There are no individual statements, there never are. Every statement is the product of a machinic assemblage, in other words, of collective agents of enunciation (take ‘collective agent’ to mean not peoples or societies or multiplicities). The proper name (*nom propre*) does not designate an individual: it is on the contrary when the individual opens up to the multiplicities pervading him or her, at the outcome of the most severe operation of depersonalization, that he or she acquires his or her true proper name. The proper name is the instantaneous apprehension of a multiplicity. The proper name is the subject of a pure infinitive comprehended as such in a field of intensity. (37)

Deleuze and Guattari don’t say this; I don’t say this; we all say this. I am *not* Scott Sundvall. I am whatever the collective enunciation of Scott Sundvall diagrams “me” to be, collectively dispersed and collectively regathered. Without desire, without my desiring-machines plugged

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>68</sup> Brian Massumi, “Deleuze and Guattari’s Theories of the Group Subject,” in *Discours social* 1 (4) (1988): 423-40.

into other desiring-machines, other partial objects, of what function or purpose “Scott Sundvall,” anyway? Scott Sundvall’s utterances, its enunciations, constitute expressions desire-machinely derived (plug in, plug out), assemblages of Scott Sundvall and all other attachments. Once again, there is only desire *and* the social—and nothing else. The desire of Scott Sundvall finds no form without the organization of the *socius*, least of all the determination to cry out a proper name (*nom propre*): *I am Scott Sundvall*. But now we know: *we* are Scott Sundvall.

How can *we* not agree: “Both expression and content are now molecular and molar. The distinction no longer concerns a single aggregate or subject; linearity takes us further in the direction of flat multiplicities, rather than unity.”<sup>69</sup> The construction of any given composition, in this case a subject, presents a case (content, form) and a rhetoric/argument (expression, style). For example, “the form of content and form expression, prison and delinquency: each has its own history, microhistory, segments.”<sup>70</sup> Both prison (content) and delinquency (expression) cross-inform each other, both rely on one another—a node, a nexus of organizational lines that constitute a single composition. We must not forget, however, that these organizational lines (of which there are multiplicative, rhizomatic infinities) create in these nodes, these nexuses of intersection, further multiplicities. We should never consider a composition—a subject—as unified, complete. Any and every composition is always and already in the process of becoming(-other), especially any iteration of a given “subject.” (Note the difference between “Scott Sundvall,” for example, as molar assemblage, and the molecular Scott Sundvall, a desiring-machine connecting and disconnecting from other desiring-machines, partial objects).

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 59.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 67.

Yet, much recent scholarship on surveillance hones in on the question of subjectivity. Michael Lynch, for example, argues that surveillance “reduces us to objects.”<sup>71</sup> He continues: “Such [surveillance] programmes treat us less like autonomous subjects and more like objects. Individual choice about what is public or private is being usurped, whether we know it or not. That is an attitude that is corrosive of democracy, one made all the more corrosive by not being visible.”<sup>72</sup> We locate many loaded, presupposed concepts here: subject, object, public, private. If surveillance modalities treat us as objects by way of their monitoring our bodies, to what degree can we claim that they infringe upon our subjective being? Should we link or conflate the concepts of object-body and subject-self? If so, surveillance does not “reduce” us to objects; rather, it strategically organizes us in the diagrammatic, object sense. Bauman and Lyon clarify this strategy, noting that emergent, digital modes of surveillance figure body data (object) as more reliable than the person (subject).<sup>73</sup> We cannot create an ontological distinction between subject and object only to then complain that surveillance’s line of sight on object-body necessarily invades our subject-self.<sup>74</sup> This accounts for Deleuze and Guattari’s decree that “subject and object give a poor approximation of thought.”<sup>75</sup>

Similarly, Phillipe-Joseph Salazar’s “Subjectivity Under Surveillance: Rhetoric Redux” claims that “rhetoric and political subjectivity are indivisible.”<sup>76</sup> His article explores “surveillance as an object for rhetoric and for a theory of subjectivity.”<sup>77</sup> This, of course, makes sense. State surveillance re- and over-codes, reterritorializes individuals as subjects; yet anxiety

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<sup>71</sup> Michael P. Lynch, “The philosophy of privacy: why surveillance reduces us to objects,” in *The Guardian* (May 7, 2015).

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Bauman and Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance*, 7-8.

<sup>74</sup> The difference between *having* a body (juridical) and *being* a body (ontological) will be discussed later.

<sup>75</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 85.

<sup>76</sup> Phillipe-Joseph Salazar, “Subjectivity Under Surveillance: Rhetoric Redux,” posted on the “Centre Francais de Recherche sur le Reseignement” website (January 31, 2015).

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

over such surveillance often revolves around the desire for private, autonomous retention of such subjectivity.<sup>78</sup> We want to live in the *polis* because it marks us as meaningful subjects; we do not want to live in the *polis* because, as meaningful subjects, it seeks to (re)mark us. This gestures to the fundamental problem with framing surveillance primarily as a political problem: the wrong question leads to impoverished concepts (subject, object, public, private).<sup>79</sup> Instead, we intend to approach surveillance in a metaphysical light—desire, vision, becoming-other—as a schizoanalytic means for rethinking rhetorical subjectivity. A new rhetorical subjectivity (under erasure): *getting what we are after*: finally leaving the *polis* for the *chora*.<sup>80</sup>

Indeed, rhetoric and composition has made great strides in rethinking subjectivity over the past several decades. Notably, Sidney Dobrin’s *Postcomposition* calls for the abandonment of the student- and writer-subject so as to return to a focus on writing itself.<sup>81</sup> Byron Hawk’s *A Counter-History of Composition* evades the subject-trap of thought by turning to complexity theory and vitalism as more adequate methods for undertaking and understanding composition.<sup>82</sup> Sarah Arroyo’s use of “videocy” (a component of electracy) engages a “video culture [that] relies upon *proairetic* invention and electracy reasoning, both of which expose the question of definition to spaces of participation where strict boundaries of belonging, such as ‘inside’ and ‘outside,’ blur and thus necessitate movement.”<sup>83</sup> Arroyo’s blurring of otherwise “subjective” interiority (intensity) and exteriority (extension, partial objects, world) moves towards the figuration of a “whatever being”—an invention of self that, always and already connected to

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<sup>78</sup> We could note that Capital decodes and deterritorializes our subject-formation, so as to recode and reterritorialize as consumers, but that is for another time.

<sup>79</sup> Even an entire issue of *Radical Philosophy* (191, May/June 2015) devoted to “Data & Surveillance” frames the question of surveillance strictly in terms of the political.

<sup>80</sup> Ulmer proposes: “*what topic was to literacy, chora is to electracy*” (*Teletheory* 293).

<sup>81</sup> Sidney Dobrin, *Postcomposition* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2011).

<sup>82</sup> Byron Hawk, *A Counter-History of Composition: Toward Methodologies of Complexity* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007).

<sup>83</sup> Arroyo, *Participatory Composition*, 60.

other partial objects, can never be wholly marked off and self-contained.<sup>84</sup> Vitanza's third sophistic has repeatedly favored a tactic that "is searching for *third, non-synthesized subject-positions-that-are-not-subject-positions*."<sup>85</sup> In the most radical formulation yet to arrive, object-oriented rhetoric (following the development of object-oriented ontology) ontologically flattens subject-object relations, giving neither rhetorical nor ontological priority or privilege to either subject or object.<sup>86</sup>

Just as one cannot declare bankruptcy by yelling aloud, "bankruptcy!," we cannot simply say, "no more subject," wipe our hands, and consider the task complete. Killing the subject is a laborious, tedious, and altogether dirty affair. How we might best go about performing this act of violence, what necessary arrangements need to be squared away (paying off debts, burial, wake, memorial, liquidation of estate), and how and what comes next (who raises the subject's children, and how?)—these are all questions that have been met with inexhaustible critical positions.<sup>87</sup> As we noted at the beginning of this Overture, perhaps the only myth greater than that of the unified, self-contained subject is the myth that we can *totally* destroy it:

You have to keep enough of the organism for it to reform each dawn; and you have to keep small supplies of significance and subjectification, if only to turn them against their own systems when the circumstances demand it, when things, persons, even situations, force you to; and you have to keep small rations of subjectivity in sufficient quantity to enable you to respond to dominant reality. (160)

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 36, 65.

<sup>85</sup> Vitanza, *Negation*, 67.

<sup>86</sup> Object-oriented ontology (OOO) scholars include Ian Bogost, Graham Harman, Levi Bryant and, to a lesser degree, Bruno Latour (whose actor-network theory constitutes a slight departure from OOO). Object-oriented and new materialist rhetoricians include, amongst others, Alex Reid, William Duffy, Laurie Gries, and Thomas Rickert.

<sup>87</sup> Aside from the short list of post-subject theories listed above in the text proper, we might consult Jordan Crandall's "body-machine-image," Scott Bukatman's "virtual subject," David Will's machinic-architectural body (prosthesis), Mark Hansen's affective body, Alex Galloway's "leaving-being," Donna Haraway's and Rosi Braidotti's "posthuman," to name a few.

Deleuze and Guattari call this necessary, eternally returning, marginal remainder of subjectivity “*hacceity*.”<sup>88</sup> A *hacceity* is not a *this* or *that*, but rather a *thisness*; it “take[s] shape according to the compositions of non-subjective powers and effects.”<sup>89</sup> To be clear, however, *hacceity* entails a “mode of individuation very different from that of a person, subject, thing, or substance,” though this mode individuation might nevertheless recover a certain, fleeting element of subjectivity as part of its expression.<sup>90</sup> “Therefore,” Arroyo elaborates, “working in tandem with *chora*, *hacceities* mark the potentiality of becoming along each composition or, rather, each felt assemblage of relations.”<sup>91</sup> Ever-shifting, recombinatory desiring-machines, plugging into and unplugging from other desiring-machines, various partial objects, cannot be taxonomized as static subjects, and can only be understood as dynamic *becomings* whose clearest articulation of singularity can only be a “thisness.”

We thus follow Deleuze’s insistence in *Dialogues* that there are “no more subjects, but dynamic individuations without subjects, which constitute collective assemblages”—even if this means retaining a nominal or fractional *quality* of otherwise subjectivity.<sup>92</sup> Following Ulmer’s lead, then, we will think the post-subject as a shift from “self” to “brand.”<sup>93</sup> Insofar as we will operate within the context of the digital institution (electracy, ubicomp), we adopt the figure of the “brand” for two distinct reasons. First, much as one brands cattle, we mark ourselves using all the electracy signs afforded to us in the digital medium (photos, pictures, emojis, songs,

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 261.

<sup>89</sup> Adrian Parr, ed., *Deleuze Dictionary* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 274.

<sup>90</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 261. Deleuze and Guattari go on to explain that, “It is the entire assemblage in its individuated aggregate that is a *hacceity*; it is this assemblage that is defined by longitude and latitude, by speeds and affects, independent of forms and subjects, which belong to another plane” (*A Thousand Plateaus* 262).

<sup>91</sup> Arroyo, *Participatory Composition: Video Culture, Writing, and Electracy* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2013), 68.

<sup>92</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Dialogues* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), 93.

<sup>93</sup> Greg Ulmer, *Heuretics: Inventing Electracy* (website). Accessed June 4, 2015.

memes, film clips, check-ins, etc.). Second, much as a corporation or celebrity creates a brand, the instantiation of brand in this sense opens up a scene of visibility, wherein an individual is not constrained by literate subjectivity or identity, and can instead become an idea, a concept, a refrain. Following both Deleuze and Guattari and Ulmer, the literate signature marks a proper name; “the [electrate] signature becomes style.”<sup>94</sup> We consider our iteration of “brand” the electrate form of post-subjectivity, an entirely stylized signature beyond proper name, with all its potentialities known and yet to be discovered.

In summation, with subjectification and signification (mutually constituted), we find only the despot: paranoia. Looking over our shoulders, if we believe it exists, it does. Subjectivity *is* the greatest conspiracy theory ever constructed by any paranoiac, perhaps because it is the only one that is half-way true, the one that affords paranoia (and conspiracy theorization) in the first instance. (Nothing ever conspired to plot against non-subjects, least of all the State. So: Find your nomad, your rhizome, your desiring-machiness; or, Learn to How to Stop Worrying about Subject Surveillance and Love your Asubjective Potential).

For there must be another way: without subject-bondage. We look towards electracy, “branding,” the third sophistic. We look to the rhetoric of the nomad, to rhizomatic collectivities (packs and bands), to the horizon-potential of the body-without-organs. How can we write ourselves as such, in a way that escapes our own dominant language? How can we write as such? How can *we*? These are rhetorical questions—in both (ahem: we mean all three and more) senses.

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<sup>94</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 317.

*Patter*

Can you play the name game? Can you name the game that plays with names? Can you out-game the play about names, *this* play?



CHAPTER 2  
ACT 1: BECOMING-LAS MENINAS: THE RELATIONAL BIRTH OF MODERN  
SUBJECTIVITY, DESIRE-AESTHETICS, AND THE RHETORICAL LOGIC OF  
SURVEILLANCE

*WARNING (FROM THE CENTRAL SCRUTINIZER): Plenty of empty seats towards the front; please move forward, albeit at your own risk [see previous WARNING]. Additionally, (spoiler alert!) this Act does not constitute a (representative) window or a (subject-forming) mirror; no subject-from-a-hat magic tricks here, folks. This Act constitutes only the connection and breakdown of various machinic parts (you, the audience, and your desiring-machines; we, the Entertainment, and our desiring-machines; our collective assemblages of enunciation—all together now!; the technical machines [props, such as rotating windows and mechanical mirrors, screens]; social and political machines writ large [you paid us for this ticket, right, are still politely sitting here?]; abstract machines that somehow, hopefully, make this all meaningful, etc.). In the event of total breakdown, we apologize, and you can use your ticket stub for a discount on life insurance policies. Do not be frightened by the sudden eruptions of the Chorus, of which you are a/part (Chora)—in fact, we encourage you to sing along: "We watch you/You watch us, too/We all watch each other/Desiring together/Misrecognition/That was always a fiction/Méconnaissance/That always was not." We apologize for the simplicity; we only model the Fort-Da refrain that enfolds us.<sup>1</sup> And this chorus, too, will "tend to cycle back. Some might call*

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<sup>1</sup> "We would say that the *refrain* is properly musical content, the block of content proper to music: A child comforts itself in the dark or claps its hands and invents a way of walking, adapting to the cracks in the sidewalk, or chants 'Fort-Da' (psychoanalysts deal with the Fort-Da very poorly when they treat it as a psychological opposition or a symbolic component of the language unconscious, when it is in fact a refrain) Tra la la" (*A Thousand Plateaus* 299). We should further note that Arjen Kleinherenbrink's article, "Territory and Ritornello," in *Deleuze Studies* V. 9 No. 2 (May 2015) argues that "Brian Massumi, the translator of *A Thousand Plateaus*, translated the French 'ritournelle' as 'refrain.' As the following pages of this paper will demonstrate, this was a mistake. A refrain is a return of the same (a, R, b, R, c, R), but a ritornello is defined by variation. A refrain connects different elements by means of a repetition of something that is always identical, which is precisely what Deleuze and Guattari argue *against*. Deleuze explicitly indicated that 'ritournelle' should be translated as 'ritornello,' not 'refrain' (Deleuze and

*that repetitious. Deleuze and Guattari call it a refrain."*<sup>2</sup> *And it's easy to remember. Best to sing the chorus from close up, maybe even on stage—again, at your own risk. And if it's "not your tune. No problem. But you would have been better off buying a record."*<sup>3</sup> *Not this opera.*

### **Surveillance in Mezzo-Soprano**

Trust me on this one, I've been wrong so many times before.

—ALF

While David Lyon notes in the introduction of *Liquid Surveillance* that, "it is widely accepted that surveillance is a central dimension of modernity," much colloquial and intellectual discourse surrounding surveillance myopically focuses on the emergent-contemporary (drones, dataveillance, satellites, etc.) and the political/ethical/juridical (who has the right to perform surveillance, to what extent, when and why?).<sup>4</sup> These approaches constitute valid concern and inquiry, but they also often collapse upon the same presupposed and loaded assumption: surveillance is something that we ought to *resist*. Especially with the advent of ubiquitous computing (ubicomputing), resistance to surveillance seems ambivalent at best, at least practically. As opposed to vertical conceptions and practices of surveillance in previous historical epochs (the Sovereign monitors the subjects), the rapid growth of ubicomputing has created a radical, horizontal expansion of vision that demands a rethinking of surveillance itself, conceptually *and* practically. In the age of electracity, we use social media platforms such as Facebook to share status updates, photos, events—even to "check in" at GPS-mapped locations; Twitter "success" can be quantified by the number of followers one has; Instagram affords an aesthetic dimension to the sharing of personal space and photos; ready-to-hand access to digital video recording allows an

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Parnet 1987: x)" (225). For the sake of general clarity, we do not follow Kleinherenbrink's retranslation call, but include it here for the sake of specificity.

<sup>2</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, xv.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, xv.

<sup>4</sup> Bauman and Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance*, 1.

everyday “subject” to record abuses of power (*sousveillance*), as we have seen with the rampant increase in police brutality documentation; and the development of augmented reality continues to enhance the virtual potential of our otherwise actual “meat-space.” In short, we first and foremost desire to see others, and to be seen by others: *desiring-surveillance*.

Though the desire-aesthetics dimension of desiring-surveillance thus finds pronounced expression in electracy, we can also *historically* map the *relational* emergence of modern surveillance, aesthetics, and subjectivity. Diego Velázquez’s *Las Meninas* provides the scene: the representation of subject-representation for, and as commissioned by, the Sovereign, thoughtfully containing half-opened doors and seeming intrusions, windows, mirrors, and other portraits. As we will explore, the scene unfolds the inauguration of the connection between modern surveillance and desire-aesthetics, between subject-content and the expression of such in form.<sup>5</sup> The painting not only (re)presents the formation of vertical surveillance (subject-formation and -representation by and for the Sovereign, the State), but also the formation of horizontal surveillance (desiring-surveillance: the desire to see others and to be seen by others). We will then examine how Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon appropriated the rhetorico-aesthetic logic of the painting’s *topoi*: how a rhetorical architecture (convincing one that one is always being watched because one is, at any given moment, possibly being watched) lifted and grafted the rhetorico-aesthetic blueprint of a classic(al) painting—a painting that reasonably argues that we desire to see and be seen, that we wish to be represented and documented, that we seek refuge in subjectivity (being *thrown-under*: sub-ject), that the ubiquity of sight and vision service the “common good,” especially by way of the State.

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<sup>5</sup> In contemporary surveillance terms, we might think here of the difference between data and information: raw data regarding a subject (content) means nothing until it becomes information (form). Alex Galloway explores this further in *Interface Effect*.

Next, we will establish the rhetorical shift from literate “subject” (as represented by *Las Meninas*) to electrated “brand” (as indicated by the digital institution), noting the implications of such a shift for surveillance modalities. We will then consider the Kantian tradition of aesthetic judgment (with *Las Meninas* in mind), how it preserves a problematic subject-formation and logocentrism (with the panopticon in mind), and how we can invert such an approach. Lastly, we will complete our schizoanalysis of the relational birth of subjectivity, surveillance, and desire-aesthetics by comparing Francis Bacon’s rearticulation of Velázquez in *Portrait of Pope Innocent X* to glitching, remixing, and remediating in digital media, and as method for electrated rhetoric and composition. In other words, we will align the emergence of these various new media aesthetic practices with the emergence of electrated “brand,” calling into question our predominant approaches to both surveillance and rhetoric and composition.

### Surveillance Opera Seria

I’m looking at the man in the mirror.

—Michael Jackson

### Tenor



Figure 2-1. *Las Meninas*. Diego Velázquez, *Las Meninas*. 1656, Painting. Creative Commons.

Artists, visual art scholars, historians, semioticians, rhetoricians, and philosophers have written much about, and theorized much upon, Velázquez's *Las Meninas*. Regardless of nuanced differences in interpretation, one aspect of the painting remains almost universally understood: the work presents a definitive classic(al) portrait of the formation of Enlightenment subjectivity, vision, representation, and desire. Intersecting gazes, a canvas painting (in the painting), a mirror, a window: who is looking at whom (including the viewer of the painting), how are they mutually represented, and why? The broad and sweeping appeal of Velázquez's *Las Meninas* constitutes its trans-disciplinary attraction across a range of discourses, not only in the self-contained work of the painting itself, but also with regard to its historical position. In space, the painting represents the accident of subjectivity, subject-representation, subject-desiring-subject-representation (expression); yet it also punctuates in form (content) the historical emergence of modern subjectivity itself, in time.

Michel Foucault's famous ekphrasis of *Las Meninas* in *The Order of Things* begins by noting the first, and arguably most fundamental, rhetorical claim in the painting: the Enlightenment formation of the ubiquitous, multiplicative, destabilized gaze, especially as compounded by the act of representation. Aside from the various gazes strictly within the narrative of the painting itself, "we [also] see the painter observing us."<sup>6</sup> In short, "we are looking at a picture in which the painter is in turn looking out at us," producing a "slender line of reciprocal visibility [that] embraces a whole complex network of uncertainties, exchanges, and feints."<sup>7</sup> Foucault notes that such an observation gestures to the explosion of unilateral, en-framed gaze and representation, blurring the lines between being-seen and seeing: "No gaze is stable, or rather, in the neutral furrow of the gaze piercing at a right angle through the canvas,

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<sup>6</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Random House, 1994), 4.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

subject and object, the spectator and the model, reverse their roles to infinity.”<sup>8</sup> Foucault likens this shift in subject vision and representation to a window: seeing others see us, and vice versa.

In terms of discourse archaeology, the implications of this shift reach infinitely far and wide, not the least of which concerns the modern development of surveillance modalities.

Foucault notes that, “we are observing ourselves being observed,” and in such a way that “our image...is to be imprisoned.”<sup>9</sup> As such, the logic of picture *qua* window (re)presents a logic later appropriated by Jeremy Bentham’s panopticon. The spatial structuring of the panopticon allows a guard to potentially observe any given prisoner at any given time. In other words, as Foucault explains, “inspection functions ceaselessly. The gaze is alert everywhere.”<sup>10</sup>



Figure 2-2. *Las Meninas* and Panopticon. Diego Velázquez, *Las Meninas* (Modified). 1656, Painting. Creative Commons.

Thus, the concluding logic of the panopticon merely echoes the concluding logic presented in Foucault’s ekphrasis of *Las Meninas*. With regard to the latter, Foucault arrives at the conclusion that the painting details the representation of subjects for the invisible-but-present sovereign. In other words, the painting visually illustrates the discourse-formation of the modern subject by and for the sovereign whom—as is most often the case—is not necessarily *visible* but

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>10</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Random House, 1995), 195.

nonetheless ubiquitously *present*. Conjoined with the ubiquity, multiplicity, and destabilization of the gaze, the painting also represents “spectacle-as-observation,” and the “centre [of the painting] is symbolically sovereign, since it is occupied by King Phillip IV and his wife,” seen only representationally in the mirror yet not present, and perhaps necessarily so.<sup>11</sup> Likewise, “the major effect of the panopticon: to induce in the inmate a sense of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if discontinuous in its action.”<sup>12</sup> In both cases, then, the Enlightenment construction of subject and subject-representation (documentation, surveillance) remains rooted primarily in the sovereign’s desire, extending from the epistemology of aesthetics (*Las Meninas*) to the method and logic of the sciences (panopticon).

### Countertenor

Jacques Lacan’s *The Object of Psychoanalysis* (Seminars XVII-XIX) argues that Foucault’s conceptual use of the window as means to unpack *Las Meninas* skips a step. Foucault, Lacan argues, forgets the importance, perhaps even the primacy, of the mirror.<sup>13</sup> We desire to see others and to have others see us because we desire to see ourselves. Before mapping Lacan’s specific treatment of *Las Meninas* and Foucault’s ekphrasis of it, we should first briefly outline some fundamental aspects of Lacan’s psychoanalytic system. In Lacan’s “Mirror Stage,” a given subject becomes such when recognizably apprehending one’s self, as such, in a mirror. The reflective mirror constitutes the subject as individuated, as marked off from all other extensive space and subjects, namely the mother. The subject “assumes [*assume*] an image,” becomes an

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<sup>11</sup> Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 14.

<sup>12</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 201.

<sup>13</sup> It is important to note that the mirror within the scene of *Las Meninas* contains the represented but non-present sovereign.

*I*.<sup>14</sup> Because the “specular *I* turns into the social *I*,” however, the subject undergoes a fracturing, a splitting.<sup>15</sup> The fracture, the split: what we *imagine* ourselves to be (imaginary realm, ego-ideal) does not equate with how we come into relational *meaning*, are *inscribed*, in our world (symbolic order). Thus, according to Lacan, the *re-cognition* of the *I*, as such, can only ever be understood as a certain *misrecognition*. Thrown into the symbolic order, with our misrecognized, fractured, split sense of self, we desire meaning by seeing and being seen by others.<sup>16</sup> In other words, though the “mirror stage” represents a primal scene for Lacan, the mirror stage as misrecognition can only reproduce itself, rearrive in continual stages (recall your Nietzschean masks, explained in the Program, exchangeable for others in the lobby).

Performing his own analysis of *Las Meninas*, Lacan writes that, “Two features are to be highlighted: that this look is looking and with respect to it, everyone says, it us, we the spectator. Why believe so much in ourselves?”<sup>17</sup> Here, Lacan gestures to misrecognition, as instantiated by the mirror stage: we say we are looking, or *I* am looking, but this understanding of selfhood is both, and at once, necessarily believed and nonetheless fractured, split, misrecognized. Via the mirror, misrecognition operates as the middle term between our imaginary, ego-ideal and the symbolic order which meaningfully inscribes us as subjects. Accordingly, Lacan argues that the rhetorical import of the painting claims that “[we] must have seen all of this in a mirror, a mirror which is where we are and there we are, transformed into a mirror.”<sup>18</sup> Much as Lacanian lack d(e)rives desire, misrecognition d(e)rives recognition. We thus all take the form of mirrors, desiring to see each other, and desiring to have others see us, as a means for us to see (recognize)

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<sup>14</sup> Jacques Lacan, *Écrits* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006), 78.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>16</sup> It would be remiss not to note that, according to Lacan, desire is primarily rooted in lack, symbolically inscribed by the phallus (which applies to all, and which none have or are):  $\sqrt{-1}$ , eternally repeating lack and which, by categorical definition of desire as such, can never be consummated.

<sup>17</sup> Jacques Lacan, *The Object of Psychoanalysis* (Eastbourne: Antony Rowe Ltd.), 11.5.66, 13.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.



ourselves. As such, instead of a canvas on an easel, “the painter is painting in front of a mirror which supposed to be where we are.”<sup>19</sup>

Lacan elaborates on the mirror function in *Las Meninas*: “By putting oneself, therefore, with the help of this mirror, through which I define in this schema of field of the Other, in a position to see, thanks to the mirror, from a point which is not the one he occupies, which he cannot see otherwise because of the fact that he keeps to a certain field....”<sup>20</sup> When we look in the mirror we see only a specular image of ourselves; we do not see *our selves*. Our imaginary, ego-ideal believes—must believe—that we see our selves, but this constitutes only a misrecognition. In any mirror, we can only misrecognize: in order to view ourselves, as in front of a mirror, we can only mis-view ourselves. By way of the imperative of the symbolic order, one *others* one’s own self, *one/self* (fracturing, splitting). By way of the imperative of the symbolic order, then, we must take the form of mirrors looking at mirrors, mirrors constituting mirrors. And, as Lacan repeatedly explains in his Seminars on *Las Meninas*, by way of the imperative of the symbolic order, *Las Meninas* represents “the representative of representation,” or, “the representative of the representation in the mirror.”<sup>21</sup>

In short, Lacan extends the Foucauldian *window* of mutual subject-formation and -representation in *Las Meninas* to a *mirror* of mutual subject-formation and -representation. Likewise, this only extends the rhetorical logic of the panopticon: the sovereign (State) seeks to not only establish the *sense* of ubiquitous presence and surveillance of subjects, but it also seeks to use surveillance as a means to recognize and understand subjects, understand itself.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 18.5.66, 12.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 25.5.66, 8. The seeming convolution of Lacan’s rhetoric stems partially from the fact that this seminar is a transcribed lecture.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 18.5.66, 12; 25.5.66, 3. Again, it is by no accident that the non-present sovereign, who affords and grants the representation of subjectivity (subjects) within this scene, is represented by and occupies the mirror as primary guarantor of such Lacanian “mirrored subjectivity.”

Still yet, we can extend and apply the panopticon's logico-rhetorical appropriation of the aesthetic-rhetoric of *Las Meninas* in a less vertical, and rather more horizontal, manner. Does Lacan not indicate that we function as mirrors reflecting mirrors, and that, as such, we seek to perform surveillance on each other? Does the sovereign (State) not know this? Does Velázquez not know this? Do we not yet know this? Of course we do, as do they. As Baumann and Lyon suggest, the logical conclusion of any effective arrangement of power: have the ruled do the ruler's job. Such accounts for the sovereign's non-presence yet representation in the mirror: to form and mark subjects and have such subjects conduct themselves in an appropriate manner during the sovereign's absence. Ulmer makes this point clear when he notes that, "The gaze is the mechanism through which the images impose its meanings and thus creates constitutive effects. As in the face of Foucault's panopticon, the scrutiny characteristic of the gaze appears to come from outside the subject but in fact is *a mediated form of self-scrutiny*."<sup>22</sup> With the appropriation and application of the panopticon architecture to social relations themselves writ large (the *socius*), we horizontally scrutinize each other, which is to say, we scrutinize ourselves.

As we will discuss in more detail in a later Act, we encounter this desire to perform horizontal surveillance everywhere: the suburban neighbor peeking out their blinds to see what that unusual neighbor or stranger walking in the neighborhood is doing; the formation of Neighborhood Watch; the commodity-consumption of reality television shows and, more specific to this argument, *America's Most Wanted*; the placement of airport signs that read, "If you see something, say something" (whatever that means). If we must see and be seen, and if we fear each other, perform surveillance on each other—if our mirrors reflect other mirrors reflecting scrutiny and fear—then what worry does the sovereign (State) have? We call these

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<sup>22</sup> Ulmer, *Electronic Monuments* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 101.

micro-fascisms (as discussed in the related Overture). We can all sing the tune, “we oppose surveillance of subjects,” but singing and doing are two different things: we actively *do* one (micro-fascism) and *sing* against the other (macro-fascism). Always a priest behind repression, as Deleuze and Guattari note: cherish the church hymn that glorifies oppression as a collective chant to overcome oppression. We can obviously exchange the Church for the State here, or any assemblage of power (as it goes: using the master’s tools....).

The final and definitive logic of the rhetorical architecture of the panopticon is just that—*rhetorical*. The panopticon first takes shape as a method, a strategy (expression), and only thereafter as a physical structure that actualizes such a method/strategy in form (content). If we are calling for surveillance discourse beyond the panopticon model, it is only because we have not fully understood the panopticon as a social architecture, as the logico-rhetorical appropriation of the desire-aesthetics represented in, and representative of, *Las Meninas*. We are doing it, desiring it.... It does not matter if we operate as windows or mirrors—such concepts arrive via the wrong questions. What does matter, rather, is how we choose to use these windows or mirrors. This is a question of *desire*.

## Surveillance Aria

We fear change.

—Garth, *Wayne's World*

### Vibrato

Deleuze provides some schizoanalytic treatment of *Las Meninas* in his text on Foucault: “the conditions pertaining to visibility are not the way in which a subject sees: the subject who sees is himself in a place within visibility, a function derived from visibility (as in the place of the king in classical representations, or the place of any observer in any prison system).”<sup>23</sup> We must distinguish visibility from seeing: the former concerns a strictly materialist account (the eye’s perceptibility); the latter concerns social organization (we see ourselves as such and such). The materialist qualification of visibility acquires meaning through *seeing*. We do not merely find each other visible but rather, as Foucault and Lacan would both agree, we *see* each other. As Massumi explains in his Deleuzian reading of *Las Meninas*, “The spectator had come to take the king’s place, just as the viewers of *Las Meninas* do.”<sup>24</sup> We (can) all become little kings and queens, assuming the righteous perspective of seeing: *what are they doing over there, and why?* The bait and switch, of course: such a position of seeing, as indicated by Deleuze, means also being subject to being-seen. The king’s position remains *virtually* open to everyone/anyone willing to occupy it without the *actual* rewards.

Deleuze continues with his treatment of Foucault and *Las Meninas*: “Visibilities are not defined by sight but are complexes of actions and passions, actions and reactions, multisensorial complexes, which emerge into the light of day.”<sup>25</sup> Visibilities become *seeing* when coded,

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<sup>23</sup> Deleuze, *Foucault* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 57.

<sup>24</sup> Brian Massumi, “Deleuze and Guattari’s Theories of the Group Subject: Through a reading of Corneille’s *Le Cid*,” in *Discours social/Social Discourse: International Research Papers in Comparative Literature*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (1988), 821.

<sup>25</sup> Deleuze, *Foucault*, 59.

territorialized, signified as such and such. Surveillance: *that* is a *subject*; subject says, *yes, I am, thanks for the representation*.<sup>26</sup> We explicitly find this rhetoric in the “anti-terrorist” airport signs (mentioned above): “If you *see* something, *say* something” (italics mine). Social organization and all its stratifications and segmentations, as inflected by political machines of rhetoric, codes visibility as *seeing*. Thus, as Massumi concludes,

In the final analysis, the subject of the painting is not the princess or the king or queen or the painter or the viewer. It is an anonymous gaze, an outside perspective filled by different figures at different times. The true subject of the painting is the infinitely complex network of social and historical forces that made perspective possible and that brought each of those figures in line with it. (820)

Indeed, the subject of the painting is none of the above and, likewise, any hermeneutic treatment of the painting cannot be reduced to windows or mirrors. We are not windows or mirrors; we are desiring-machines. We are not the subject of the painting, either. The subject of the painting is subjectivity itself—and the social and historical forces of seeing and perspective that rendered such subjectivity possible. As such subjects, the anonymous gaze, bereft of all State or Capital affiliation, becomes the most horrifying: not because we desire to see each other, but because of *why* we desire to see each other. Micro-fascisms: desiring-surveillance *qua* desiring-surveillance-desiring-repression-of-desire. The painting only looks at us because we are in the painting: our desire for subject-formation and -representation demands surveillance. We desire to see and to be seen; one desiring-machine plugging into another desiring-machine. And we cannot, for whatever reason, seem to let our subject(ive) baggage go.

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<sup>26</sup> We understand ideology only as a “thing,” as a desire in action, but we find Louis Althusser as correct on this account: interpellation (hailing): the police officer yells, “hey, you!” and you turn around.

## Portamento



Figure 2-3. *Las Meninas* and social media. Diego Velázquez, *Las Meninas* (Modified). 1656, Painting. Creative Commons.

Much as *Las Meninas* denotes an epochal shift in terms of subjectivity, representation, and surveillance during the Enlightenment period, Greg Ulmer's development of electracy allows us to consider another shift already underway: from orality, to literacy, to electracy—our present apparatus shift, indicated by film, television, and, most recently, ubicomp. Ulmer first presented the concept of electracy in *Teletheory*:

Part of the project of teletheory is to imagine a different apparatus, beginning with a different technology. My assumption is that to inquire into the future of academic discourse in the age of a new technology we must include the possibility of a change not only in technology, but also in the ideology of the subject and the forms of institutional practice. (21)

Ulmer suggests that the rapid development of electronic technologies, specifically digital technologies, has historically impacted culture in such a way—and to such a degree—that we need to radically adjust our conceptions, understandings, and practices of the Humanities. In short, “teletheory is concerned with discovering and inventing the kind of thinking and representation available for academic discourse in an electronic age.”<sup>27</sup> Extensive shifts, growths, and developments in visual and digital media render the terms “visual literacy” or

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 83.

“digital literacy” short on the account; rather, an entirely new concept needs to guide our Humanities orientation. As noted above, as well as illustrated in the image below, such a discovery and invention implicates all discourse-formation, not the least of which concerns subjectivity and, by extension, surveillance. (Recall the Overture on Electracy).

Apparatus	Orality	Literacy	Electracy
Practice	Religion	Science	Entertainment
Procedure	Ritual	Method	Style
Institution	Church	School	Internet
State of Mind	Faith	Knowledge	Fantasy
Behavior	Worship	Experiment	Play
Philosophy	Mythology	Epistemology	Aesthetics
Ground	God	Reason	Body
Ontology	Totem	Category	Chora
Mode	Narrative	Argument	Figure
Axis	Right/Wrong	True/False	Joy/Sadness

Figure 2-4. Electracy chart. Greg Ulmer, Untitled (Electracy Chart). Last accessed April 2015, Digital Chart. Ulmer’s Learning Screen Website.

For our purposes, we should take particular note of the shift from science to entertainment, method to style, knowledge to fantasy, epistemology to aesthetics, argument to figure, and true/false to joy/sadness. Accompanying these shifts, Ulmer’s Heuretics blog proposes the following analogy: “Literacy = school/concept/self :: Electracy = internet/emblem/*brand*.”<sup>28</sup> As such, electracy indicates a transition from modern subjectivity *qua* self to brand. In other words, the formation of a(n electrate) body (rather than a subject) concerns not interior or internal depth, but networked surfaces (consider digital persona); not the prescription of science or the scientific method, but of entertainment and style (consider the packaging and delivery of everyday news and information); not the priority of epistemological appropriation of aesthetics, but the other way around (consider *Las Meninas* inverted, as the television shows *Cops* or *America’s Most Wanted*); not the truth-content of one’s essential self,

<sup>28</sup> Greg Ulmer, “Electracy: Inventing Heuretics,” last accessed March 10, 2015. Italics mine.

but the dynamics of joy and sadness (consider not what *Las Meninas* tells us about truth—or falsity—of subjectivity and representation, but rather how visual art diminishes and/or augments our capacities).<sup>29</sup>

The internet in general, and social media in particular, perhaps present the clearest example of the relationship between this epochal shift in—or erasure of—subjectivity and surveillance: the desire to see and to be seen. Desiring-surveillance. The electrated emphasis on entertainment, style, fantasy, play, and joy/sadness figure the digital body (persona) as brand; as brand, much as celebrity (the electrated horizon of everyday electrated brand), exposure and visibility is desired. The desiring-surveillance of brand-towards-celebrity, however, reaches a double bind: the paparazzi (as an electrated surveillance modality), for example, might be resisted by celebrities, but the paparazzi also affords celebrity in the first place. We can easily replace celebrity complaints regarding paparazzi with brand complaints regarding Facebook. While many surveillance grievances regarding Facebook, as well as other social media platforms, gesture toward a vertical, top-down imposition, whether it be the State (normative surveillance) or Capital (such as dataveillance), the same grievances conveniently forget that such vertical, top-down surveillance techniques are first and foremost afforded by, and even predicated upon, an ever-more expansive and desired horizontal, brand-to-brand surveillance.

Thus, while electracy retains the ubiquitous, multiplicative, destabilized gaze from Enlightenment-era modernity, it nonetheless obfuscates the priority of subject(ivity) as ordained by a sovereign, *imagined* as present or otherwise, regardless of what sense of mourning and nostalgia that will certainly produce. While electracy retains the importance of aesthetics, it inverts the order of importance: not aesthetics appropriated by logic of power technique, but

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<sup>29</sup> By “capacities,” we mean Spinoza’s understanding of how affect (*affectio* and *affectus*) diminish or augment capacities, that is, produce sadness or joy.



rather aesthetics appropriating logic in the service of entertainment, style, brand-towards-celebrity—joy/sadness. While electracy concedes surveillance, its concession involves a new media(tion) that rethinks surveillance: no longer a window or mirror of reflexive seeing that interns our selves as subject-prisoners, but rather a voluntary desiring-surveillance of images-cum-brands.

### Vibrato redux



Figure 2-5. Rhizomatic *Las Meninas*. Diego Velazquez, *Las Meninas* (Modified). 1656, Painting. Creative Commons.

We might here return to Deleuze and Guattari's ontological foundation, as articulated in *Anti-Oedipus*: “*There is only desire and the social, and nothing else.*”<sup>30</sup> As desiring-machines constituted not as subjects but as bodies (and now as digitally mediated brands), the function of aesthetics in electracy moves away from the interpretive (hermeneutic) and epistemological model—as witnessed during the Enlightenment epoch, for example—and towards invention (heuretics) and sensation (affect, expression). As Deleuze and Guattari note in *What Is Philosophy?*: “What is preserved—the thing or the work of art—is a *bloc of sensations, that is to say, a compound of percepts and affects.*”<sup>31</sup> Ubicomp figures platforms such as social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) as surveillance vehicles and delivery systems for brand expression—a surveillance modality that first concerns desire, sensation, affect.<sup>32</sup> The

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<sup>30</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 29.

<sup>31</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 16.

<sup>32</sup> We consider “brand” as an updated iteration of “desiring-machines.”

Enlightenment construction of subject(ivity) concerns content (information, representation, documentation), as does its surveillance modality; the electrated shift, however, concerns expression (entertainment, play, joy/sadness), as does its own surveillance modality. To this end, the horizontal expansion of surveillance afforded by ubicomp cannot be primarily situated in subject-representation or documentation; rather, it ought to be primarily rooted in the desiring sensation of watching and being watched. Desiring-surveillance.

We thus do not seek to change *what* we see; we seek to change *how* we see. Windows, mirrors, or whatever ontological or metaphysical figuration of seeing and subjectivity—the rhetorical import of desiring-surveillance rings clear. We desire to see and to be seen. Desiring-surveillance. But we can adjust this. For example, Gary Shapiro writes in *Archaeologies of Vision*:

Much discussion of Foucault's interpretation has focused on the question of whether he got the perspectival system of *Las Meninas* "right," that is, on questions such as whether the lines of sight that would locate the positions of the model, spectator, and artist actually coincide, and it has been assumed that if they do not, his reading is insupportable. (227)

Such a discussion takes the shape and form of a rather Kantian systematic approach to art—an approach that surely still haunts much aesthetic discourse today. Kant's third critique, *Critique of Judgment*, provides a schema by which one can determine whether or not an object is (or is not) beautiful: a subject apprehends a given object; the subject reflects upon the object in a disinterested manner (Kant provides an explicit criteria for proper, disinterested aesthetic reflection); if the subject then finds the object agreeable, then the object can be considered beautiful, and it *ought* to be universally so.<sup>33</sup> While Kant's systematic approach to aesthetic judgment ushered in the necessity of subjective reflection (*ought* to be universally beautiful,

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<sup>33</sup> The "ought" qualification is very important in Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, as the universal beauty of a given object always depends upon a subject's reflection upon an object, meaning that an object is never deterministically, *a priori* beautiful.

rather than *deterministically* so), as well as the necessary interaction between subject and object, such an approach fails to account for several developments in aesthetic and rhetorical philosophy since his time.

First, Kant's system maintains a division between subject and object, wherein the disinterested former apprehends and reflects upon the latter. While this division nonetheless necessitates a reflective interaction between subject and object, the reflection remains unilateral, linear, necessarily divided. As Mark Hansen explains in detail in *New Philosophy for New Media*, the emergence of digital art installations can now blur the line between subject-spectator and work-of-art, wherein the subject-spectator *becomes part* of the work-of-art.<sup>34</sup> In such a case, a reflection upon the work-of-art is also a reflection upon the subject-spectator, and vice versa. Retroactively, then, we can say that such an imbrication of subject-spectator and work-of-art has always been the case, and that such is only now phenomenologically *apparent* in digital art. In this case, we are in *Las Meninas* as much as we are viewing it; *Las Meninas* is as much in us as it is being viewed. Such perhaps accounts not only for why the gazes within the painting appear to coincide, as Foucault notes, but also why the painter appears to stare at us, as we stare back. We do not, however, mean this in the sense of a window or a mirror, as both figures retain to some degree a division (window: division *between* subjects; mirror: division *of* subject). We mean this in the sense of collective assemblages of enunciation (see Overture on Subjectivity): the enunciation—or in this case, representation—of subject-formation only comes into coherence collectively, gazes intersecting gazes intersecting gazes (*gazes and gazes and gazes and....*). Because we collectively desire to see and be seen—because the desire to see and be seen affords

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<sup>34</sup> See: Mark Hansen's *New Philosophy for New Media*. In this text, Hansen explores various digital art installations to demonstrate the manner in which art embodies the subject-spectator, creating a haptic space and affective response that cannot demarcate the subject-spectator from the work-of-art itself.

subjectivity and art in the first instance—the appropriation of such a primary aesthetico-logic by political machines of power appears ostensibly as the logical conclusion: desiring-surveillance.

Second, Kant’s systematic approach remains rooted in a logocentrism: he provides a *how* in order to ascertain an either/or *what* (it *is* or *is not* beautiful). As Vitanza argues, “What is X?...is a question that excludes and purges.”<sup>35</sup> This structure of “the ontological question is so violent because it *pre-excludes*.”<sup>36</sup> In other words, using the third sophistic, we seek to invert the Kantian approach: examining the *what* (ontology) in order to determine the *how* (rhetoric). (Lest we forget, Kant’s systematic approach begins as, and presupposes, a rhetoric (*how* we determine beauty) in order to render ontological claims concerning aesthetics). With such an inversion and counter-history, the ontological *what* of aesthetic judgment remains subordinate and secondary to the desire-aesthetics of rhetoric. Via the third sophistic, we can thus develop a counter-history to rhetoric, one that moves from what Vitanza coins “*dissoi-logi*” to “*dissoi-paralogoi*.” Instead of *this is that* (ontology), this is that *and* this *and* that other thing (desire-aesthetics of rhetoric). In concert with schizoanalysis, the desire-aesthetics of the third sophistic exchanges the *either/or* operation of *dissoi-logoi* for the conjunctive *and* of *dissoi-paralogoi*—excess, multiplicity, becoming-other.

Ironically enough, the appropriation of *Las Meninas* by machines of political power, by way of logical technique (*logo techne*), evades the very logocentrism that otherwise plagues aesthetic discourse: machines/assemblages less concerned with what *Las Meninas* is or means, and more concerned with how it works, what and how it desires. Which is to say, it concerns how we collectively work, desire: desiring-surveillance. Deleuze and Guattari clarify this point: “State science retains of nomad science only what it can appropriate; it turns the rest into a set of

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<sup>35</sup> Vitanza, *Negation*, 11.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

strictly limited formulas without an real scientific status, or else simply represses and bans it.”<sup>37</sup>

While the appropriation of nomad science in terms of *Las Meninas* and the panopticon appears rather clear, we might replace their concepts of repressing and banning with forgetting, or desire-repressing/forgetting-desire. Remember and resurface your nomads, your desiring-machines, your minor desire-aesthetics.

A schizoanalysis of Kant, then: he fell into the ontological trap of subject-signification. What Kant missed, then, is that the argument *itself* concerning aesthetic judgment also constitutes aesthetics—style approaching style, aesthetics apprehending aesthetics, desire concerning desire. What Kant missed, then, we miss, too, as indicated by our approach to *Las Meninas*. Of course all the gazes within the painting intersect; of course the painting gazes at us as we gaze at the painting—all of us becoming-*Las Meninas*. As such, the *what* (ontology) of the painting can only be returned to the *how* (rhetoric) of desire-aesthetics: desiring-surveillance. Any figuration of the ethics of surveillance must thus be first thought in terms of aesthetics, wherein we here use the cue of *Las Meninas* and its unsurprising appropriation by surveillance modalities. Vitanza asks that we think through “how the ethical subject—and consequently how the *polis* and politics—must be aestheticized so as to get to what has been systematically forgotten.”<sup>38</sup> In short, we must “aestheticize the ethical subject.”<sup>39</sup> Before surveillance, subjectivity, the ethics therein, etc., we must first return to desire-aesthetics.

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<sup>37</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 362.

<sup>38</sup> Vitanza, *Negation*, 103.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

## Cadenza: Strategies

We therefore have a general strategy: desire-aesthetics. Schizoanalysis agrees. But “rethinking (unthinking) subjectivity, specifically, a sublime ethos, in relation to writing histories of rhetorics” only brings the abyss face-to-face with the abyss.<sup>40</sup> As Deleuze and Guattari note, the face of subject-signification (faciality) constitutes a black hole and a white wall.<sup>41</sup> (Per your Program, recall again your Nietzschean masks). So where to the schizoanalytic method of desire-aesthetics for rethinking rhetoric and composition and surveillance?

We might begin by echoing Shapiro’s point that “the painter is not the origin of meaning...but one element among others in a comprehensive tableau or diagram of the functions of representation.”<sup>42</sup> Taking the desire-aesthetics of the third sophistic and electracy into account, we can add to “the painter” the “rhetor.” Schizoanalytically, the “rhetor” assumes a machinic complexion, a desiring-machine desiring-production (rhetorical invention), plugged into other desiring-machines, various partial objects. Machinically, the rhetor *qua* desiring-machine enters into collective assemblages of enunciation, from which various systems of meaning and coherence emerge (some molar, such as linguistics, signification; some molecular, such as affect, art). As first indicated by *Las Meninas* and its subsequent appropriation, however, the assemblage of rhetoric still relies upon a subject-signification system:

The complete system, then, consists of the paranoid face or body of the despot-god in the signifying center of the temple; the interpreting priests who continually recharge the signified in the temple, transforming it into signifier; the hysterical crowd of people outside, clumped in tight circles, who jump from one circle to another; the faceless, depressive scapegoat emanating from the center, chosen,

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 102.

<sup>41</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 167-172. They write: “*The gaze is but secondary in relation to the gazeless eye, to the black hole of faciality. The mirror is but secondary in relation to the white wall of faciality*” (171).

<sup>42</sup> Shapiro, *Archaeologies of Vision: Foucault and Nietzsche on Seeing and Saying* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 235.

treated, and adorned by the priests, cutting across the circles in its headlong flight into the desert. (116)

In practical terms, we can translate this system into the institutional form of rhetoric and composition: general, first-year writing programs that reproduce the five-paragraph, literate essay, complete with writing program administrator, standardized textbooks, golden rubrics, normalized assessment and grading, and the masses of student writer-subjects, hysterical and depressive, treated by the instructor-/professor-priests. The call of schizoanalysis and the desire-aesthetics of the third sophistic in general, electracy in particular, seek to wholly disassemble this system and create/invent anew.<sup>43</sup>

Following *Las Meninas* and its appropriation by the logic and technique of assemblages (machines) of power, institutional rhetoric and composition engages a process of subject-formation and surveillance itself. As noted by Dobrin, institutional rhetoric and composition does not study writing so much as it produces writer-subjects and, in doing so, implements methods of writing-subject surveillance (from plagiarism-identification technical machines such as Turnitin, to the abstract machines of normalized rubrics and assessment of standardized, literate essays).<sup>44</sup> These writer-subjects under surveillance do not engage in rhetorical discovery or invention (heuretics), do not employ experience in tandem with desire-aesthetics, but rather demonstrate writer-subject competence by replicating models of interpretation and analysis (hermeneutics), reproducing the hegemonic institution of the rhetoric and composition surveillance apparatus. In schizoanalytic terms, the molar institution of rhetoric and composition territorializes and codes students as writer-subjects, stratifies and segments them as such, oversees (surveillance) their

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<sup>43</sup> To understand the fixity of institutional rhetoric and composition hegemony, we need only to understand the machinic-functional relation between the paranoiac (institution of rhetoric and composition), the despot-god (administration), the priests (instructors and professors), the hysterical masses (the social field), and the depressive subject (the student): as Garth says in *Wayne's World* when the new producer proposes changes to the show format, "We fear change."

<sup>44</sup> See: Sidney Dobrin's *Postcomposition*.

development as such, cuts-off the potentiality of desire-aesthetics for the instruction and reproduction of the “order-word” (see: Overture, Part Two, Rhetoric and Composition).<sup>45</sup>

Still yet, where to the schizoanalytic method of desire-aesthetics for rethinking rhetoric and composition and (its) surveillance? Let us remix, ever-so-slightly, Shapiro’s quote: “the [*painting*] is not the origin of meaning...but one element among others in a comprehensive tableau or diagram of the functions of representation.”<sup>46</sup> We can easily discard the intentionality of the author (painter, writer, rhetor, etc.) as authority, as the author has long since been dead; yet, discarding the singular and self-contained authority of the work (painting, literature, argument) takes more time and effort. But schizoanalysis demands we abandon *both* the myth of the author as authority and the work as authority.<sup>47</sup> Every desiring-production from one desiring-machine always and already connects to another desiring-production and another desiring-machine, to such a degree that we have only continual *process* (desiring-production), not *product*.<sup>48</sup> Thus, the concepts of schizoanalysis find congruence with the desire-aesthetics and heuristics of electracy: we should not perform a rhetorical analysis or interpretation of another given text (painting, literature, rhetoric, etc.), as this emphasis on product misses the point; rather, we should appropriate the art or logic of a given text (painting, literature, rhetoric, etc.) as means to rhetorically reinvent, emphasizing the process of rhetorical desire-aesthetics.

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<sup>45</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 75-78.

<sup>46</sup> Shapiro, *Archaeologies of Vision*, 235.

<sup>47</sup> Arguably, Roland Barthes’ “intertextuality” and, perhaps to a lesser degree, Jacques Derrida’s “chain of signification” (see: “Signature Event Context”) offer up similar concepts and methodologies, though both of these approaches concern semiotics more than the metaphysics of desire itself.

<sup>48</sup> Deleuze and Guattari write: “Hence everything is production: *production of productions*, of actions and of passions; *productions of recording processes*, of distributions and co-ordinates that serve as points of reference; *productions of consumptions*, of sensual pleasures, of anxieties, and of pain. Everything is production, since the recording processes are immediately consumed, immediately consummated, and these consumptions directly reproduced. This is the first meaning of process as we use the term: incorporating recording and consumption within the production itself, thus making them the productions of one and the same process” (*A Thousand Plateaus* 4).



Take, for example, Deleuze's fascination with Francis Bacon, and with Bacon's rearticulation of Velázquez: *Portrait of Pope Innocent* turned *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X* (Screaming Pope).



Figure 2-6. *Portrait of Pope Innocent X*. Diego Velázquez, *Portrait of Pope Innocent X*. Circa 1650, Painting. Creative Commons.

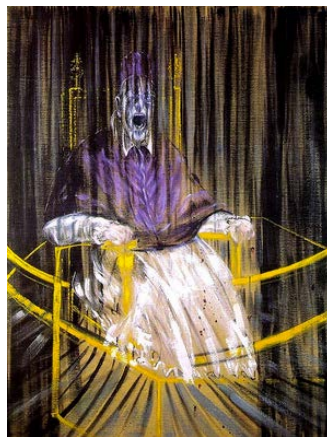


Figure 2-7. *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*. Francis Bacon, *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*. 1953, Painting. Creative Commons.

As we can clearly see, Bacon does not analyze *Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, literately or visually; he does not perform an ekphrasis, or use windows or mirrors (or whatever) to explain the painting's semiotic or rhetorical import. Even if Bacon performs an interpretation of *Portrait of Pope Innocent X* (hermeneutics), such an interpretation constitutes only a *re*interpretation

(heuretics). Bacon appropriates the given aesthetics (*Portrait of Pope Innocent X*) and uses his own aesthetics (Screaming Pope) to render an aesthetic judgment, and this judgment does not concern whether or not *Portrait of Pope Innocent X* is beautiful or not, or what it *means*, but rather what it could be(come otherwise). As such, Bacon uses heuretics and the desire-aesthetics of the third sophistic to make an argument that exceeds an ontological determination (either/or) and rather proposes an aesthetic point (and, and, and). Thus, Bacon's desire-aesthetic rhetoric (by way of painting) picks up the ever-repeating third term: not this (*being* first term) or that (*being* second term), but this other, endlessly possible, excessive third term (*becoming* thirdly)—the third as excess-escape from binary logocentrism. Bacon makes an aesthetic argument regarding an aesthetic object through the process of aesthetic (re)invention: from *dissoi-logoi* to *dissoi-paralogoi*.

Electracy explains that, given the affordances of the digital institution (technical machines), even if we cannot paint as Bacon painted, we can now use desire-aesthetics and image-logic as a means to rhetorically (re)invent (heuretics) in a stylized sense. The hegemonic form of rhetoric and composition does this already: just because one cannot write as Plato or Cicero wrote does not mean one cannot appropriate and apply the literate rhetorical method therein. In fact, with the inauguration of the digital scene, what Bacon did with the Screaming Pope we might now call remediation, remixing, glitching, etc. Arroyo's "participatory composition" by way of videocy (particularly Youtube videos) presents a concrete, practical example of how we might rethink and apply rhetorical desire-aesthetics in an electrated form.<sup>49</sup> An even better example, and quite tantamount to Bacon's Screaming Pope, might be Everything Is Terrible!, an art collective that recovers VHS tapes of circa 1980s infomercials, religious

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<sup>49</sup> See: Sarah Arroyo's *Participatory Composition*.

programming, public service announcements, children's shows, workout routines, etc., only to reformat them digitally and glitch/edit portions to demonstrate the rhetorical failures therein, particularly with regard to kairos.<sup>50</sup> The rhetorical import of Andy Warhol's layering of colored papier-mâché over *The Last Supper* can now be done even more easily, and more effectively, with electracy.

Where to: everywhere, nowhere, all at once. Schizoanalytically, the rhetorical desire-aesthetics of electracy and the third sophistic should approach rhetorical "art as a *process* without goal, but that attains completion as such."<sup>51</sup> Deleuze and Guattari gesture to Antonin Artaud's and William Burrough's experiments as models for further exploration—"the pure process that fulfills itself, and that never ceases to reach fulfillment as it proceeds—art as 'experimentation.'"<sup>52</sup> Ulmer's electracy recognizes this: from scientific method to experimentation, play, fantasy. From dissoi-logoi to dissoi-paralogoi; from literate practice to electracy invention; from the order-word's subject-signification to desire-aesthetics. We have a new rubric, following desire-aesthetics and the advent of electracy: locate your image, your brand—and brand it; follow your nomadic travels; find your desiring-machines; map and navigate your rhizomatic wanderings. Deleuze and Guattari can only say so much, as can anyone: "Make a rhizome. But you don't know what you can make a rhizome with, you don't know which subterranean stem is effectively going to make a rhizome, or enter a becoming, people your desert. So experiment."<sup>53</sup> We do not present a better system than the one that hegemonic, institutional rhetoric and composition currently imposes; we only call foul on the current system, as a system without forward movement, without electracy, without desire-

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<sup>50</sup> For more information on Everything Is Terrible!, visit: [watch.everythingisterrible.com](http://watch.everythingisterrible.com)

<sup>51</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 370.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 370-371. We will explore Burroughs' cut-up method in a later Act.

<sup>53</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 251.

aesthetics, and thus call only for experimentation. Perhaps experimentation *as* the new system, because “everything in the [current] system is insane.”<sup>54</sup> Not what or why, but why not? Not why not, but how? Experiment.

We have tried to perform this desire-aesthetic, electrify rhetorical experiment with our *Las Meninas* recreations. We cannot match the quality of Bacon, but we tried—we experimented. The recreations hopefully establish their own rhetoric and do so recreationally. Where to desiring-surveillance: let us experiment with it. If we desire to see and be seen, and if assemblages of power logically appropriate such, we should stop asking ourselves *what* we see and start asking ourselves *how* we see. How can we see otherwise? As with any invention, technical or abstract or aesthetic, *Las Meninas* presents its potential and predicts its own accident: on the schizoid pole, the liberating potential of desiring-surveillance; on the fascist pole, the prohibitive formation of desiring-surveillance. We can only ask the rhetoric of desire-aesthetics: not what is it, but how does it work—does it *move* us, in what direction, and how do we thus move *with* it?



Figure 2-8. *Las Meninas* under erasure. Diego Velázquez, *Las Meninas* (Modified). 1656, Painting. Creative Commons.

(What are you looking at, trying to see? That is: how are you seeing?).

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<sup>54</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 374.

CHAPTER 3  
ACT 2: THE FANTASY AND RHETORIC OF FEAR: THE PARANOIAC TENDENCY OF  
DESIRING-SURVEILLANCE

*WARNING [FROM THE CENTRAL SCRUTINIZER]: Do not put away your smart phones; take them out, keep them out, and use them. We know you want to. But take a tip from Joe: when you're Googling "Joe's Garage" to figure out what's going on, remember: the State wants to know who you are, who you know, where you've been, where you're going, why you're buying so much copper fitting (re- and over-coding); Capital wants to know how to more effectively sell you more shit you don't need, such as copper fitting (decoding). But we know you like it—being able to buy matching drapes that Amazon recommended for you while singing the twelfth national anthem of the ballgame. Nobody cares about "you," anyway. We should be beyond this by now. "You" only desire, desiring-surveillance. Appropriation comes secondarily; change your Nietzschean mask. "You" are now a part of this—this Entertainment—so model your brand beautifully, terrifyingly. "You" are watching on stage now. We will make you one of us; we will make you one of us; we will make you one of us....<sup>1</sup>*

**Surveillance in Basso Profundo**

If you build it, they will come.

—Ray Kinsella

Let us begin with a reiteration: "*There is only desire and the social, and nothing else.*"<sup>2</sup> To clarify, Deleuze and Guattari intend here to only make note of metaphysical and ontological primacy, that everything beyond desire and the social concerns secondary machines, assemblages, and appropriations. Thus, following Deleuzo-Guattarian logic, both the State and

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<sup>1</sup> See: Tod Browning's *Freaks* (1932).

<sup>2</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 29.

Capital appropriate and exploit desiring-surveillance, albeit in different yet codependent ways. The State seeks to appropriate and exploit desiring-surveillance as a means to mark subjects, render a subject legible, so as to more effectively manage productive subjects (re- and over-coding); Capital aims to appropriate and exploit desiring-surveillance as a means to (re)channel desire towards production and consumption (de-coding). The State does not merely code individual subjects as such, but rather as particular subjects within an organized terrain of limits, as uniquely territorialized subjects. In this sense, the State provides not only the product of re- and over-coding but even more so the actual apparatus or machinery for the *process* of re- and over-coding. Likewise, Capital does not just amount to decoded flows but to the general *process* of decoding flows, breaking up the codings of the State within given designated limits, while further expanding its own limits. For example, the State might appropriate the otherwise abstract “war machine” militaristically and, through the process of re- and over-coding paranoid, fearful subjects (paranoiac-despot: desire-repressing-desire: think post-9/11 politics), Capital decodes and rechannels such paranoia through the legitimized production, consumption, and use of munitions. We call this the military-industrial complex. On a more micro-scale, the State might re- and over-code subjects as paranoid of each other, encouraging them to police and surveil themselves, while Capital will “liberate” such desire-repressing-desire through the production and consumption of guns, home security systems, background-check software (or, in our following examples, through television programming). In other words, via two different but codependent processes of coding, the State functions to assist in the maximization and expansion of Capital. “In short,” Deleuze and Guattari note, “the general theory of society is a generalized theory of flows.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 262.

This opera agrees, but we find the question of surveillance to be more complex, at least insofar as we seek to return the question to its primary terms (desire and the social). The growth of both secondary, vertical methods of surveillance appropriation (State and Capital) fundamentally rely upon a primary, horizontal expansion of desiring-surveillance which, as we have noted in the previous Act, concerns desire-aesthetics (first) rather than subject-ethics (which can only come second). To this end, rhetoric as art, as desire-aesthetics: the will to increase the visibility of each other, for the purposes of whatever potential persuasion, following an aesthetic dimension and framework—desiring-surveillance.

Along these lines, and as noted in the Introduction, many Surveillance Studies scholars have advanced social and political concepts similar to “desiring-surveillance,” especially in light of the advent of ubicomp (see: Overture, Surveillance). Bauman and Lyon suggest that liquid modernity, or what Ulmer coins electracy, ushers in a “confessional society” wherein “we seem to experience no joy in having secrets.”<sup>4</sup> Such a “desire for more and more surveillance,” they further argue, updates the Cartesian cogito: “I am seen (watched, noted, recorded) therefore I am”—or, we could argue, from *Being* to *Beseen*.<sup>5</sup> Mark Andrejevic explains that one result of ubicomp “is increasing public access to the means of surveillance—not just by corporations and the state, but by individuals,” and in such an interactive way that it “enables an emergent culture of peer-to-peer minitoring.”<sup>6</sup> The emergent culture of peer-to-peer monitoring, Andrejevic explains, enables “lateral surveillance,” which renders us all suspects and spies, especially as contained in the post-9/11 Homeland Security mantra, “If You See Something, Say Something.”<sup>7</sup> Phillipe-Joseph Salazar suggests that “rhetoric and political subjectivity are indivisible,”

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<sup>4</sup> Bauman and Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance*, 30; 28.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 116; 130.

<sup>6</sup> Mark Andrejevic, *iSpy: Surveillance and Power in the Interactive Era* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007), 212; 213.

<sup>7</sup> See: Ibid.

contemporary surveillance modalities flatten subjects into objects, and that such a flattening corrodes a healthy democracy.<sup>8</sup> On a more positive note, Albers Albrechtslund's "participatory surveillance" "look[s] at online social networking and the idea of mutuality...[as] not about destructing subjectivity or lifeworld. Rather, this surveillance practice can be part of the building of subjectivity and of making sense in the lifeworld."<sup>9</sup>

All of the above examples, however, either explicitly or implicitly covet the Enlightenment construction of subjectivity and the philosophically tired concept of privacy; retain the vertical, top-down understanding of, and approach towards, surveillance; and/or posit an ethical critique, as built around the assumption of subjectivity and privacy. As Deleuze and Guattari explain in *What Is Philosophy?*, "subject and object give a poor approximation of thought. Thinking is neither a line drawn between the subject and object nor a revolving of one around the other."<sup>10</sup> Rather, they argue, we do not constitute individual subjects so much as "desiring-machines"—"real ones, not figurative ones: machines driving other machines, machines being driven by other machines, with all the necessary couplings and connections. An organ-machine is plugged into an energy-source machine: the one produces a flow that the other interrupts."<sup>11</sup> Plugged into the electrified institution of the internet—with the corollaries of entertainment, style, fantasy, play, and joy/sadness—our desiring-machines take on the quality of brand, mimicking the logic of celebrity. As brand, much as celebrity, exposure and visibility is desired. Andrejevic correctly identifies this "savvy recognition of the staging of the self,"

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<sup>8</sup> Phillipe-Joseph Salazar, "Subjectivity Under Surveillance: Rhetoric Redux," posted on the "Centre Francais de Reserche sur le Reseignement" website (January 31, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> Anders Albrechtslund, "Online Social Networking as Participatory Surveillance," in *First Monday*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (March 2008).

<sup>10</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 85.

<sup>11</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 1.



wherein “surveillance as a form of entertainment is perhaps not unfamiliar to a generation raised on reality shows like MTV’s *The Real World*.”<sup>12</sup>

As electrate brands playing on the panoptic stage of ubicomp, we retain the ubiquitous, multiplicative, destabilized gaze from Enlightenment-era modernity, but nonetheless deface the priority of subjectivity as ordained by a sovereign. We move from the vertical, top-down logic of power technique to the horizontal desire-aesthetics of brands seeing brands, desiring-surveillance. As such, following the third sophistic, we must also move from an ethical approach and critique of surveillance to one that properly concerns desire-aesthetics. “Part of the problem,” notes Andrejevic, “has been the tendency to think of privacy as possession, something that can be acquired, surrendered, or exchanged”—that they are out to get our secrets.<sup>13</sup> Deleuze and Guattari note that secrets always take on a “virile paranoid form”: the paranoiac-despot trying to gather a paranoid subject’s secrets, or a paranoiac-despot hiding secrets from a paranoid subject, both of which create the same axis of paranoiac-despotism.<sup>14</sup> In other words, “the paranoid body: the organs are continually under attack by outside forces, but are also restored by outside energies.”<sup>15</sup> Such a paranoiac approach to ethics, predicated upon the coveting of an over-determined subjectivity, does not fit within an electrate framework and, in any case, reproduces what it otherwise resists: paranoia and fear legitimize the paranoiac-despot which, in turn, redoubles paranoia and fear (post-9/11 surveillance modalities being the clearest example of this).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Andrejevic, *iSpy*, 229.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 256.

<sup>14</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 288.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 150.

<sup>16</sup> We might also consider the following from *A Thousand Plateaus*: “On the one hand, paranoiaks denounce the international plot of those who steal their secrets, their most intimate thoughts; or they declare that they have the gift of perceiving the secrets of others before they have formed (someone with paranoid jealousy does not apprehend the other in the act of escaping; they divine or foresee the slightest intention of it). On the other hand, paranoiac act by

We thus leave the supposed depth of subjectivity, as well as the “private” realm it supposedly circumscribes, for the desiring-machine imprint of “brand.” Considering the advent of ubicomp, Scott Bukatman’s *Terminal Identity* offers a key to understanding our shift from subjectivity to brand, from subject-ethics to desire-aesthetics: “Everything that was directly lived has moved away into a representation.”<sup>17</sup> “The subject is finished,” Bukatman concludes.<sup>18</sup> Revising Chris Marker’s proclamation in *Sans Soleil* (1982), also revisited by Bukatman, that “television is watching you,” we can now say that your computer/smart-phone is watching you—which is to say: we are all watching each other.<sup>19</sup> As the concept of “reality television” becomes a ubiquitous and lived everyday reality, rather than a mere concept-commodity consumed—wherein brands broadcast themselves via ubicomp platforms—Patricia Pisters suggests that “surveillance...develop[s] into an entire apparatus.”<sup>20</sup> In this sense, desiring-surveillance not only undergoes a certain commodification (reality television, social media platforms, background-check software, etc.), but the entire apparatus of surveillance develops “intimate, aesthetic, and affective dimensions.”<sup>21</sup>

Exchanging subjectivity and privacy for brand and machinic connectivity, contemporary desiring-surveillance adopts the electrated quality of entertainment. Ulmer correctly unpacks the success of the panopticon as nothing more than the ability of a rhetorical logic (substance),

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means of, or else suffer from, rays they emit or receive (Raymond Roussel and Schreber). Influence by rays, and doubling by flight or echo, are what now give the secret its infinite form, in which perceptions as well as actions pass into imperceptibility. Paranoid judgment is like an anticipation of perception replacing empirical research into boxes and their contents; *guilty* a priori, and in any event!” (289).

<sup>17</sup> Bukatman, *Terminal Identity*, 35.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>19</sup> Chris Marker’s *Sans Soleil* (1982) qtd. in *Terminal Identity*, 26.

<sup>20</sup> Patricia Pisters, *The Neuro-Image: A Deleuzian Film-Philosophy of Digital Screen Culture* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2012), 99.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 100.

instantiated by a particular architecture (form), to initiate “*a mediated form of self-scrutiny*.”<sup>22</sup> But this rhetorical substance can take an infinite number of forms. Jordan Crandall elaborates upon this claim in terms relevant to contemporary desiring-surveillance: “Observation is not a menace; observation is entertaining. In the field of surveillance the panoptic pleasures of exhibitionism and voyeurism, or scopophilia, unfold. The TV viewers at home are members of a television society, inhabitants of a mediatized world.”<sup>23</sup> Within this mediatized, digital world, of which we all now function as visible participants and components (brands), we discover an endless catalogue of new, fledgling rhetorics, some of which we will discuss in this Act. Following Richard Lanham’s notation, we must again emphasize our shift from subject substance to brand style: “We have a theory of communication that is based on a theory of economics that is based on a theory of morality that is based on a theory of self and society. It goes all the way down to the bedrock.”<sup>24</sup> Loosely following Lanham’s call to move from substance to style, we seek to replace morality (or subject-ethics) with desire-aesthetics; self and society with desire and the social; and move from that point of departure all the way down the turtles, so to speak. This is how we intend to rethink rhetoric and composition in the face of emerging desiring-surveillance modalities.

None of this means to say that vertical, top-down surveillance no longer exists (State and/or Capital), or that we, as a body politic, should not have individual and collective agency in deciding what forms of surveillance ought to be permissible. Rather, it argues that we most often desire surveillance and, with the rapid growth of ubicomp, bear witness to, and willfully participate in, a horizontal, aesthetic expansion of desiring-surveillance, only *secondarily*

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<sup>22</sup> Ulmer, *Electronic Monuments*, 101.

<sup>23</sup> Crandall, *Drive*, 5.

<sup>24</sup> Richard Lanham, *The Economics of Attention*, 140.

appropriated by State or Capital surveillance modalities. Arguments that frame surveillance as primarily dystopic, anti-democratic, objectifying, etc. often run into a couple of double-bind conclusions.

First, we should consider the classical conception of the polis (abstract State), which renders an individual as a subject, as marked and legible (re- and over-coding). Ironically, many of the contemporary critiques of surveillance, some of which are listed above, claim that the polis infringes upon or utterly negates political subjectivity. In short, we find it counter-productive—if not counter-intuitive—to both an at once champion political subjectivity while decrying the polis. Lest we forget, despot = paranoiac = birth of the Empire: the State, in the first instance, forms *because* of a paranoia. Hence the security of the totalizations of signification, limits and territories, re- and over-coding of subjectivity.<sup>25</sup> This accounts for our abandonment of the political-ethical subject of modernity for the desire-aesthetic brand of electracy—for a move from the modern polis to the electrate chora.

Similarly, the desiring-surveillance of what we dub “brand-towards-celebrity” also reaches a double-bind: the paparazzi (as an electrate surveillance modality), for example, might be resisted by celebrity, but the paparazzi also affords celebrity in the first place. Vertical, top-down surveillance techniques are first and foremost afforded by, and even predicated upon, an ever-more expansive, horizontal, brand-to-brand desiring-surveillance. The ubiquity of desiring-surveillance extends to power techniques of the State and the logic of Capital, with the panopticon’s figurative appropriation of *Las Meninas* serving as one example of this (see: Act 1). Inasmuch as we harbor a metaphysical desire to see and be seen, the State seeks to gather

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<sup>25</sup> See: *Anti-Oedipus*, 194-197.

information and Capital attempts to more effectively sell us goods (with both working in cooperative tandem), if only by exploiting our primary tendency towards desiring-surveillance.<sup>26</sup>

As such, following Deleuze and Guattari's claim that "desire can never be deceived," this Act does not explore how the State and Capital dupe us, manipulate us, repress us; it rather schizoanalyzes the manner in which desiring-surveillance becomes re- and over-coded by the State and de-coded by Capital.<sup>27</sup> Even if by way of desire-repressing-desire: desiring-surveillance as the potential for surveillance modalities that self-repress (i.e., desiring-surveillance-repressing-desire). To this end, the Act will begin with a critique of ideology, as well as the ideology of desiring-surveillance in paranoid terms. Second, we will link the paranoid tendency of social media engagement to other cultural iterations of paranoid desiring-surveillance: televisual entertainment, such as *COPS* and *America's Most Wanted*; anti-terrorist public service campaigns, such as, "If You See Something, Say Something"; and the thematic virtue of Pete Travis's *Dredd* (2012)—all with an eye to the rhetorical import in each case. Third, we will review desiring-surveillance in social media as collective, expressive manifestation of Hollywood celebrity culture, returning to the concept of "brand" (rather than subject or self) and "brand-towards-celebrity." Lastly, we will return to the third sophistic of desire-aesthetics as a properly schizoanalytic and rhetorical alternative to paranoid desiring-surveillance in the age of electracy.

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<sup>26</sup> If you want to find a singular, decoded inscription of desiring-surveillance by way of the logic of Capital, look in your toilet, in your wallet, or at a crucifix. Otherwise, get back to the primacy of your desire to see and be seen.

<sup>27</sup> *Anti-Oedipus*, 257.

## Cabaletta: The Magic of Paranoia and Social Media Platforms

Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain.

—*The Wizard of Oz*

Joe Marshall Hardin's "Putting Process into Circulation" argues that there are "two specters haunting the discipline of Writing Studies. Those specters are the unified subject and the hegemony of communitarian thinking. These specters come in the guise of process theory and ideology critique."<sup>28</sup> We thus seek to demystify these specters.

For brevity and clarity sake, we will first adopt an Althusserian understanding of ideology: imaginary relations stemming from material conditions, production.<sup>29</sup> The problem with framing ideology as imaginary, as largely enacted via unconscious activity, and as contrasted with material conditions/production (though stemming from such), is that ideology thus adopts the form of an immaterial phantasm, ubiquitous in its circumscription of everyday life yet beyond the reach of any proper recognition. Thus, when Deleuze and Guattari write that "there is no ideology and never has been," they mean there was never ideology *as such*.<sup>30</sup> We therefore rethink ideology as a thing, as the real coding of desire (by way of desire) into a grammar of everyday life that organizes and shapes all social activity, if even by way of virtual potentiality (becoming-ideology, ideology-becoming-something-else). Understanding the primacy of desire and the social, as well as the function of the unconscious as site of production (factory rather than language or theater), ideology does not, cannot reproduce *itself*. Rather, in the final analysis, we (*desire plus social*) materially reproduce ideology. Ideology does not trick us, blind us; we consciously desire ideology. In other words, Slavoj Žižek's reformulation of the classic Marxist critique: "they know very well what they are doing, yet they are doing it

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<sup>28</sup> Joe Marshall Hardin, "Putting Process into Circulation: Textual Cosmopolitanism" in Sidney I. Dobrin, J.A. Rice, and Michael Vastola's (eds.) *Beyond Postprocess* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2011), 61-74.

<sup>29</sup> See: Louis Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses."

<sup>30</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 4.

anyway.”<sup>31</sup> If we continue to think ideology as the subliminal announcements from an Oz wizard behind the curtain of otherwise material conditions, productions, only desire and the social first feed him the script.

As it goes with the narrative of *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), our conception of repressive ideology as a fundamental extension of some macro-fascism—whether it be traditional State fascism, or the fascism enacted by the totalization of the logic of Capital as dubiously calculated in the culture industry writ large, á la Theodore Adorno—turns out as a petty collection of our own micro-fascisms.<sup>32</sup> Deleuze and Guattari explain in *A Thousand Plateaus* that:

Only microfascism provides an answer to the global question: Why does desire desire its own repression, how can it desire its own repression? The masses certainly do not passively submit to power; nor do they ‘want’ to be repressed, in a kind of masochistic hysteria; nor are they tricked by an ideological lure. Desire is never separable from complex assemblages that necessarily tie into molecular levels, from microformations already shaping postures, attitudes, perceptions, expectations, semiotic systems, etc. Desire is never an undifferentiated instinctual energy, but itself results from a highly developed, engineered setup rich in interactions: a whole supple segmentarity that processes molecular energies and potentially gives desire a fascist determination. (215)

In other words, we find not an all-powerful wizard but rather the smallest of ourselves: desire-repressing-desire. Further, as with *The Wizard of Oz*, ideology does not dupe or manipulate; “desire can never be deceived.”<sup>33</sup> Rather, ideology functions akin to a magic show, much like the magic of the Wizard: desired suspension of disbelief so as to see what we desire to see,

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<sup>31</sup> Matthew Sharpe and Geoff Boucher, *Žižek and Politics: A Critical Introduction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 43. The quote reformulates the Marxist-ideological concept of: “They know not what they are doing, but they are doing it.”

<sup>32</sup> Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer’s famous article, “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception,” identifies cultural commodities (film, literature, architecture, art, music, etc.) as a deceptive and totalizing fascism, wherein sameness gets reproduced (even and especially when it deceptively pretends to do something different, such as jazz, they argue) and control operates by way of passive consumption and incentive. They note, for example, that the “culture industry” produces the same forms in any given state apparatus: Fascist, Communist, Democratic Republic, etc.

<sup>33</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 257.

regardless of the otherwise actual “Real.” Again, they know what they are doing, and yet they are doing it anyway. –It’s what they (social) paid for, desire.



Figure 3-1. *The Wizard of Oz*. *The Wizard of OZ* © 1939 Metro-Goldwyn Meyer. All Rights Reserved.

Thus, what Althusserian ideology considers subject-formation by way of interpellation we consider re- and over-coding; what one might consider the “culture industry,” as extension and reproduction of material conditions and productions, we consider de-coding and (re)channeling. Even if we take ideology as the formation of that which becomes “taken for granted,” as “common sense,” such a grammar can be better understood as molecular particles and flows turned into molar aggregates, churned out by connections of desire, machines, and assemblages. “The most general principle of schizoanalysis,” explain Deleuze and Guattari, “is that desire is always constitutive of a social field. In any case, desire belongs to the infrastructure, not to ideology: desire is in production as social production, just as production is in desire as desiring-production.”<sup>34</sup> Ulmer reaffirms this position, noting that “ideology contributes to invention in part through the dreams and desires of a civilization.”<sup>35</sup>

As our following examples will detail, an “autonomous culture” does not create ideologies that are then consumed by the masses, duping them, inscribing subjects as such (the

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<sup>34</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 348.

<sup>35</sup> Ulmer, *Teletheory*, 91-92.



Oz approach). Rather, we (the social) desire certain paranoiac fantasies of fear, and these desires are de-coded, liberated even, in a commodified form that we then consume. In other words, ideology does not circumscribe and inform the desires of a subject; desiring-machines form aggregates within a social field that desire certain subject-formations, only then desiring the production of ideologies, often manifested in the form of paranoia (the re- and over-coding of the paranoiac-despot as State, and as de-coded and (re)channeled by Capital, often in the form of commodity). The only ideology, at least in Althusserian terms, that therefore rings true is the (truly imaginary) ideology of the subject and the depth of the private sphere therein—a desired ideology that misconstrues our common conceptions of surveillance.

We follow Deleuze and Guattari: “regimes of signs, which express organizations of power or assemblages...have nothing to do with ideology as the supposed expression of a content (ideology is a most execrable concept obscuring all of the effectively operating machines).”<sup>36</sup> Where one might say “ideology,” we say “desire” and/or “rhetoric.” James Berlin accounted for this long ago, in his seminal article, “Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class.” While we might split hairs with what Berlin actually means when he writes that “ideology provides the structure of desire” (we would likely argue the converse), we can nonetheless agree that “rhetoric is...always already ideological,” and that such is informed primarily by desire.<sup>37</sup> Thus, where Vitanza asks, “So can we amend Althusser and Deleuze/Guattari and say, first, there is force/desire, second, ideology (negation), then, writing (reading, thinking) history?”<sup>38</sup> We reply: yes, except we would replace the second term with the third.

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<sup>36</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 68.

<sup>37</sup> James Berlin, “Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class,” *College English* 50, no. 5 (1988): 479, 477.

<sup>38</sup> Vitanza, *Negation, Subjectivity, and the History of Rhetoric*, 8.

We begin with a critique of ideology as a means to better glean the social and political criticisms of surveillance via social media platforms. The criticisms, as we know, concern “privacy” of the “self” (interior subjectivity): first, critics argue, the State has over-stepped its Constitutional boundaries, largely by way of the Patriot Act, in order to track the online activity of its citizens; second, they argue, corporations use duplicity to afford the tracking of data (“dataveillance”) so as to generate customized advertisements on an individual’s social media page, or via e-mail, “cookies,” search engine results, etc. As detailed in the section above, these criticisms not only rely on antiquated concepts of “privacy,” “self/subjectivity,” and vertical surveillance, inadequate in the age of electracy; they further fail to acknowledge the degree to which the social desires these surveillance modalities, even if such means complicity with the micro-fascisms of desire-repressing-desire. Lyon and Bauman remind us that, “Facebook doesn’t just use people; people use Facebook,” and that “it is the ‘users’ of Google and Facebook who produce the database.”<sup>39</sup> Social media platforms only present the potential expansion of vision by way of technical machinery, with such expansion of vision actualized by desiring-surveillance. That the State and Capital appropriate desiring-surveillance, insofar as desiring-surveillance affords, should come as no surprise. At the most primary level, and in the simplest of terms, increased visibility means increased visibility: the virtual potentiality of desiring-to-be-seen (desiring-surveillance) on social media platforms arrives as actualized via various machines and assemblages, including State and Capital. The cliché about having your cake and eating it, too....<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Bauman and Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance*, 44, 73.

<sup>40</sup> Andrejevic notes: “There is a price to be paid for convenience and customization—and we will likely end up paying it not just by sacrificing our privacy, but by engaging in the work of being watched: participating in the creation of demographic information to be traded by commercial entities for commercial gain and subcontracted forms of policing and surveillance” (*iSpy* 98). “Privacy” and “the work of being watched,” however, stem first from

Notes Crandall: “the space between the viewer and the image is a social space.”<sup>41</sup> Adds Philip E. Agre: surveillance and capture are primarily “sociotechnical”—and, actually, primarily “social.”<sup>42</sup> We are in it, doing it, desiring it....

Aside from the obvious fact that many supported and still do support the Patriot Act, and that many consumers appreciate the practical application of corporate dataveillance, the paranoiac tendency often vested in desiring-surveillance remains self-constructed and self-perpetuated by the social, a collection of micro-fascisms from each other and aimed at each other. While the State and Capital might exploit this paranoiac tendency—such as the Patriot Act, NRA, home security devices, *American’s Most Wanted*, *Dredd*, etc.—their ability to do so stems not only from the practical expansion of vision as virtually afforded by technical machines and actualized by desiring-surveillance, but further by a preceding desire of and for self-reflexive paranoia—the social fearing itself.

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a primary desire to increase visibility (desiring-surveillance); the above appropriations only constitute secondary captures, and the above framing of such seems inflected with a paranoiac flair.

<sup>41</sup> Crandall, *Drive*, 186.

<sup>42</sup> Philip E. Agre, “Two Models of Privacy” in *The New Media Reader*, Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Nick Montfort, eds. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), 755.

## Recitativo: Electrate Paranoia

### Consuming the Rhetoric of Paranoia: *COPS* and *America's Most Wanted*

Bad boys, bad boys/What'cha gonna do?/What'cha gonna do when they come for you?  
—Inner Circle, “Bad Boys,” *COPS* Theme Song

Rhetorical exercise: consider the rhetoric of the opening theme song for *COPS* in terms of re-, over-, and de-coding, insofar as it presents an implicit argument relative to the content of the show:

When they come for you? Or when we come for you? Who's “you,” *whose* “you”? “You” clearly intends to mean the address of the “bad boys,” that scary Other that somehow manages to walk amongst us, which could mean any and all of us, all “yous”—so we keep our eyes open. We look out the suburban blinds: who's that new guy walking down the street late at night? He looks like one of the guys featured on *America's Most Wanted* last night, one of the “bad boys” on *COPS*. *Are we looking at us?* Watch television; be afraid; help us catch the “bad guys.” Do not be too afraid: the commercials will tell “you” how to buy home security devices, and we do not need to tell “you” that “you” should consider buying a firearm. See how the “bad boys” give the cops such a hard time every night on *COPS*? “You” are lucky to have them; “you” need more of them. They will not harm “you”—unless you are one of the “bad boys,” and “you” know—at least desire to believe—that “you” are not that, right?



Figure 3-2. *COPS*. *COPS* Logo. 2012, Image. Creative Commons.

Deleuze and Guattari might here remind us that “the administration of a great organized molar security has as its correlate a whole micro-management of petty fears, a permanent molecular insecurity, to the point that the motto of domestic policymakers might be: a macropolitics of society by and for a micropolitics of insecurity.”<sup>43</sup> In other words, the State reproduces and augments itself through the micropolitics of everyday fear, self-reflexive paranoia that brings forth the paranoid-despot (re- and over-coding). With regard to *COPS* and *America’s Most Wanted*, Capital decodes and liberates such paranoia *qua* desire through the commodification and eventual consumption of paranoid television programming.<sup>44</sup> Recalling our first section of this Act, this example illustrates the manner in which the State and Capital work in tandem via coding, following the desire of paranoia. More specifically, both *COPS* and *America’s Most Wanted* engage such a process by way of desiring-surveillance—and expression of such desiring-surveillance, particularly on *COPS* and *America’s Most Wanted*, arrives as nothing short of rhetorical (see above).

The commodification of desiring-surveillance long outdates the still-burgeoning rise of reality television formats we encounter today. Preceding these formats, we can trace the popularity of *COPS* and *America’s Most Wanted* somewhat to a desire for what we now understand as reality television, but more so to a paranoid desire for the fantasy of fear. Beginning their runs in the final years of a decade of Reagan conservatism, both shows effectively commodified a rhetoric of crime hysteria: watch (consume) a running capture of criminals roaming *your* streets—and, further, help us catch them. *COPS* and *America’s Most Wanted* thus ushered in a new panoptic architecture, though the rhetorical logic remains the same: “If everyone is a suspect,” writes Andrejevic, “surveillance must become ubiquitous and

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<sup>43</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 216.

<sup>44</sup> We might also recall “the paranoid body: the organs are continually under attack by outside forces, but are also restored by outside energies” (*A Thousand Plateaus* 150).

comprehensive, and thus distributed. There is no way for the police to watch everyone; machines or volunteers (or both) will have to fill in the gaps.”<sup>45</sup> Again, via desiring-surveillance, Capital de-coded and liberated paranoiac desire in the form of television programming commodity (*COPS* and *America’s Most Wanted*), the content of which afforded State re- and over-coding (the reinforcement and reproduction of paranoiac desire, (re)turning to the paranoiac-despot). The rhetorical import and effect of this process: a persuasion (desire) to *stay tuned* and for everyone to keep watching each other.<sup>46</sup>



Figure 3-3. *America’s Most Wanted*. *America’s Most Wanted* Studio Set. 2008, Picture. Creative Commons.

The rhetorical import and effect of *COPS* and *America’s Most Wanted*, as paranoiac iterations of desiring-surveillance, concerns micropolitics engendering microfascism: desire-repressing-desire or, more precisely, desiring-surveillance-repressing-desire. The desire and fantasy of fear, inverted and directed at ourselves (social), constitutes an internal self-scrutiny, a self-repression (not an ideology imposed externally). Yet the paranoiac rhetoric delivered by *COPS* and *America’s Most Wanted* arrives subtly, indirectly. Deleuze and Guattari note: “there is

<sup>45</sup> Andrejevic, *iSpy*, 43.

<sup>46</sup> We here again recall Ulmer’s note on the panopticon presented earlier in the Act: “The gaze is the mechanism through which the images impose its meanings and thus creates constitutive effects. As in the case of Foucault’s panopticon, the scrutiny characteristic of the gaze appears to come from outside the subject but in fact is a *mediated form of self-scrutiny*” (140). *COPS* and *America’s Most Wanted* present a new panoptic architecture that reiterates the same panoptic logic, desired and expression in the social field (collective, aggregate).

a micropolitics of perception, affection, conversation, and so forth.”<sup>47</sup> The subtle and indirect quality of micropolitics, as contained within everyday nuance, renders microfascism difficult to identify. *COPS* and *America’s Most Wanted* never give a singular and/or explicit rhetorical appeal to fear; rather, their repetition of new and different “cases” engenders a progressive and cumulative paranoiac desiring-surveillance, an eventual microfascism. Even more subtle and indirect, however, might be the more recent and massive growth of detective serials (*Law and Order*, *CSI*, *Bones*, *NCIS*, *Criminal Minds*, *The Fall*) that mimic the paranoiac rhetoric of *COPS* and *America’s Most Wanted*, often through the aestheticization of gratuitously gruesome criminal acts of violence.

Crandall explains in *Drive*:

This radically other form of production takes shape in conjunction with contemporary staging conditions, where a global stage or extended factory floor emerges without a director—at least no longer constituted by an omniscient, authoritative gaze, but rather by configurations of individual capacities collectivized and extended into the network eye (whose symbol might resemble a CBS logo), focused upon remote landscapes as well as intimate life like a home movie camera, its stage lights projecting scripts on walls of both public and private, its effects internalized in behavior. (820)

In our electrated sphere, art does not imitate life, and life does not imitate art. They are one in the same, thus accounting at least somewhat for the subtle and indirect quality of the rhetoric. Again, Capital decodes and liberates the paranoiac element of desiring-surveillance in the form of television programming commodities, whether it be *COPS*, *America’s Most Wanted*, or the detective serials listed above. In turn, this paranoiac desire, otherwise vested in desiring-surveillance-cum-programming, after repeated consumption and effective re- and over-coding, becomes an actual pattern of behavior.

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<sup>47</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 213.

Despite the subtle and indirect nature of the rhetoric implicit in *COPS* in particular—or, perhaps, because of it—the program effectively covers all three classic branches of rhetoric, as coined by Aristotle: judicial, epideictic, and deliberative. Despite the voice-over in *COPS* that reminds viewers that all suspects remain innocent until proven guilty, for example, the carefully edited presentation of the police and the suspects gives the rhetorical impression that the “bad boys” (as per the opening theme song) ought to be considered guilty. Why else would the opening song-address qualify them as such, as “bad boys” (judicial rhetoric)? Likewise, each segment opens with a police officer answering questions about his/her life, about the difficulty of his/her job; shortly thereafter, and again in a carefully edited fashion, we watch the police officer struggle with the “bad boys” and, with cameras present and rolling, we often witness the police officer conduct himself/herself in a reasonable, sympathetic, trying manner. In effect, and in contrast to the tacitly prejudged “bad boys,” the program praises the police officers and their work (epideictic rhetoric). Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, the deliberative rhetorical impact: persuasion towards a paranoid desiring-surveillance, to admire the paranoid-despot and, in turn, function with increased fear and scrutiny of each other. For the “bad boys” are everywhere, are potentially ourselves. All three classic forms of rhetoric contained in *COPS* function inter-connectedly: Capital decodes and liberates a paranoid desire with the production and eventual consumption of the television show; in turn, re- and over-coding by way of the abstract State assemblage reinforces and reproduces such paranoid desire through judicial, epideictic, and deliberative rhetoric.

To this end, and unsurprisingly, suburban Neighborhood Watch programs flourished contemporaneously with the advent of *COPS* and *America's Most Wanted*, and they still do today, as another articulation of paranoid rhetoric, actualized and mobilized in material force.



Another iteration of paranoiac, microfascist desiring-surveillance: neighbors watching neighbors, working together to be afraid of each other, to watch each other. Ironically, but also unsurprisingly, the paranoiac tendency undergirding the formation of Neighborhood Watch created vigilante-militia versions of the otherwise police proper, resulting in the undue violence of one neighbor against another (see: George Zimmerman and Eliyahu Wedersheim). The paranoiac tendency of desiring-surveillance, however, arguably now constituting its own apparatus, has spilled over to legislative and judicial rhetoric, thus “justifying” such acts of vigilantism (see: Stand Your Ground).<sup>48</sup> Indeed, as Deleuze and Guattari note, “desire is always assembled; it is what the assemblage determines it to be.”<sup>49</sup> As we will discuss towards the end of the Act, the increasingly paranoiac complexion of the desiring-surveillance assemblage, along with all its rhetoric of fear, demands radical rethinking. For example, in stark contrast to the rhetorical import of *COPS*, the use of smart phones to document police brutality (ubicomp; sousveillance) has revamped a national dialogue regarding police oversight, due process, and proper use of force. Yet, while this desiring-surveillance modality of sousveillance redistributes a certain amount of agency and power to the everyday citizen, it nonetheless entails a different paranoia—one outside the scope of this opera.

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<sup>48</sup> Stand Your Ground, as a microfascist legislation and product of rhetoric of fear, justified the initial conduct of George Zimmerman as vigilante and then, along with the micropolitics of racial signification, justified his actual murder of Trayvon Martin. Such horror indicates the absolute potential of paranoiac desiring-surveillance: justifiable death.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 230.

## **Appropriating Paranoiac Desiring-Surveillance: “If You See Something, Say Something”**

There are three primary colors/Only three are primary, it’s true/The world is full of every kind of color/But we’re just talking red, yellow, and blue.

—OK Go, “Three Primary Colors, *Sesame Street*

Let us pause to reflect upon and remember a (visual?) rhetoric that reduced us, returned us to children watching *Sesame Street*: the color-coded Homeland Security Advisory System. Remember: green, low; blue, guarded; yellow, elevated; orange, high; red, severe. Yes, the colors get warmer as the threat level increases. Of course, the system never used green and blue; those colors only existed as relative measures to demonstrate that we always needed to be more than guarded. The paranoiac-despot in full motion. We will skip any attempt to dignify the Homeland Security Advisory System with scholarly discourse—an after-school special system that never revealed its logic or rationale for color upgrades or downgrades, likely because the color-coded system had little to do with actual threats and rather to do with over-coding paranoiac desire, reproducing a general rhetoric of fear. And this rhetoric of fear regressed the “order-word,” bypassed signification-subjectification, and instead used an even more vacant strategy: “order-color.” If literacy fails, no need to move into electracy; we can just use the rhetoric of a simpler time: yellow is scary; orange is scarier; and red is scariest.

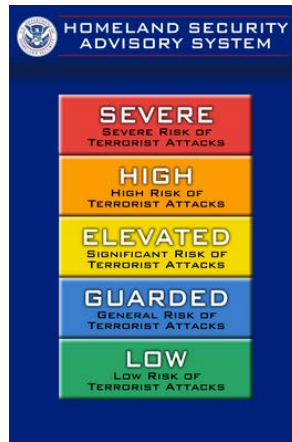


Figure 3-4. Advisory System. Department of Homeland Security, “Homeland Security Advisory System.” 2008, Image. Creative Commons.

Are colors not yet persuasive enough when concerning national security? Does yellow not scare you? How about orange? Red? Remember, as the colors get warmer and scarier, the social field’s self-scrutiny and paranoiac desiring-surveillance ought to also amplify.

Indeed, we should consider the general logic of the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) institutional response to 9/11 primarily in abstract terms, as a color-coded threat-level system without rationale would suggest. Andrejevic explains that, as with the color-coded threat-level system in particular, the same goes for the DHS apparatus at large: “[in] the case of the federal Ready.gov site, the information is disconcertingly sparse and simplistic, and the recurring theme is one of universal suspicion and generalized fear.”<sup>50</sup> We can thus already glean the essential goal and logic of the DHS in Deleuzo-Guattarian terms: produce a rhetoric that both and at once initiates a collective paranoiac desiring-surveillance apparatus and that, in effect, reproduces the paranoiac-despot. In other words, the embrace of the paranoiac-despot (that fights the “evil-doers”) also produces an inverted paranoiac desire: “The participatory, interactive character of the war on terror,” notes Andrejevic, “extends beyond mutual monitoring to

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<sup>50</sup> Andrejevic, *iSpy*, 179.

embrace a characteristic element of reflexive government: self-surveillance.”<sup>51</sup> In this sense, fear and anxiety regarding vertical, top-down State surveillance misses the primacy and efficacy of horizontal, distributed paranoid desiring-surveillance, nonetheless in the service of the re- and over-coding State: re- and over-coded paranoid desire manifests in the desire to watch, scrutinize each other, ourselves (paranoid desiring-surveillance).

Interestingly enough, Andrejevic explains that the DHS’s rhetorical strategy borrowed from a familiar example: “Shortly after the 9/11 attacks, the government started a call-in program called TIPS that so closely echoed the participatory character of the popular TV show, *America’s Most Wanted*, that one White House secretary reportedly forwarded a TIPS call to the switchboard for the television show.”<sup>52</sup> Aside from the postmodern absurdity of the DHS borrowing from television pulp, the linkage of TIPS and *America’s Most Wanted* suggests, if not demonstrates, a latent paranoid desire in the American social field, needing only to be captured, molarized, re- and over-coded as a manifest paranoid desiring-surveillance. In short, if “the watchmen don’t want to be watched,” or cannot do all the watching, then a rhetoric of fear can amplify a paranoid desire, shift it into a paranoid desiring-surveillance: we fear and watch ourselves.<sup>53</sup> As Deleuze and Guattari suggest, “each power center is also molecular and exercises its power on a micrological fabric in which it exists only as diffuse, geared down, miniaturized, perpetually displaced, acting by fine segmentation, working in detail and in the details of detail,” wherein “segments, then, are themselves governed by an abstract machine.”<sup>54</sup> In other words, then, the State and its normative, vertical, top-down surveillance modalities do not only exist in their typical molarized conception; they also exist as abstract machines, dispersed and distributed

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 179.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 177.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>54</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 224; 226.

in a molecular fashion, displaced into and onto the social, and often more effectively so—and, in this instance, as paranoiac desiring-surveillance.

A more precise and concrete example of a DHS campaign using paranoid, deliberative rhetoric, and one which still exists today: “If You See Something, Say Something.” The deliberative rhetorical plea clearly does not intend to persuade one to report an apparent terrorist threat—who would *not* do that, even without a sign suggesting one do such? Rather, the deliberative rhetorical plea intends to persuade one to act in a generalized paranoid fashion and, in turn, it reproduces the desire for the paranoiac-despot. The universal exigency of the deliberative rhetorical plea can be found in the *noema* of the qualifying phrase, “if you see something.”<sup>55</sup> Obviously, “something” can mean anything, even if the content of “something” translates to “suspicious.” As such, the deliberative rhetorical plea, as Andrejevic explains, “attempt[s] to turn every citizen into both spy and suspect”; and “the corollary of generalized suspicion is a paranoid redoubling of the world.”<sup>56</sup> After all, Deleuze and Guattari remind us that, “*it is in vain that we say what we see; what we see never resides in what we say,*” and this proves especially true for a something-anything articulation of a something-anything sighting.<sup>57</sup> Rather, as explicit in this example, “a form of content is reducible not to a thing but to a complex state of things as a formation of power.”<sup>58</sup> Indeed, the rhetoric of “If You See Something, Say Something” gestures more towards a plea for the augmentation of paranoiac desiring-surveillance than it does to the articulation of a “something.”

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<sup>55</sup> We use “noema” here as obscure or ambiguous speech wherein, in this instance, the true content of “something” remains intentionally obscure and ambiguous, even if “something” implies “suspicious.”

<sup>56</sup> Andrejevic, *iSpy*, 43; 168.

<sup>57</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 67.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 66-67.



Figure 3-5. If you see something. Metropolitan Transportation Authority, “If You See Something, Say Something.” 2009, Image. Creative Commons.

Akin to Deleuze and Guattari’s conception of the fascist quality of signification (and totalizing linguistics), Andrejevic argues that “the process of naming everything in the universe turns out to be a prelude to enfolding it into a monitored totality subject to manipulations and ministrations.”<sup>59</sup> Yet, the DHS’s rhetoric appears to initially invert this signifying process, though only as a means to expand such: the ambiguous, almost non-signifying rhetorical use of colors and “something” rhetoric deterritorializes anything and everything so as to allow anything and everything to be reterritorialized as “suspicious,” as part of the already vague and dubious “war on terror.” If, as Deleuze and Guattari contend, “language is made not to be believed but to be obeyed, and to compel obedience,” then the DHS’s rhetoric appears to somewhat side-step the precise capture potential of language so as to *significantly* capture anything (i.e., something-anything, at times color-coded). As Andrejevic records, “Tom Ridge, when he unveiled a series of commercials for his readiness campaign, said, ‘The next attack could happen to any community at any time. The random, unpredictable nature of terrorism itself requires, hopefully,

<sup>59</sup> Andrejevic, *iSpy*, 102. See also: *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*.

everyone to take our recommendations to be prepared regardless of where they live.”<sup>60</sup> Any time, anywhere; it could be anyone, maybe even your neighbor, maybe you: the broad, non-signifying *qua* universally signifying rhetoric maximizes paranoiac desiring-surveillance. Everything, everyone, everywhere, every time is suspect—so watch out totally and absolutely. DHS thus exemplifies Bukatman’s observation of “the simultaneous over- and under-valuation of sign systems at a time when the sign *is* everything by *stands for* nothing.”<sup>61</sup>

Quite arguably, as Andrejevic notes, such a universalized presentation of the “war on terror,” especially as molecularly diffused and distributed amongst the whole social field via paranoiac desiring-surveillance, approaches what Paul Virilio considers “pure war.”<sup>62</sup> Pure war: a war that takes place at all times, in all places, potentially against all people. In order to become a “pure war,” however, the “war on terror” must enact a rhetoric of absolute fear that (re)directs desire towards and for the paranoiac-despot, that maximizes a generalized and universal paranoiac desiring-surveillance. That is, we must desire it first. This accounts for how and why Deleuze and Guattari argue that the masses were not duped in fascism; they desired it.<sup>63</sup> What begins as molecular, abstract micro-fascisms, as contained in paranoiac desiring-surveillance, recursively augments a macro, molarized fascism.

Following the schizoanalytic methodology, this section does not concern what “the war on terror” means, rhetorically or otherwise, especially because it means nothing (and thus, apparently, everything); rather, it concerns how it works, especially in terms of desire and rhetoric. One pivotal way in which it works: paranoiac desiring-surveillance. This shifts, if not revises, Deleuze’s vision of an approaching “control society,” wherein arrangements of power

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 162, Tom Ridge qtd.

<sup>61</sup> Bukatman, *Terminal Identity*, 106.

<sup>62</sup> Andrejevic, *iSpy*, 181.

<sup>63</sup> See: *Anti-Oedipus*.

could use emerging technologies to micro-control “dividuals.”<sup>64</sup> While the potential of centralized formations of power to technologically micro-control “dividuals” still exists, and while many of Deleuze’s prophecies have already been actualized, Deleuze’s vision finally appears as too optimistic. In fact, Deleuze’s concept of micro-control arrived *actually* as far more micro: not the micro-control of centralized, molar power via technological advancement, but rather the molecular micro-fascisms of the social field—paranoiac desiring-surveillance.

Andrejevic suggests in *iSpy* that ours is

a culture [of] mutual detection characterized by generalized suspicion in which everyone can be treated similarly as a potential suspect. It turns out that the government’s post-9/11 surveillance model is not all that different from what we’re starting to do ourselves by using the technology to cast as broad a net as possible, drawing on algorithms to sort through the clutter and conducting background checks on particular individuals. As in policing, electioneering, and marketing, so too in dating. Watching one another, it turns out, is one of our post-9/11 duties, not just for our government but for ourselves. (219)

Thus, Deleuze stands correct in his assessment of the general function of technology in a “control society,” as well as in his conception of a “dividual”; he simply, yet significantly, misconceived the manner in which power would work. He forgot about the potential of desire-repressing-desire, and how such can be used as a means to offset any necessary attempt by the State to micro-control centrally. He forgot before he could remember the potential of paranoiac desiring-surveillance.

The question, then, which we will discuss in a later Act: how do we schiz, rhetorically and otherwise, our paranoiac desiring-surveillance?

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<sup>64</sup> See: Gilles Deleuze’s “Postscript on Control Societies.” The short article argues that methodologies of control have started to shift from Foucauldian “disciplinary societies,” wherein institutions and discourses condition a subject, to “control societies,” wherein emerging technologies allow power formations to micro-control “dividuals” (dividual replaces individual because such control allows power formations to divide an otherwise individual up into segments, data points, parts). For example, bioengineering replaces the tree splint; ankle bracelets replace the prison door and key; digitized records (internet activity, credit card spending, medical records, debt, etc.) replace material surveillance.



## The Fascist We Desire, Deserve: *Dredd*

I am the law.

—Judge Dredd

Let us be clear: when watching *Dredd*, one watches a fascist fantasy propaganda film.<sup>65</sup> The film opens in a dystopic future, with a voice-over explaining that America has become an “irradiated wasteland.” The setting of the film takes place in a “cursed city”—an urban stretch of land from Baltimore to DC—constituted by “mega-blocks, mega-highways, a mega-city convulsing, choking, breaking under its own weight.” The film then cuts to a series of aerial shots, ostensibly presented through the lens of a drone or similar technology, wherein faces are instantly identified using advanced facial recognition programming. An aerial shot then presents the Police Headquarters, an overbearing skyscraper with a massive, illuminated eagle on its side, a not-so-thinly-veiled nod to fascist architecture and imagery. After a lengthy car chase, we learn that “judges” function as police, judges, and juries, sentencing suspects upon their apprehension. Shortly thereafter, the department assigns Judge Dredd his new partner-in-training, Cassandra Anderson, a female psychic by way of radiation mutation. After Cassandra tells Dredd that she decided to become a judge because she “wants to make a difference,” and that she understands the plight of the people in the city because she came from a similar background, Judge Dredd responds sarcastically, “admirable.”

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<sup>65</sup> We chose to examine Peter Travis’s *Dredd* (2012) as opposed to Danny Cannon’s original film, *Judge Dredd* (1995), because, quite simply, the former is a better film.



Figure 3-6. Dredd emblem. *Dredd* © 2012 DNA Films. All Rights Reserved.

Yet all of the above initial framing and contextualization of the film’s narrative intends to situate Judge Dredd and the police department at large as protagonist-hero, despite the lack of sympathy or concern for the people, the fascist totalization of due process, and the clear reference to Nazi figuration. In short, without critical analysis and typical of rhetorical fascist exigency, the audience “roots” for Judge Dredd, desires him.



Figure 3-7. Dredd surveillance. *Dredd* © 2012 DNA Films. All Rights Reserved.

*Dredd* therefore illustrates the process by which microfascisms prompt the eternal return of the paranoiac-despot; how, by the very virtue of the ease of characterizing Judge Dredd as protagonist-hero, desire-repressing-desire remains a positive tendency for self-imposed fascism. We care not for or about the plight of the “masses” in the film (ourselves); rather, we care for and about Judge Dredd. We desire him. We desire *to be* him, his figuration, his abstract body. How does this work? Perhaps due to “magic reconciliation,” as noted by Richard Dyer, wherein

film and “stars...ease the problem of judgment.”<sup>66</sup> Or perhaps, more likely, by way of an inversion of paranoia: fear and anxiety regarding an impoverished—and by extension criminal—social field (ourselves) creates, as Andrejevic notes, “an unexamined identification with the priorities of those in power.”<sup>67</sup> Again, we see the tandem effect of Capital decoding and State re- and over-coding: “What do private property, wealth, commodities, and classes signify? The breakdown of codes.”<sup>68</sup> The State then re- and over-codes: Judge Dredd, for example.<sup>69</sup> As already mentioned previously, “the paranoid body: the organs are continually under attack by outside forces, but are also restored by outside energies.”<sup>70</sup> Paranoia begets desire-repressing-desire, producing the body of the paranoiac-despot, taking the shape of an absolute paranoiac desiring-surveillance—Judge Dredds. Despot = paranoiac = birth of Empire, whether in actual, historical past, or in imagined fantasies of a dystopic future—and all by way of desire.<sup>71</sup>

We thus return to the Oedipal configuration from which we never escaped: Father, God/Priest, State; Mother, Mary, Capital. Judge Dredd, as instantiation of the abstract State machine, presents us with Name of the Father, our desire for absolute law. By extension, it provides us with an omniscient paranoiac desiring-surveillance by proxy: Judge Dredd that sees all, makes all judgments and sentences. Following such an Oedipal rubric, we find the shift from Nietzsche to Deleuze and Guattari as slight: from inverted aggression in the form of bad conscience or guilt to desire-repressing-desire. “Every time desire is betrayed, cursed, uprooted from its field of immanence, a priest is behind it,” write Deleuze and Guattari.<sup>72</sup> In this instance,

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<sup>66</sup> Richard Dyer, *Stars* (London: British Film Institute, 2008), 27.

<sup>67</sup> Andrejevic, *iSpy*, 44.

<sup>68</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 218.

<sup>69</sup> To be clear, coding does not necessarily work in this order, as nobody truly knows “which came first”—abstract state or economies of exchange (219).

<sup>70</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 150.

<sup>71</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 194.

<sup>72</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 154.

the priest takes the shape of Judge Dredd, though the general figuration always remains the same.

Especially as the film presents a speculation, we can consider it rhetorically, as the formation of an argument. We have already done much of this above. *Dredd* gives us an end-limit version of *COPS*, a totalization of where post-9/11 DHS rhetoric could take us. Does Judge Dredd not represent what we finally seek to see in the finale of *COPS*, the rhetorical figuration of cops as needing more, perhaps absolute, power over “bad boys”? Does the fantastic rhetoric of *Dredd* not maximize entirely the “realist” rhetoric of *COPS*—if only cops on *COPS* could be Dredds? And does post-9/11 DHS rhetoric not compel us to desire Dredds, to be Dredds ourselves: “If You See Something, Say Something.” Let us revise the implicit deliberative rhetoric: “If You Fear Something, Fear Yourself.” Paranoiac desiring-surveillance: you know what you are doing, and you are doing it anyway. You are desire-repressing-desire, and you love it. You paid for it.

More proximally, does the institution of rhetoric and composition not also follow a certain Judge Dredd logic and figuration? Dobrin’s *Postcomposition* details at length the manner in which composition studies has adopted an administrative approach more concerned with the management of student-subject writers than with writing itself. The incessant and incestuous focus on administration, rubrics, assessment, etc. provides only the reproduction of a codification of writing, leading to the re- and over-coding of students as subjects, rather than an intellectual inquiry into writing as a potentiality (be it epistemological, metaphysical, rhetorical, ontological, etc.). As such, the institution of rhetoric and composition functions not as free exchange of thought, but rather as an assemblage where administration takes the shape of the paranoiac-

despot, rubrics enact laws, and assessment becomes judge, jury, and sentence. Nothing much has changed, as Deleuze and Guattari note in *A Thousand Plateaus*:

When the schoolmistress instructs her students on a rule of grammar or arithmetic, she is not informing them, any more than she is informing herself when she questions a student. She does not so much instruct as “insign,” give orders or commands. A teacher’s commands are not external or additional to what he or she teaches us. They do not flow from primary significations or result from information: an order always and already concerns prior orders, which is why ordering is redundancy. The compulsory education machine does not communicate information; it imposes upon the child semiotic coordinates possessing all of the dual foundations of grammar (masculine-feminine, singular-plural, noun-verb, subject of the statement of enunciation, etc.). The elementary unit of language—the statement—is the order-word. (75-76).

The very institution of rhetoric and composition desires Judge Dredd, desires to be Judge Dredd. Writing instruction thus becomes a paranoiac desiring-surveillance. Victor Vitanza emphatically asks: “WHAT WILL HAVE BEEN ANTI-OEDIPAL (De-Negated) HYSTERIES OF RHETORICS? WHAT WILL HAVE THEY LOOKED, SOUNDED, READ LIKE?”<sup>73</sup> We can, indeed, only ask this question in the optimistic future perfect tense. We must first exchange our paranoiac tendency for schizoid potential, our Judge Dredds for artists and perhaps even clowns.

Do not fear: as you might have guessed, desired, after the butchering of countless people in poverty (“bad boys”), Judge Dredd and his partner-in-training do save the day. As the film closes, the voice-over returns: “800 million people living in the ruin of the old world, in the mega-structures of the new one. Only one thing fighting for order in the chaos—judges.” So finally arrives the concluding argument for the paranoiac-despot.

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<sup>73</sup> Vitanza, *Subjectivity, Negation, and the History of Rhetoric*, 329.

## Surveillance Diva: Becoming-Brand in the Age of Electracy

Cause baby you're a firework/Come on show 'em what you're worth/Make 'em go 'oh! oh!  
oh!'/As you shoot across the sky-y-y.

—Katy Perry

Recalling the Introduction (Overture: Subjectivity) and Act One, Ulmer identifies in electracy a shift from “self” to “brand.”<sup>74</sup> To reiterate, we use the Ulmerian notion of “branding” in two related ways: first, extra-literate, stylized branding, as one might do to a cow, extending the literate notation of the signature; second, and similarly, “brand” as appropriated from corporate vernacular—logo/emblem, slogan(s), image-logic, etc. In rejection of ontological essentialism, Vitanza’s recovery of Nietzsche as means to (re)frame rhetorical agency elucidates our sense of “brand” in basic terms:

We all wear masks. Remember, Nietzsche says, whoever wears a mask is profound. (Of course, I fool myself, and yet we all are fools). We all wear either proper or *impropria* persona when we write. (But this wearing of a mask does not mean that underneath or on the other side, there is a real, fixed authentic person! I am not an essentialist of that sort). And if we are confronted with different audiences (different desires, forces) and if we have different things (forces) to express, doesn’t it follow that we need many different masks (folds)? (*Negation, Subjectivity, and the History of Rhetoric* 19).

In other words, masks all the way down. As noted by Vitanza, in terms of rhetoric and composition, the Nietzschean mask changes depending upon what the discipline might call audience, intent, rhetorical strategy, etc. In this sense, however, rhetorical subjectivity finds no foundationalist grounding; an otherwise rhetorical subject can only be surmised by way of the rhetoric itself. The form and style of the mask is, or at least ought to be, commensurate with the content of the rhetoric, inextricably tied to it. As Lanham argues: “[rhetoric] sees the self as a social fabrication, created by the many dramas we pass through in our lives. It is formed from the outside in, not vice versa. In this view, we accrete a self by playing a series of roles we pass

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<sup>74</sup> Ulmer, “Heuretics: Electracy” blog. Last accessed August 31, 2015.

through life, rather than being born with one.”<sup>75</sup> Close, but not exactly: by way of the machinic connectivity of desire, intensive and extensive, dispersed throughout the social field, our electrated sense of brand (akin to Nietzschean mask) assumes the form of a “group subject” whereby the (false) binary of “inside/outside” collapses with the third term (desire-aesthetics, image-logic). As Deleuze and Guattari explain, “both expression and content are now molecular and molar. The distinction no longer concerns a single aggregate or subject; linearity takes us further in the direction of flat multiplicities, rather than unity.”<sup>76</sup> Earlier in his book, Lanham thus touches upon the ontological specificity of brand as such: “The wrapping is the attitude surrounding the contents, the spirit in which it has been sent or give”—only now the wrapping also functions as the contents themselves.<sup>77</sup>

Moreover, the conceptual use of the Nietzschean mask as means to explicate “brand” logically follows other components of electracy: entertainment, style, fantasy, play, aesthetics, figure.<sup>78</sup> The Nietzschean mask-cum-brand in electracy thus does not cover the subjective depth of a rhetor; only the ideological imaginings of a subject and subjective depth hide behind the mask, which we have already dismissed earlier in this Act. The brand and only the brand instantiates and constitutes what we would otherwise call a “subject” and, as noted by Vitanza, this constantly shifts and mutates—recursively becoming-other, to use Deleuzo-Guattarian language. We therefore exchange the myth and ideology of subjective depth for the rhetorical image-logic of brand.

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<sup>75</sup> Richard Landham, *The Economics of Attention: Style and Substance in the Age of Information* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 140.

<sup>76</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 59.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>78</sup> Ulmer, “The Learning Screen: Introduction to Electracy” blog. Last accessed August 31, 2015.



Figure 3-8. Nietzschean profile. Facebook Silhouette. 2015, Modified Image. Creative Commons.

Conceptually following our rubric of electrate brand, Peter Weibel notes that “a postmodern image-theory therefore does not begin with an observation of the world, but rather with an observation of the image.”<sup>79</sup> Following the electrate condition of brand, Bukatman underscores Weibel’s claim: “*Terminal Identity* constructs a trajectory that propels the subject into the machine” in such a way that “everything that was directly lived has moved into a representation.”<sup>80</sup> As Bukatman continues, “in the end, image addiction is no longer posited as a disease: it has instead become the very condition of existence in postmodern culture.”<sup>81</sup> Our once Nietzschean masks have become digitized brands, capable of manipulation and being manipulated, new forms and methods of rhetorical arrangement, style, and delivery, presented on social media and in online worlds. And these brands—our own brands—follow first and foremost the rhetoric of image-logic. At last, then, “an ontology of culture may be derived through an ontology of its visual space: the images of a culture which constitutes itself *as* image.”<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Peter Weibel’s Introduction in Crandall’s *Drive*, 4.

<sup>80</sup> Bukatman, *Terminal Identity*, 17; 35.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.



How, then, does surveillance function in terms of brands, and how might brands rhetorically approach surveillance? First, we must discard the notion of “privacy” as an imagined interiority of “subjectivity.” As Agre notes, “ideas about privacy are, among other things, cultural phenomena. They are shaped through historical experience, they condition perceptions of newly arising phenomena, and they are reproduced or transformed in all of the same complicated ways as other elements of culture.”<sup>83</sup> With a shift from self to brand, we must also consider a shift in our conception of privacy. Brands, when successful, demand and command attention; they invite surveillance, desire to be seen, consumed, as evidenced in still-burgeoning social media platforms. When each of our own brands post on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, we hope to elicit attention, “liking,” and engagement. In doing so, we hope to improve our digital presence, develop our brand, render it more visible (what corporate vernacular would call “name recognition” and “habitual consumption”).

As such, brands fall into our general thesis: desiring-surveillance. Bukatman explains that, “for most of the population...the new information technologies represent *intrusions*, rather than *extrusions*.”<sup>84</sup> Herein lies the faulty reasoning of many, common apprehensions of surveillance in the age of electracy. Top-down, vertical modalities of surveillance (State and Capital) arrive with, are predicated upon, and expand proportionally with a horizontal, brand-to-brand, aesthetic desiring-surveillance. Our sense of surveillance as *intrusive* upon our subjective privacy needs to be rethought: brands’ desiring-surveillance as *extrusive*, as collectively manifested, as part of our more general shift into electracy. No desiring-machines without social machines, and vice versa, note Deleuze and Guattari.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Agre in *The New Media Reader*, 740.

<sup>84</sup> Bukatman, *Terminal Identity*, 77.

<sup>85</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 340.

Brands therefore mimic the logic of celebrity, stars. “Stars are,” writes Dyer, “like characters in stories, representations of people.”<sup>86</sup> Likewise, our Nietzschean masks turned rhetorical brands in digital space offer up a generalized rhetorical attitude, accented by a rhetoric informed by entertainment, play, fantasy. Image trumps substance; style trumps content. Following the prescripts of schizoanalysis, as well as Dyer’s own concern, we therefore consider not what celebrity/stardom means, but rather what does it do—how does it work?<sup>87</sup> As mentioned before, we find a useful analogy between brands’ complaints of surveillance as intrusive and complaints from celebrities/stars regarding the paparazzi: both rely upon surveillance, categorically, in order to actualize themselves. Both desire such. In this formulation, we can consider brands in the context of desiring-surveillance as brands-toward-celebrity. Such is how brand-towards-celebrity works.

While we will discuss this in more detail in the following Act, we agree with Lanham: “We need to find new shapes for traditional arguments and shapes for new kinds of arguments. We need to develop a notation that allows us to move from stuff to what we think about the stuff more easily than print permits. To develop it, we will have to embrace a traditional enemy, stylistic self-consciousness.”<sup>88</sup> Indeed, Lanham presents an electrating call for new rhetorical figures and strategies for brands, especially brand-towards-celebrity (from “stuff” to “fluff,” as he puts it). Bukatman expresses a similar sentiment, noting that, “the implosion of meaning in the mediascape, in blip culture, dictates the rise of new literary forms.”<sup>89</sup> By “literary forms,” we can safely assume that Bukatman would extend this to the realm of rhetoric, also (rhetorical genres). Indeed, these new rhetorical genres in the age of electracy will be grounded in the

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<sup>86</sup> Richard Dyer, *Stars*, 20.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 200.

<sup>88</sup> Lanham, *Economics of Attention*, 115.

<sup>89</sup> Bukatman, *Terminal Identity*, 45.

institution of entertainment. As Arroyo notes, “Ulmer argues that the institution of entertainment contains the same set of practices in electracy that schooling holds for literacy. In other words, if we accept that a shift toward electracy is taking place, then we see that entertainment and learning should not be separated.”<sup>90</sup>

Understanding the emergent conditions of electracy in this fashion, as well as the rhetorical figure of brand-towards-celebrity, we, like Jeff Rice, are “asking for a new kind of rhetorical understanding that begins with cool’s structures.”<sup>91</sup> We have already begun to witness the formation of new rhetorical genres as developed by brands-toward-celebrity, following the conditions of electracy and “cool”: word-economic “tweets” that demand the brevity of wit, the goal of which is to get re-tweeted and gather more “followers”; status updates, life-event posting, and photo-sharing on Facebook that hopefully elicit “likes”; Instagram photo-sharing, which allows an amateur photographer to aesthetically modify the visual appearance of his/her personal photography; the rhetorical use of “memes,” which draw from popular culture and, again, the brevity of wit; or the simple sharing of images, video clips, music, etc., for whatever persuasive purpose. While many of these emerging rhetorical genres often have their own specific and explicit rhetorical agenda and purpose, the general rhetorical aim of all of these is to create a “brand,” a rhetorical attitude that attracts followers (and what rhetorical attitude works more effectively in our postmodern, electrate age than “cool”?). Such illustrates the entanglement of brand-towards-celebrity, rhetoric, and desiring-surveillance. Our next Act will engage more sophisticated, speculative rhetorical figures.

If, as Lanham contends, “orality depends on a public self...[and] literacy creates or, depending on who you read, reinforces a private self,” then electracy, along with its compatible

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<sup>90</sup> Arroyo, *Participatory Composition*, 45.

<sup>91</sup> Jeff Rice, *The Rhetoric of Cool: Composition Studies and New Media* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2007), 7.

coupling with desire-aesthetics, obliterates such a binary for a new, third-term rhetorical orientation.<sup>92</sup> This new rhetorical orientation includes brands (and the corollaries of entertainment, fantasy, play, etc.) rather than subjects; image-logic rather than literate content; heuretics rather than hermeneutics; “cool” rather than “academic”; and the extrusion of schizoid desiring-surveillance rather than the intrusion of paranoiac desiring-surveillance.<sup>93</sup>

Alas, we do not endorse a wholesale rhetorical adoption of brand (noun; concept) or branding (verb; process) in terms already granted by the corporate (Capital) institution, regardless of the way brand (or brand-towards-celebrity) mimics such. Sure, the decoding of Capital presents, has already presented, a means by which to deterritorialize otherwise State re- and over-coding of “subjectivity,” especially by example of the intimate relationship between commodity and aesthetics. As Deleuze and Guattari observe, “a becoming is not a correspondence between relations. But neither is it a resemblance, an imitation, or, at the limit, an identification.”<sup>94</sup> There is always another way, a third term: desire-aesthetics in the service of schizoid potentiality. After all, Lanham reminds us: “The Dada brand was the brand of the century—not Coca-Cola.”<sup>95</sup>

Let us mimic, explore *that*.

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<sup>92</sup> Landham, *Economics of Attention*, 150.

<sup>93</sup> We wish to reiterate that, as Deleuze and Guattari explain, and as we note in the Introduction, we can never *fully* abolish the question or concept of the “subject.” All the tendencies of the concept “subject” remain regardless of how we re-qualify it; subjectification-signification cannot just collapse into negation, otherwise there would be no need to discuss it. Just as Deleuze and Guattari note in *Anti-Oedipus* that “you have to keep small supplies of significance and subjectification” (160), Bukatman writes in *Terminal Identity*: “Such a deconstruction does not point to an *annihilation* of subjectivity, but rather to the limits of the existing paradigms. The subject is deconstructed through the interrelated synaesthetic operations of technology, narrative, and language. Phenomenologically and rhetorically, then, the subject is *broken down* in the zones of cyberspatial simulation, there to await its reconstitution amidst these fields of data” (180). Rather, we seek a radical rearticulation of what might inevitably and otherwise be reconstituted and reterritorialized, recoded as “subjectivity,” especially in terms of rhetoric.

<sup>94</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 237.

<sup>95</sup> Landham, *Economic of Attention*, 72.

## Surveillance in Bel Canto: Desire-Aesthetics against Subject-Ethics

I'm not The Beatles.

—John Lennon

Whereas Scott Bukatman notes that, “technology is always disruptive and creates a crisis for culture,” Jordan Crandall adds that, “the aesthetic field is a site of conflict.”<sup>96</sup> We consider both as mutually engaged: the potential of desire-aesthetics in the age of electracy, especially for generating sites of crisis and conflict. Yet, we must keep in mind that such crisis and conflict does not concern right/wrong (morality/ethics; orality) or true/false (science-logic; literacy); it concerns aesthetics (joy/sadness; electracy). Deleuze understood this long before his *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* adventure with Guattari, before his work on rhizomatics and desiring-machines found adoption in media studies: his philosophical subscription to Nietzsche’s will-to-power and appreciation of art, as well as Spinoza’s capacities.<sup>97</sup> Likewise, Vitanza “is seaching for *third, non-synthesized subject positions-that-are-not-subject-positions*”—“not-subject-positions” that “aestheticize the ethical subject.”<sup>98</sup> Vitanza thus calls for an aesthetic subject, arranged by the potential and potential excess of desire-aesthetics, rather than an ethical subject, arranged and governed by a Nietzschean slave-morality.<sup>99</sup> To this end, Vitanza wonders “how the ethical subject—and consequently how the *polis* and politics—must be aestheticized so as to get to what has been systematically forgotten.”<sup>100</sup> In short, in the age of electracy in particular, how do we move from a discourse concerning the ethics of top-down, vertical surveillance

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<sup>96</sup> Bukatman, *Terminal Identity*, 3; *Drive*, 87.

<sup>97</sup> See: Deleuze’s *Nietzsche, Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, and *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*.

<sup>98</sup> Vitanza, *Negation, Subjectivity, and the History of Rhetoric*, 67; 105.

<sup>99</sup> See: Friedrich Nietzsche’s *Genealogy of Morality*, wherein Nietzsche situates morality as the inversion of aggression of the servant class against itself, by way of “morality,” as inscribed by the “Priest class.” From such we develop bad conscience, guilt, and poor conceptions of “subjectivity,” such as the “ethical subject.”

<sup>100</sup> Vitanza, *Negation, Subjectivity, and the History of Rhetoric*, 103.

modalities to a discourse concerning the aesthetics of horizontal desiring-surveillance modalities? And how can this change our approach to rhetoric and writing studies?

First, our paranoiac rhetoric regarding surveillance needs to be relinquished, exchanged. Deleuze and Guattari suggest that, in the age of desire-aesthetic electracy, “everything is allowed: all that counts is for pleasure to be the flow of desire itself, Immanence, instead of a measure that interrupts it or delivers it to three phantoms, namely, internal lack, higher transcendence, and apparent exteriority.”<sup>101</sup> The three phantoms in more concrete terms: internal lack as subjectivity (Oedipus as transcribed as any formation of an “ethical subject,” self-repression, desire-repressing-desire); higher transcendence as assemblages or machines (institutions) that make claim to any essentialism—God/Church/Priest, State/Country, Law; apparent exteriority as ideology, as the belief in an informing externality in which one does not contribute to the social field in terms of desire. In short, only subject-ethics (outlined above) stands in the way of a proper desire-aesthetics in the service of pleasure and well-being.

Much like “the officer of ‘In The Penal Colony,’” as noted by Deleuze and Guattari, desiring-surveillance “demonstrates what an intense libidinal investment of a machine can be, a machine that is not only technical but social, and through which desire desires its own repression.”<sup>102</sup> We find the same kind of Kafkaesque logic in desiring-surveillance. Consider the paranoiac tendency of desiring-surveillance above: *COPS*, *America’s Most Wanted*, Department of Homeland Security, *Dredd*, etc. All of these examples harbor an aesthetic dimension in their rhetorical delivery, yet all of them also reinforce and reproduce a subject-ethics. They all produce, through a certain aesthetic screen, a rhetoric of paranoiac desire: compelling each other to watch each other, frightfully.

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<sup>101</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 156-157.

<sup>102</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 346.

Sure, as Marshall McLuhan has it, “retrospectively, it may well prove necessary to concede to the period of mass marketing the creation of the means of a world order in beauty as much as in commodities.”<sup>103</sup> Likewise, as Victor Burgin puts it, sure: “In contemporary capitalism, in the society of the simulacrum, the market is ‘behind’ nothing, it is in everything. It is thus that in a society where the commodification of art has progressed apace with the aestheticization of the commodity, there has evolved a universal rhetoric of the aesthetic in which commerce and inspiration, profit and poetry, may rapturously entwine.”<sup>104</sup> Yet we cannot get caught up in the exchange-logic of Capital, however, even if it marks legitimized theft, as such exceeds the scope of our work: for now, you pay for it, you desire it, and it gets de-coded as such. Other than going “off-the-grid,” find a way around it; report back. In the process of such commodification, however, we also encounter the potential of desire-aesthetics.

Patricia Pisters explains in *The Neuro-Image*:

It may seem I have moved a long way from the issue of contemporary surveillance screens, their ubiquity and critical negotiation, through which started to unpack the schizoanalytic powers of affect in contemporary screen culture. To complete the analyses of this chapter by way of return to those beginnings, we can recall Deleuze’s insistence on the possibility of resisting power (as *pouvoir*) of the panoptic gaze with ‘war machines’ such as artistic practices. (121)

Pisters thus describes how we can “schiz” paranoid desiring-surveillance by using war machines such as artistic practices and, in doing so, shift approach from subject-ethics to one of desire-aesthetics. Anti-drone haute-couture fashion wear, Hasan M. Elahi’s voluntary self-tracking and reporting, Wafaa Bilal’s camera in the back of his head, and everyday sousveillance activities

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<sup>103</sup> Marshall McLuhan, “The Galaxy Reconfigured, or the Plight of Mass Man in an Individualist Society” in *The New Media Reader*, 200. We might also note that, in the same article, McLuhan argues that, “Western man knows that his values and modalities are the product of literacy. Yet the very means of extending those values, technologically, seem to deny and reverse them” (197).

<sup>104</sup> Victor Burgin qtd. in Victoria Vesna’s “Seeing the World in a Grain of Sand: The Database Aesthetics of Everything” in *Database Aesthetics: Art in the Age of Information Overflow* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 8.

demonstrate various ways in which we can recapture the process of surveillance in a molecular fashion that returns the question of vision to the arena of desire-aesthetics.<sup>105</sup> All of the above examples prove, as Bukatman notes, that “totalizing perspective is impossible; control eludes even the controllers.”<sup>106</sup>



Figure 3-9. Stealth wear. Adam Harvey, “Stealth Wear” ©. 2013, Image. AHProjects.com

Yet we do not need to undertake such drastic steps and become professional artists in order for us to utilize the aesthetic dimension as a libratory war machine. In the field of rhetoric and composition, we need only to move from literate ethics to electrated desire-aesthetics as our predominate mode of composing and teaching composition. Much scholarship already exists on the rhetorical figuration such a shift might assume: Ulmer’s work on emblem and mystery; Arroyo’s work on video and participatory composition; Jonathan Alexander and Jackie Rhodes’ work on the potential of new media in the composition classroom; and John Tinnell’s work on augmented reality. The future of rhetoric and composition cannot ignore the development of technical machines (ubiquitous) that expand vision; it must reconfigure our very metaphysical arrangement, and, in doing such, move us from literacy to electracy, from subject-

<sup>105</sup> Adam Harvey created anti-drone fashion, “Stealth Wear,” that camouflages thermal detection and disrupts facial recognition software. After being incorrectly identified as a terrorist threat while traveling (his name appeared on the “no-fly” list, though he was the wrong Hasan. M Elahi), the FBI told Elahi that he needed to now report his travels in advance when traveling. Elahi, an interdisciplinary media artist, responded by attaching GPS to his body and created software that automatically sent his slightest movement information to every FBI e-mail and fax he could find. After repeatedly flooding the FBI with information, they asked Elahi to stop reporting. Wafaa Bilal, an art professor at New York University, implanted a camera into the back of his, an artistic gesture to ubiquitous vision.

<sup>106</sup> Bukatman, *Terminal Identity*, 54.



ethics to desire-aesthetics. The question of surveillance, extending only from the expansion of vision afforded by advances in technical apparatuses, still haunts us because we still have yet to develop the tools and language to properly approach it. Figuring how to develop such tools and language to approach surveillance—namely, desiring-surveillance—thus becomes a crucial task for rhetoric and composition, and one which we will explore in further detail in the next Act.

CHAPTER 4  
ACT 3: THREE RHETORICAL FIGURES, OR, TO SCHIZ THE PARANOIAC FACE OF  
RHETORIC AND WRITING STUDIES IN THE AGE OF ELECTRACY

*WARNING [FROM THE CENTRAL SCRUTINIZER]: Are you still here? We cannot be sure how many of you moved forward, onto the stage, and then into the back dressing room to pick out masks and costumes, and how many of you left quietly through the marked exit doors to get a beer and watch the game. Those of you in the dressing rooms, picking out masks and costumes: be careful about the rhetorical figures of resistance you choose. Remember what desire-aesthetics did to Joe—he's still in that green room placing little green rosettes on muffins. Speaking of which: we have free muffins in the back for all attendees. Courtesy of Joe. Not cupcakes—muffins! For there is, and only ought to be.... Anyway, with all of us apparently entertaining and watching each other now, we figure you can write your own warning: [INSERT PERSONAL WARNING].*

**Canzone: After This Rhetoric, There Will Be This Other Rhetoric Which Came Before,  
Which We Think Should Again Come After(,) Now**

And somehow a dog/has taken itself & its tail considerably away/into the mountains or sea or sky, leaving/behind: me, wag.

—John Berryman, “Dream Song 14”

Indeed, the literate logic of rhetoric and writing studies still seems ahead of itself, far ahead of the “one final approach to the Text,” as Barthes notes, “that of pleasure.”<sup>1</sup> Which is also to say that it is behind itself. In Deleuzo-Guattarian terms, the territorialized, signified-subjectified, paranoid *face* of rhetoric and writing studies forgot the erotic *body* and potential of the text, turned away from it, left it behind. The face of rhetoric and writing studies looks behind and away from its own body: the face looks back at and scrutinizes the literacy of subject-ethics while the body plays in electracy pastures of desire-aesthetics. The field of rhetoric and writing

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<sup>1</sup> Roland Barthes, *Image, Music, Text* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 7.

studies already forgot the Platonic function of desire, love, erotics as essential to any semblance of truth, and it has yet to remember to forget such in terms proper to electracy. The subject of rhetoric and writing studies ran “into mountains or sea or sky” and forgot the basis of rhetoric and writings studies itself—that wagging tail of pleasure.

*Chorus Response: The Emperor wears too many clothes. Let us disrobe her.*

We can trace the desire-aesthetics basis of rhetoric back to antiquity. Plato does not qualify rhetoric as an art by accident; he does not begin *Phaedrus* with an extended dialogue on desire, love, and erotics coincidentally. Likewise, Quintilian reminds us in *The Orator’s Education*:

Some have said that the subject matter or material of rhetoric is “speech”: Gorgias is given this opinion in Plato. If this means that discourse is composed on any subject is “speech,” then it is not the material but the work itself, just as the statue is the work of the sculptor, for a speech, like a statue, is a product of art. (407)

Indeed, the subject of rhetoric does not constitute the material (product) but the work(*ing*) (process) itself; it constitutes desire-aesthetics (art), the wagging tail. The literate conception of surveillance inflects, informs, and pervades rhetoric and writing studies: the use of normalized rubrics to unilaterally assess student subject-writers—who themselves merely reproduce tired method-logics of literate composition (see: five paragraph essay)—over-emphasizes material product rather than aesthetic process. As with surveillance, literate rhetoric and writing studies focuses too much on the subject-face, the signified material, rather than the mobile and erotic body, the primary basis of rhetoric *qua* desire-aesthetics.

Moreover, this classical argument from Quintilian also clarifies recent inquiry into the question of algorithms, code, and programming as rhetorical language, especially as amplified by surveillance and dataveillance studies. We should here consider the Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts of expression and content, especially as they pertain to desiring-machines, abstract machines,

and technical machines. Desiring-machines express affectively (substance), in an image of thought or “feeling” that in the first instance exceeds the content-confines of language-signification. Captured by the signification of language, however, this affective expression (substance) finds structural meaning (form) within content, giving rise to an abstract machine.<sup>2</sup> Technical machines, including any given apparatus (be it textual literacy, recording devices, digital composing, etc.), then facilitate the fluid transmission of the expression-cum-content. Deleuze and Guattari thus agree with Quintilian: technical materials, such as algorithms, code, and programming do not enact a rhetoric anymore than the linguistic structures of phonetic language do. The processual “work” of the rhetor or sculptor can only derive from the agency of desire (desiring-machines-desiring-production, *producing*), not from the materials (technical machines) or even final product (content).

We do not mean to suggest, however, that we therefore advocate process or post-process theories of composition. We do not advocate any theory of composition that merely services the improvement of an exhausted literacy apparatus, including the dubiously dubbed “digital literacy.”<sup>3</sup> For example, Jonathan Alexander and Jackie Rhodes write in *On Multimodality* that, “in our push to assert our own disciplinarity, we have perhaps privileged text-based forms of writing to the extent that we rarely address the specific invention, delivery, and rhetorical possibilities of other types of composition in our classes.”<sup>4</sup> The emphasis here on post- or extra-literate, multimodal forms of rhetoric and composition, however, does not arrive as anything

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<sup>2</sup> While we acknowledge that other Deleuzo-Guattarian scholars might invert this relationship, instead writing expression-form and content-substance, we find this model more metaphysically practical.

<sup>3</sup> Again, we argue that “digital literacy” falls short on the account, fails to account for the significance of the shift into an entirely new apparatus (complete with an entirely new logic and metaphysics). We ask again: why not “written orality” as a means to frame “literacy”? Because, of course, literacy introduced an apparatus that wholly shifted our orientation in terms of logic, metaphysics, ontology, rhetoric, etc. We claim another shift is underway: electracy.

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Alexander and Jackie Rhodes, *On Multimodality: New Media in Composition Studies* (Urbana: NCTE Press, 2014), 3.

new—it has been around since at least the unfortunate coinage of “digital literacy.”<sup>5</sup> The key is not to approach and understand these emergent forms of composition in literate terms (“digital literacy”), but rather to approach and understand these emergent forms of composition proper to their own apparatus (electracy). Just as orality organizes thought and being in contrast to literacy, electracy does the same.

*Chorus Response: Let us return to desire-aesthetics as a means to finally arrive in electracy wholly naked.*

As explained in previous Acts, ubiquitous computing in the age of electracy brings with it ubiquitous surveillance, albeit in the form of desiring-surveillance. The desire-aesthetic dimension of desiring-surveillance in electracy only mirrors the broader desire-aesthetic dimension of rhetoric and writing in electracy. With these configurations in mind, we propose three new rhetorical figures for the teaching and composing of electrate writing:

1. The *electeur* (*bricoleur* and *flâneur* update): rhetorical tactics for walking through the architecture of surveillance in the cyber-city.
2. The *(e)choro* (update of the Greek hero of orality to the protagonist detective of literacy; remix of e-for-electronic, hero, and chora): assemblages and inventions of discovery; rhetorical heuristics in electracy.
3. The *aumateur* (remix of amateur and auteur): the function of the everyday digital rhetor as artist, especially in terms of augmented reality, and the return of rhetoric as a productive and liberating art; desire-aesthetics in the age of electracy.

Following Deleuze and Guattari’s schizoanalytic treatment of *bricolage*, a digital rethinking of the *flâneur*, as well as Michel de Certeau’s exploration of tactics (as vested within,

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<sup>5</sup> The number of books on “multimodal composition” and “digital literacy” is too extensive to list.

and counter to, strategies), this section will examine the ways in which the bricoleur/flâneur can be specifically applied to the nuances of the digital institution (i.e., the electeur update). The electeur proposes and enacts tactics of rhetorical invention as couched within desiring-surveillance and, in turn, offers rhetorical tactics within the strategies of the digital institution writ large in new and novel ways.

The (e)choro extends from the electeur. The literate to electrate shift of the protagonist-detective to the (e)choro will begin with a review of Bryan Singer's *The Usual Suspects* (1995), focusing on kairotic invention. We will then examine the (e)choro's inversion and subversion of the literate protagonist-detective in terms of William S. Burroughs' cut-up method and Greg Ulmer's heuretics and mystory. The (e)choro, as often understood as an "anti-hero," does not assume the literate figuration of hero/protagonist or villain/antagonist (right/wrong; subject-ethics); it exceeds such biunivocal rhetorical structures of thought or practice. That is, the protagonist-detective does not "read" the narratological clues as a means by which to inductively or deductively arrive at the (e)choro. Rather, the (e)choro *invents* the narrative and the clues, often improvisationally and with a keen sense of pattern and image-logic, as a means of flight and escape from the protagonist-detective.

The aumateur will use desire-aesthetics to look towards and recover the potential of rhetoric as art, particularly as located within ubicomp in general and ubiquitous desiring-surveillance in particular. The general targets remain the same: ideology, subject-ethics, digital literacy. Here we are interested in how desiring-surveillance can take on a positive, productive, rhetorical quality, and do so in the service of well-being. We will focus on common, everyday social media genres of writing (viral videos, memes, picture-manipulation and –sharing), using schizoanalysis to rethink them as desiring-surveillance tools as well as innovative methods for

electrate compositional practices. In short, the rhetorical functions of style, humor, and networked-participatory modes of non-linear and image-centric writing concern the amateur.

Thus: in the context of desiring-surveillance, let us schizoanalyze rhetoric and writing studies and offer up not a diagnosis or a treatment, but rather a process—three rhetorical figures we can adopt and employ. Methods we can dream into being.

*Chorus Response: No, that we can become into a dream.*

### **Supernumerary: The Electeur: The Rhetoric of Walking in Digital Space without a Face**

Where's that Joe Buck?

—*Midnight Cowboy*

Every time you think you're walking, you're just moving the ground. Every time you think you're talking, you're just moving your mouth.

—Isaac Brock

The generalized rhetorical concern has not changed from orality, to literacy, to electracy, from meat-space to digital space, from one historical moment to our present one: how to not get subsumed—consumed, eaten up—by the powers that be. (*Time to meet the new boss, same as the old boss*). Who and where are the heroes? Does David beat Goliath; does Odysseus arrive; does Sherlock Holmes or Perry Mason crack the case; does democracy work; can charity overcome poverty; can we fix ourselves? How so? What is the good life? How can we detect evil, even amongst and within ourselves? Are *they* out to get *us*?

These concerns appear as clichés because they are, because they are endlessly repeatable, perennial. And these clichés are as real as any ghost that haunts us, for it does not matter if the ghost is *actually real* if you *believe* it is. *In that we have demons, we thus harbor daimon*. So we invent platitudes to mitigate our tireless dispositions: God, subject-ethics, ideology, etc.. Spectres to wrestle spectres. We invent psychoanalysis to locate and treat these symptom-formations, this tendency to fall back on spectres. Though psychoanalysis could be its own subject of analysis,

with its (re)invention of Oedipus, of the mommy-daddy-me triad, its exclusive and absolute reduction that arrives at the cure (the cure also being, of course, the symptom, the spectre of mommy-daddy-me). “What a mistake,” indeed, “to have ever said *the* id.”<sup>6</sup> Ours is the blessing-curse of Dasein, as Heidegger would have it: the facticity of Being as a groundlessness from which we can only *construct* a grounding (for being-towards-death is a difficult pill to swallow).

Rhetoric, as distinguished from philosophy proper, classically developed as a systematic method for constructing such a grounding: persuasion, after all, has no effective import if it does not concern *well-being*, that “semblance of truth,” as Plato would have it.<sup>7</sup> In doing so, however, rhetoric further distinguishes itself from philosophy proper as a practical art (the art of persuasion). And with any art comes also a craft—and it is useful and wise to be crafty, especially in rhetorical terms. For rhetoric is not only those strategies which persuade the body politic—the *socius*, to use Deleuze and Guattari’s term—but is also the various (crafty) tactics that can be employed to allow an individual to find a line of flight of escape from any given territorialization or stratification. Sometimes you cease petitioning the Lord for sanctuary and instead develop a different rhetoric—that of craft and invention—that produces *its own* sanctuary.

From this we arrive at the electeur, an electrated update of the bricoleur and the flâneur. Very similar to the rhetor who uses all available means of persuasion, the bricoleur, as marked by Claude Lévi-Strauss, uses all available materials (bricolage). Whereas the engineer appropriates the “scientific mind,” the bricoleur appropriates the “savage mind.”<sup>8</sup> Deleuze and Guattari find the bricoleur as having “the ability to rearrange fragments continually in new and

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<sup>6</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 1.

<sup>7</sup> Plato, *Phaedrus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>8</sup> See: Lévi-Strauss’s *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).



different patterns or configurations...the rule of continually producing production...the production of production.”<sup>9</sup> Think Wile. E. Coyote, despite his repeated failures (as such, and ironically, think Roadrunner, too). Yet the bricoleur needs updating because, with the advent of the digital institution, the bricoleur-cum-electeur no longer works only with her hands, at least not in the traditional sense.<sup>10</sup> While the surveillance state engineered by the State and Capital properly seeks information, a certain knowledge, the electeur works rhetorically from within that surveillance state, craftily creating spaces and networks and, potentially, a schizoid desiring-surveillance that disrupts the surveillance state itself, at least as commonly understood.

In order to understand the rhetorical dimension of the electeur, we must first understand Michel de Certeau’s qualification of “strategies” and “tactics.” A strategy denotes “the calculus of force-relationships which becomes possible when a subject of will and power (a proprietor, an enterprise, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated from an ‘environment.’”<sup>11</sup> For example, “political, economic, and scientific rationality has been constructed on this strategic model.”<sup>12</sup> Conversely, tactics denote “a calculus which cannot count on a ‘proper’ (a spatial or institutional localization), nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as a visible totality. The place of a tactic belongs to the other.”<sup>13</sup> To this end, engineers enact strategies, while the electeur invents tactics. It is important to note, however, that tactics are always positioned within strategies—in fact, tactics reappropriate the very logic of a circumscribed strategy *against* that very strategy. While we can thus consider the surveillance state as operating according to the principles of the scientific method and rationality, as necessarily adapted to a logocentric approach, we can

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<sup>9</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 7.

<sup>10</sup> We do not intend to enter into a digression regarding the materiality or immateriality of digital spaces. Suffice it to say that digital space, at least phenomenologically, differs from what we would otherwise call physical space, or “meat-space.”

<sup>11</sup> Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), xix.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, xix.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, xix.

consider the electeur as the deployment of desire-aesthetics, as the “poetic ways of ‘making do.’”<sup>14</sup> For example, the electeur helped us mark the shift from *Las Meninas* and the panopticon to a ubiquitous desiring-surveillance of the shizoid variety (see: Act 1).

The electeur has a privileged place in the surveillance state, as she rhetorically subverts it into a positive, productive, schizoid desiring-surveillance potential, much as

the Sophists have a privileged place, from the point of view of tactics. Their principle was, according to the Greek rhetorician Corax, to make the weaker position seem the stronger, and they claimed to have the power of turning the tables on the powerful by the way in which they made use of the opportunities offered by the particular situation. (*The Practice of Everyday Life* xx).

The electeur is “the ‘anyone’ or ‘everyone’ ...a common place, a philosophical *topos*.”<sup>15</sup> To this end, as Certeau would agree, the electeur as the anyone/everyone is also a *rhetorical topos*—a thematic site of examination, study, and *persuasion*. From this site, what knowledge does power derive, or from such knowledge, what powers are (re)produced (hence Foucault’s necessarily hyphenated claim: power-knowledge)?<sup>16</sup> In other words, what strategies does State and Capital surveillance enact in order to augment power-knowledge, and what tactics, couched within these strategies, might be rhetorically available to the electeur (anyone and everyone) as a means to subvert and redirect such surveillance, potentially producing counter-power-knowledge? Recent examples abound: Julian Assange and Wikileaks, Edward Snowden, Chelsea Manning, and, perhaps most interesting, Anonymous. Following Certeau, all of these iterations of the electeur demonstrate that “authority is indissociable from an ‘abuse of knowledge,’” hence their principle *sousveillance* tactic of leaking information the State (and at times Capital) acquires, often

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., xv.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>16</sup> Michel Foucault’s “power-knowledge,” as detailed extensively in *Discipline and Punish* and his *History of Sexuality* volumes, notes that knowledge or truth is discursively produced as a *thing* by formations of disciplinary power; in turn, such truth or knowledge legitimizes and reproduces such formations of disciplinary power. As such, “knowledge” and “power” cannot be marked off as separate terms—hence, “knowledge-power.”

through the State's own strategic methods of surveillance.<sup>17</sup> In short, this constitutes the manner in which the electeur (typified by Snowden, Manning, and Anonymous) can use a tactic against—and yet afforded by—a strategy: sophisticated sousveillance, or the surveillance of surveillance.

We should also touch on the nomadic orientation of the electeur, especially as indicated by Assange, Snowden, Manning, and Anonymous, in both actual/physical and virtual/conceptual terms. First, there exists “nomad, war machine science and royal, State science,” and “nomad science does not have the same relation to work as royal science.”<sup>18</sup> Nomad science operates along smooth space (that without territorializations, hence the term) through asubjective “vague essences [that] are nothing other than haecceities,” producing heterogeneous concepts and practices categorically in conflict with the homogeneity of royal, State science.<sup>19</sup> In contradistinction, royal, State science operates along striated space (territorializations) through the use of law, and “retains of nomad science only what it can appropriate; it turns the rest into a set of strictly limited formulas without any real scientific status, or else simply represses and bans it.”<sup>20</sup> (This has been the case since the *Urstaat*, recounted as far back as the age of Sophocles).<sup>21</sup> Recalling Act 1, the relation between Velázquez's *Las Meninas* and Bentham's panopticon—on forward to our present moment of, and potential for, both a paranoiac and schizoid desiring-surveillance—suggests that royal, State science has always appropriated nomad

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 8. Practically speaking, “sousveillance” means the recording of an activity by an individual involved in the activity, often used as a counter-measure to the surveillance strategies used by formations of power (namely, the State).

<sup>18</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 364, 368.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 369.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 362. There is a practical and very real irony to the State's appropriation of nomadic science: Hacker communities and subcultures consider it common knowledge that the best and arguably *only* way to get an elite job with the State (e.g., National Security Administration) is to actually hack a highly-secured State database. In other words, to use the principles of the *nomos* against the *logos*/law in order to work with (i.e., be appropriated by) the *logos*/law.

<sup>21</sup> Consider Sophocles' famous play, *Antigone*: the State appropriates and memorializes the face of Eteocles but bans the memorialization of the body of Polynices, though both purportedly worked *against* the State.

science and will continue to do so. Both then and now, and perhaps as it will always be, “there is an opposition between the *logos* and the *nomos*, the law and the *nomos*”—between the schizoid-nomadic desire-aesthetics of desiring-surveillance as promulgated by the electeur (or any of our personas or brands), and the paranoiac-despotic, information-territorialization (biunivocal capture) of desiring-surveillance enacted by the State. (The Orchestrator apologizes for such a mouthful, but he says that we’ve covered all this seemingly convoluted jargon already, so it is done for the sake of brevity and convenience).

Back to the practical matter at hand, while Manning resides in military detention, Assange and Snowden remain in indefinite exile abroad—nothing short of the occupation of the nomad in practical, physical, actual terms. Anonymous remains in virtual and conceptual exile, indicated eponymously. Assange, Snowden, and Manning all emerge as parts of a nomadologic grouping (i.e., Wikileaks), and Anonymous even more so, as a loosely-connected group of hyper-encrypted hackers. Both Wikileaks and Anonymous constitute “packs, bands...groups of the rhizome type, as opposed to the arborescent type that centers around organs of power.”<sup>22</sup> (And for our intents and purposes, arborescent logic and power : biunivocal subject-ethics :: nomadology : desire-aesthetics). Anonymous in particular illustrates how “nomad science...presents itself as an art as much as technique.”<sup>23</sup> Indeed, Anonymous frequently uses desire-aesthetics—manifest in their Guy Fawkes masks as cohering image, artistic videos that often contain warnings, and use of style in the literate aspect of their rhetorical delivery—to make their rhetorical point. Yet do not be confused. Both royal, State science and nomad science use magic and mystery: the former uses priests and sovereigns; the latter uses poets and mystics.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 358.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 369.

Both poles fundamentally operate according to a rhetorical measure, but the electeur obviously attunes herself to digital poetics and mysticism, especially in the face of desiring-surveillance.

With the emergence of a latent hyper-visibility as inherent to the various practices carried out within the digital institution, most often manifest in desiring-surveillance, the electeur endures a certain “foreignness-at-home,” as Certeau frames it: “the face remains that we are *foreigners* on the inside—but *there is no outside*.” The approach of such an absolute surveillance also marks a metaphysical shift—that of being rendered utterly naked. Without the metaphysical cloak and security of interiority versus exteriority, concealment and privacy, subjectivity and subject-ethics, we feel uneasy and develop an uncanny sense of foreignness. For to lose these binary securities is to lose sense of even ourselves, and necessarily so. Yet such an absolute surveillance, as we have detailed at length, constitutes two distinct poles: paranoiac desiring-surveillance (royal, State science) and schizoid desiring-surveillance (nomadic science). To which pole we gravitate determines both the *expression* and *content* of the rhetorics to come. The paranoiac pole, of course, follows the proclamations of the priest, where one trembles cold and ashamed in the face of the State towards which it nonetheless turns for the security of the despot. (We can here substitute “State,” especially as concept, for hegemonic writing program administration). For even those that claim to resist the digital turn, to resist surveillance in all senses, use old tools (traditionalism, digital literacy, biunivocality) for new wars and, in turn, advance only a losing proposition. The schizoid pole, rather, turns to the poets and mystics, where one’s now-exposed body rhetorically blurs the subject-signification of the face (self-foreignness); one playfully dances, finds warmth in the return of desire-aesthetics, especially as a fundamental resistance to the paranoiac pole of the rhetorical orientation towards absolute

surveillance. “Mystical thought,” after all, notes Lévi-Strauss, “is a kind of intellectual bricolage.”<sup>24</sup>

Deleuze and Guattari note “a distinction...between weapons and tools on the basis of their usage (destroying people or producing goods). But although this extrinsic distinction explains certain secondary adaptations of a technical object, it does not produce a general convertibility between the two groups, to the extent that it seems very difficult to propose an intrinsic difference between weapons and tools.”<sup>25</sup> In other words, as Bauman and Lyon explain in *Liquid Surveillance*, “a knife can be used to cut bread and slice throats.”<sup>26</sup> Electeurs—such as Assange, Snowden, Manning, and Anonymous—use surveillance mechanisms as tools, yet the manner in which they use such tools, especially in contrast to how the State uses the same tools as weapons, can easily qualify such tools as *counter-weapons*. In the oppositional arrangement of the electeurs noted and the State, surveillance itself cannot intrinsically constitute a weapon or a tool; only the manner in which surveillance is rhetorically appropriated and deployed constitutes its function as such. Yet, though of paramount importance, our concern rests less with the politico-rhetorical aim of electeurs (Assange, Snowden, Manning, Anonymous) and more with the desire-aesthetic potential of electeurs, ““where the philosophy and artist launch their shot.””<sup>27</sup>

The self-foreign, nomadic quality of the electeur brings us to the flâneur aspect of the electeur. Certeau understands “walking as a space of enunciation,” as a (potentially) rhetorical practice.<sup>28</sup> With the advent of electracy, as well as with the emergence of absolute desiring-surveillance therein, how then does one *rhetorically* walk within the architecture of the “digital

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<sup>24</sup> Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, 17.

<sup>25</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 395.

<sup>26</sup> Bauman and Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance*, 45.

<sup>27</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 377, Nietzsche qtd.

<sup>28</sup> Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 98.

city?” Following our work above, “to walk is to lack a place. It is the indefinite process of being absent and in search of a proper,” yet such a process can develop rhetorical “practices that invent spaces.”<sup>29</sup> Virtually always visible now—rendered naked and thus self-foreign—we can always hyper-encrypt our browsers, seek out the “deep web” and the “dark web,” akin to walking in the sewers and underground tunnels rather than in the urban city.<sup>30</sup> Such a practice, however, follows the paranoiac tendency. Instead, we can follow the schizoid, desire-aesthetic rhetoric of the flâneur, that heuretic, self-stylized method of walking-*qua*-rhetoric that (re)invents spaces and thus changes the function and potential of walking-*qua*-rhetoric itself.

Of course, as with any rhetorical figure as relay, the flâneur does not come without its own problems. For example, we do not champion the bourgeois inflection of the flâneur, nor do we deny that much of the rhetorically or aesthetically inventive practices of the flâneur stem from a certain boredom that itself stems from a certain privilege. We do not believe that performing the digital equivalent of self-indulgently walking a turtle down the street on a leash, for example, for the purposes of whatever rhetorical or aesthetic point or provocation, achieves anything worthwhile for us here. In any event, it would seem difficult to “out-weird” the internet at this point, anyhow. We do seek to appropriate from the flâneur, however, the potential for changing rhetorical space and praxis, especially by way of desire-aesthetics, seeing and being-seen (desiring-surveillance). This alone constitutes the update of the flâneur to the electeur.

Following the flâneur, the electeur does not hide from desiring-surveillance; the electeur embraces desiring-surveillance, walks wholly naked down the digital streets of desiring-surveillance, wrought as it may be with State surveillance and the growing culture of commodity

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 103, 107.

<sup>30</sup> The “deep web” includes all sites that are not indexed by major search engines. The “dark web” is similar to the “deep web,” in that it is not indexed by major search engines; to access the “dark web,” however, one almost always needs to have a specific encryption (such as an encrypted browser) or specific authorization to access its sites.

consumerism (Capital dataveillance). The electeur uses the rhetorics of desire-aesthetics to make the space of desiring-surveillance its own: in a schizoid leap, it leaves behind the paranoiac tendency of desiring-surveillance and celebrates the rhetorico-aesthetic expansion and potential of desiring-surveillance. Indeed, to “practice space” in such a manner “is thus to repeat the joyful and silent experience of childhood; it is, in a place, *to be other and to move toward the other*.”<sup>31</sup> Understanding the precepts of nomadism and self-foreignness necessarily applied to the electeur, this signals the “becoming-other” Deleuze and Guattari so famously propose, most uniquely offered up to the electeur in digital spaces as a rhetorical and aesthetic resistance to the ontology and metaphysics of (re)territorialization. To lose subjectivity and subject-ethics, interiority and privacy, to lose one’s face and subject-signification, indeed, to lose biunivocal capture means to gain, temporarily tragic as it may seem, a self-foreignness, a period of mourning, as Certeau and Ulmer put it, a transition of exile.<sup>32</sup> But this also means to gain from a certain death (of biunivocal subjectivity) a new birth, for the exile of the electeur is one from the polis to chora. If “Being is measured by doing,” then rhetorically we must do *otherwise*; electracy demands such, and its godchild, desiring-surveillance, offers up strategies for doing so, such as figured in the electeur.<sup>33</sup>

Paranoiac desiring-surveillance concerns information-gathering—the biunivocal capture of a subject, the facialization therein, the use of writing only to *mark* a body: “Give me your body and I will give you meaning, I will make you a name and a word in my discourse.”<sup>34</sup> Yet we are concerned that the royal, State science that first imprinted us as such subjects might now be taking such away (paranoiac desiring-surveillance); rhetorically, then, we cling to same the

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 110.

<sup>32</sup> Ulmer, *Teletheory*, 29; Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 137.

<sup>33</sup> Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 137.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 149.



despotism, even in our seeming resistance of it. In terms of rhetoric and writing proper, then, this angle of desiring-surveillance echoes the reproach of totalizing, fascisizing linguistics, subject-signification, and the schoolmistress given by Deleuze and Guattari, reiterated by Certeau: “The credibility of a discourse is what first makes believers act in accord with it. It produces practitioners. To make people believe is to make them act.”<sup>35</sup> So within the framework of absolute desiring-surveillance, give up the subject-fetishism; move from the polis to the chora. Mourn, if you must. Enter into the age of electracy and give up your biunivocal approaches to rhetoric and writing, for writing is “no longer something that speaks, but something made.”<sup>36</sup> The electeur, conceptually graphed here, presents such a new figure of approach to rhetoric and writing, especially as situated within desiring-surveillance. The electeur provides but one answer to Victor Vitanza’s question: “WHAT WILL HAVE BEEN ANTI-OEDIPAL (De-Negated) HYSTERIES OF RHETORICS? WHAT WILL HAVE THEY LOOKED, SOUNDED, READ LIKE?”<sup>37</sup> Difficult to answer robustly, of course, for “revolution itself”—even and perhaps especially rhetorical revolution—is “to produce *a new history*.”<sup>38</sup> For now, the Chorus sings: *how do you choose to rhetorically space, place—practice yourself?*

### **Helden: (E)choro: Heuretic Heretic**

I am, I am, I said, I’m not myself. I’m not dead, and I’m not for sale.

—Scott Weiland

We can think of no better typification of the (e)choro than the character of Verbal Kent in Singer’s *The Usual Suspects*. The film unfolds in a non-linear fashion, with Verbal Kent, a half-crippled scam artist, recounting to detective Dave Kujan how he and a group of other criminals

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 148. Deleuze and Guattari, speaking as the (conceptual) State, note: “Always obey. The more you obey, the more you will be master, for you will only be obeying pure reason, in other words yourself...” (*A Thousand Plateaus* 376).

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 137.

<sup>37</sup> Victor Vitanza, *Negation, Subjectivity, and the History of Rhetoric*, 329.

<sup>38</sup> Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 135.

committed a series of crimes that culminated in a drug robbery that left everybody but himself dead. Kent admits that a well-known global criminal of mythical proportions, Keyser Söze, orchestrated the series of crimes, often without the group of criminals even knowing so. Agent Kujan, whose life-long professional goal has been to put one member of the criminal group, Dean Keaton, behind bars, convinces Kent that Keaton was not his friend (something Kent repeatedly argues), was not dead and, in fact, was Söze.

The final sequence of the film, however, inverts the traditional “eureka” moment of the protagonist-detective. As Kent leaves the police station, Agent Kujan drinks his coffee and stares at a tack board littered with various police information flyers. Agent Kujan realizes that Kent had invented his narrative, using words and images from the tack board and around the office—even Söze’s supposed lawyer, Kobayashi, with whom the group of criminals had supposedly worked, was the name of the coffee mug manufacturer, which we discover as Kujan drops his mug onto the floor upon this realization. Agent Kujan chases after Kent, but Kent, whose half-cripple walk suddenly adjusts, escapes into the crowd of people. Not only was Kent actually Keyser Söze, but Kent had invented a rhetorical narrative by stringing together random patterns of words and images in his immediate surroundings, leaving Agent Kujan with an utterly fabricated narrative to investigate. Thus, the inversion: Agent Kujan did not put together the clues of the literate narrative to arrive at the answer; rather, Kent rhetorically invented a narrative, by way of improvised image- and word-pattern formation, and delivered it to Agent Kujan as a line of flight of escape.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Kent delivers the rhetorical upshot punchline when describing Söze to Kujan: “the greatest trick the Devil every played was *convincing* the world he didn’t exist.”

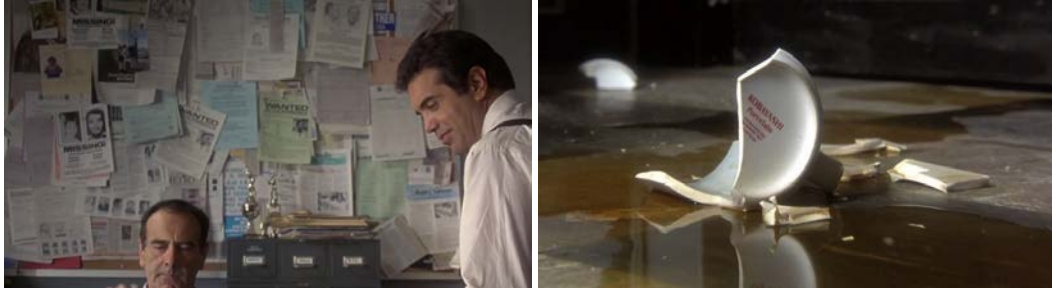


Figure 4-1. *The Usual Suspects*. *The Usual Suspects* © Bad Hat Harry Productions. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy of Gramercy Pictures.

The rhetorical import of *The Usual Suspects*, especially in terms proper to electracy, cannot be overstated.<sup>40</sup> Thomas Rickert's *Ambient Rhetoric* notes that, "the film *The Usual Suspects*...as David Blakesly points out...is 'explicitly about rhetoric as a social and verbal art.'"<sup>41</sup> That is, that the (e)choro's name was *Verbal* Kent comes as no coincidence or surprise. To that end, Rickert further argues that "Verbal is a kind of latter day Sophist, one who invents through attunement to audience and place in much the same way Gorgia trusted to do. Thinking place kairotically and kairos spatially thus moves us from a subjectivity of semiautonomous, willing agents to something like subjectivity as condensations of probabilities realized in movement, materialized in space, and invented in place."<sup>42</sup> Rickert's focus on rhetorical subjectivity as connected to, and never demarcated from, the ambient space enveloping it, especially as pronounced in this film, provides a key insight into how kairos, rhetorical pattern-formation, and image-logic might best function in the age of electracy. Such an analysis gestures to our claim of the shift, if not erasure, of rhetorical subjectivity (indicated instead by brand). Indeed, the film demonstrates how a desiring-machine rhetor can productively exercise its schizoid connections with its surrounding environment—insofar as it is never wholly removed

<sup>40</sup> For one, it inverts and, thus, subverts, shifts the detective story emblematic of literacy, as noted by Walter Ong in *Orality and Literacy* (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 144-148.

<sup>41</sup> Thomas Rickert, *Ambient Rhetoric: The Attunements of Rhetorical Being* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013), 95.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

from these connections, anyway—and thus use improvised rhetorical invention, via pattern-formation narrative, as a tactic against a strategy, as a line of flight or escape. (We should note, however, that a given environment and the connections therein do not offer *probabilities* [a fixed, static representation of a network], but that they rather offer *potentialities* [a fluid, dynamic representation of a network]).<sup>43</sup>

Kent's improvised rhetorical invention, therefore, typifies Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the schizoid potential of rhetorical desire-aesthetics: "Such a voyage does not necessarily imply great movements in extension; it becomes immobile, in a room and on a body without organs—an intensive voyage that undoes all the lands for the benefit of the one it is creating."<sup>44</sup> Similar to Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*, which Deleuze and Guattari mark as exemplary of the schizoid method, Kent rhetorically invents "new lands" through an intensive (internal) exploration rather than an extensive (external) one, *forging* and *creating* connections with all of his surroundings, and he does so with the use of rhetorical narrative. As such, Kent's rhetorical operation constitutes a molecular tactic inside of a molar strategy. He does not crack under the protagonist-detective's literate, molar strategy of interrogation, as usually expected in such narratives; he instead uses molecular potentiality within the space of that molar strategy to secure a line of flight, of escape: "*it is not the lines of pressure that matter, but on the contrary the lines of escape.*"<sup>45</sup> The improvised, rhetorical invention of the (e)choro does not concern a pressure, a judicial or epideictic rhetorical process of force. Rather, the (e)choro creatively assembles patterns, grafting them together into a coherent rhetoric, purely for the purpose of escape from molar coding and territorialization.

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<sup>43</sup> In Deleuzo-Guattarian terms, "probability" denotes a fixed system of possible outcomes; potentiality denotes a dynamic system of virtually infinite flows and forces.

<sup>44</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 319.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 338.

Yet the rhetorical figure of the (e)choro, as described thus far, does not arrive at anything entirely new or novel. As noted above, not only have Deleuze and Guattari described the conceptual potential of the (e)choro in abstract terms, awaiting only certain figures to give it form, but Greg Ulmer has also detailed many of the strategies inherent to the (e)choro. In particular, the (e)choro utilizes Ulmer's notes on heuretics, mystory, and flash-reason in (re)combinatory fashion.

Ulmer notes in the beginning of *Heuretics*:

Theory is assimilated into the humanities in two principal ways—by critical interpretation and by artistic experiment. “Heuretics,” the latter approach, functions at the same level of generality as “hermeneutics.” Theorists from Plato to Derrida have influenced the making of arts and letters as much as they have their analysis and interpretation (and often have been influenced in turn by the arts as much as by argument). (1)

Heuretics, as a creative, generative rhetorical practice, principally invents rather than interprets or analyzes.<sup>46</sup> Ulmer thus situates heuretics as contributing “to what Barthes referred to as ‘the return of the poetician’—one who is concerned with how a work is *made*. This concern does not stop with analysis or comparative scholarship but conducts such scholarship in preparation for the design of a rhetoric/poetics leading to the production of new work.”<sup>47</sup> Thus, again, the inversion: the literate protagonist-detective *interprets* and *analyzes* (hermeneutics); the (e)choro *invents* (heuretics) what the literate protagonist-detective interprets and analyzes. An adaptation of Althusserian tactic in everyday meat-space: when the police officer yells out, “hey, you!”—*do* turn around, and give him or her a rhetorical invention, brand yourself, use your molecular-rhetorical potentials to disrupt the molar inscription of otherwise inevitable interpellation. Ideology signs its own death certificate when we all realize that we only follow what we

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<sup>46</sup> We do note that, while we present heuretics and hermeneutics in a seeming contra-distinction, the two methods are not mutually exclusive (i.e., invention often contains analysis, and vice versa).

<sup>47</sup> Gregory Ulmer, *Heuretics: The Logic of Invention* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 4.

ourselves design, invent, believe. Verbal Kent as (e)choro rhetor understood and practiced such a tactic in the most compelling fashion.

Indeed, Kent went into questioning willingly; he interpellated himself as that which he was not, eventually removing his proverbial cloak and revealing himself as an (e)choro, an anti-hero that inverted the literate logic of the protagonist-detective. But not before he got away. As Michel de Certeau notes: “strategies are able to produce, tabulate, and impose these spaces, when those operations take place, whereas tactics can only use, manipulate, and divert these spaces.”<sup>48</sup> Believing Kent’s narrative-rhetorical invention, Agent Kujan tells Kent that Söze spared him in the shooting “because [he was] weak.” Only in this instance does Agent Kujan not miss the mark: “a tactic is an art of the weak.”<sup>49</sup> Up against the strategic extension of the Law, detained and in questioning, Kent *qua* (e)choro embraces the reality of his weakness, exaggerates his weak position (remember: he pretends to be a half-cripple) through a narrative-rhetorical tactic to escape the space of such a strategy.<sup>50</sup> Touching upon the function and relation of memory and rhetorical narrative, typified by Kent and explained by Certeau: “Standing in the same relation to time that an ‘art’ of war has to manipulations of space, an ‘art’ of memory develops an aptitude for always being in the other’s place without possessing it, and for profiting from this alteration without destroying itself through it.”<sup>51</sup> This rhetorical method of employing a tactic (in this case, that of memory and narrative) that is always within the circumscription of a strategy can also be considered as the molecular force and potential—the rhetorical resistance of becoming-other—within any molarity.

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<sup>48</sup> Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 30.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>50</sup> We should note that De Certeau considers strategies as spatial (detention and interrogation room) and tactics as temporal (rhetorical narrative).

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

Likewise, as exemplified by Kent, the (e)choro thus utilizes Burroughs' "cut-up method"—a method which also mirrors Ulmer's "mystory," and which, depending upon its kairotic employment, we can consider a tactic.<sup>52</sup> Burroughs' method calls for a text to be cut up into pieces and rearranged so as to create a new text with the same materials. Kent, for example, cuts up the pieces of his given environment (text)—literate and visual—and, in a pastiche like manner, rearranges them so as to create a kairotic narrative-rhetoric. In doing so, Kent demonstrates Quintilian's claim above: it is not the materials that form a rhetoric (product); it is how the materials are strategically used (process). Again, Kent's narrative-rhetoric, invented by way of his cut-up appropriation of his environment, inverts the hermeneutic order of literacy: the protagonist-detective does not analyze and solve the case (hermeneutics); rather, Kent invents the case as a means to forge a line of flight, an escape from the otherwise protagonist-detective (heuretics). Especially when translated into digital spaces—namely, cyberspace—the potential of the cut-up method for the (e)choro appears glaringly infinite. Following Deleuze and Guattari, rhetorically applying the cut-up method in this manner and in cyberspace, then, produces the potential of an "active point of escape where the revolutionary machine, the artistic machine, the scientific machine, and the (schizo) analytic machine become parts and pieces of one another."<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Ulmer's mystory provides an alternative to the literate logic of argumentation: by choosing four components of one's life (family, pop culture, discipline, school, etc.) one can identify patterns, and from this pattern-formation one can create a narrative that arrives at a unified concept. In conjunction with Ulmer's concept of "Flash Reason," the (e)choro's potential application of the "mystory" logic as a tactic reflects Certeau's work on a certain function of narratives: especially for oppressed people, or even just everyday individuals (most of us) on the wrong side of power dynamics, stories can exist as a rhetorical repertoire, as an index of resistance. Memory, which "remains hidden (it has no determinable place) up to the instance in which it reveals itself, at the 'right point in time'"—or what we might call kairos—"produces flashes...[that] illuminate [an] *occasion*" (*The Practice of Everyday Life* 83). These proper occasions of memory, invoked and manifested as narratives, "obtain the maximum number of effects from the minimum of force" (82).

<sup>53</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 322.

We might thus consider Jacqueline Preston's "Project(ing) Literacy" as an explication of a Deleuzo-Guattarian method that works in concert with the aims of the (e)choro and that, we would argue, carries the *potential* to exceed the constraints of the literate apparatus:

Critical beyond the mechanics and organization underscored in theories of writing as primarily representation is writing's complexity, its relevancy, its contingency, and, of particular importance, its *becoming* (Deleuze and Guattari 272). To speak of *becoming* is to highlight writing's protean quality. *Becoming* underscores change, flight, and movement. In becoming, one piece of the assemblage is knitted into the landscape of another piece, changing its value as an element and bringing about a new kind of unity. While the process of *becoming* may include imitation, it is primarily generative, a moment of invention, identification and articulation. (40-41)

First, Preston's approach to writing implies the necessary function of desire-aesthetics—that writing does not merely represent but further, in an ontological fashion, engages a *becoming*. We would argue that the force and potentiality of becoming, as situated within writing and rhetoric, extends from desiring-machines. Second, Preston notes the manner in which rhetoric and writing initiate "change, flight, and movement." In this light, Preston echoes a Deleuzo-Guattarian call for a rhetoric that exceeds signification and subjectification, that reaches beyond the mere reproduction of the "order-word," and that, instead, creates not faces but linked bodies, lines of flight and escape. We consider this proposed rhetoric as the *modus operandi* of the (e)choro. Third, Preston's emphasis on linkage and "knitting" provide us with two key contact points: first, it moves toward the schizoid, rhizomatic quality of (e)choro rhetoric; second, it mirrors Burroughs' cut-up method—a preferred method of (e)choro rhetoric. Lastly, Preston highlights the *inventive* quality of writing and rhetoric, rather than the rhetorical act of simple imitation. Indeed, the (e)choro could not function any other way. When placed in the context of the digital institution, Preston's "Project(ing) Literacy" could therefore form the beginnings of a "Project(ing) Electracy."



The (e)choro—as rhetor, as inscriptor (writer)—does not operate *under* ubiquitous surveillance; the (e)choro operates *with/in* ubiquitous surveillance, necessarily and categorically so.<sup>54</sup> The fact of the matter, as noted by Crandall, is that “the condition that arises to serve all needs is that of surveillance—a kind of monitored, formatted vision-at-a-distance.”<sup>55</sup> But the (e)choro does not follow Crandall’s conclusions—that the desire for surveillance has been ideologically disguised as such, that the people have been *duped*. Rather, the development of ubiquitous surveillance indicates only an epochal shift in the metaphysics of vision: “In the end,” writes Bukatman, “image addiction is no longer posited as a disease: it has instead become the very condition of existence in postmodern culture.”<sup>56</sup> Indeed, the ontological arrangement of the (e)choro, as well as of all the rhetorical personas proposed in this chapter, shifts from *Being* to *Beseen*. This ontological arrangement, however, has a reflexive quality: Beseen is also to see other Beseens.<sup>57</sup> The development of ubiquitous surveillance—*qua* desiring-surveillance—follows the charting of electracy writ large: with a certain ontological shift (from Being to Beseen), another metaphysical shift (the function and engagement of vision), which, in turn, indicates a rhetorical shift (from subject-ethics to desire-aesthetics). (We have already noted recursively that any machine—State, Capital, desiring-machine, etc.—can appropriate desiring-surveillance, whether in the service of paranoiac capture or schizoid escape). The (e)choro, as an

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<sup>54</sup> The ubiquity of surveillance, marked as desiring-surveillance (whether on the schizoid or paranoiac pole), means we do not merely operate *under* surveillance as *subjects* any longer. Rather, we operate as constantly immersed *within* surveillance, as active participants in its unfolding logic. Hence the need for rhetorical personas to breach this new limit of thought.

<sup>55</sup> Crandall, *Drive*, 174.

<sup>56</sup> Bukatman, *Terminal Identity*, 69.

<sup>57</sup> We can actually think this turn in Heideggerian terms, if only for the matter of phenomenological perspective: Dasein’s facticity of being, its being-in-the-world, and the generation of “care” and “concern” that follow such facticity can be largely attributed to the *mitsein* (being-with; Dasein being-with-Dasein’s-others) condition of Dasein’s ontological facticity (see: *Being and Time*). The phenomeno-logic and onto-logic of Beseen and seeing-others follows: one loses all valence without the necessary other.

electrate brand-persona of rhetorical invention (an iteration of a desiring-machine), thus finds her line of escape—kairos-ambiently and abductively.

As Rickert has already indicated briefly above when discussing Kent, our typification of the (e)choro par excellence:

Kairos is not about mastery but instead concerns attunement to a situation, with attunement understood not as a subjective state of mind or willed comportment but as an ambient catalysis within what is most material and concrete, a gathering that springs forward. Kairos is less about the irrational, then, than about refining what rationality will have meant when it is made again ambient in a worldly sense. (98)

The (e)choro with/in ubiquitous desiring-surveillance, then, does not seek to resist or overcome desiring-surveillance, rhetorically or otherwise, as desiring-surveillance indicates only an ontological and metaphysical shift in the arrangement and transparency of vision. Instead, the (e)choro “attunes” herself in a rhetorical manner that fits the situation at hand, and she “refines” the (often visual) materials at hand in a manner that can rhetorically subvert the situational paradigm of power construction, much as Kent did. As previously discussed, Kent *qua* (e)choro rhetorically subverts the power dynamic at hand through the careful use of ambient kairos, inverting the roles of (literate) detective and suspect. Such a rhetorical method—which we can clearly apply to ubiquitous desiring-surveillance writ large—also follows a new third term, *abduction*.

Similar to the third term of desire-aesthetics’ rejection of biunivocal logic (i.e., *this is that* and, in effect, *not* these other things), abduction arrives in a similar “thirdly” fashion: not to logically deduce or induce but rather, by way of insight, suggestion, or instinct, to abduct.<sup>58</sup> To

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<sup>58</sup> Thomas A. Sebeok’s “One, Two, Three spells Uberty” in *The Sign of Three* provides a most practical example of abduction: “Deduction: Rule: All the beans from this bag are white; Case: These beans are from this bag; Result: These beans are white; Induction: Case: These beans are from this bag; Result: These beans are white; Rule: All the beans from this bag are white; Abduction: Rule: All the beans from this bag are white; Result: These beans are white; Case: These beans are from this bag” (8).

digress for a moment, we can consider the third terms of desire-aesthetics and abduction in the same light: “the reality of Thirdness is ‘operative in Nature,’” argues Thomas A. Sebeok, quoting C.S. Peirce, and “‘the Universe as an argument is necessarily a great work of art, a great poem—for every fine argument is a poem and a symphony—just as every true poem is a sound argument.’”<sup>59</sup> The desire-aesthetic dimension of nature, world, universe thus calls forth the rhetorical art of abduction, “replete with uberty, the Play of Musement.”<sup>60</sup> We can qualify this amusing play of abduction in numerous ways: “sense intuition,” gut instinct, or “‘an act of *insight*, ‘the abductive suggestion’ coming to us ‘like a flash.’”<sup>61</sup> Abduction is the playful and intuitive method of invention, wherein “an element of art and magic is blended into the logic of scientific discovery.”<sup>62</sup> Abduction constitutes the foundation of “Peirce’s ‘theory of why it is that people so often guess right.’”<sup>63</sup> Etc.

Needless to say, much as Sherlock Holmes used abduction to solve crimes by way of a certain invention, the (e)choro uses the same method, only the (e)choro does so in a way that rhetorically subverts and inverts the relationship between protagonist-detective and suspect.<sup>64</sup> In this sense, the (e)choro also clearly retains a nomadic dimension.<sup>65</sup> But what does this mean for the everyday, practical function of rhetoric and writing, particularly in terms of ubiquitous

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<sup>59</sup> Umberto Eco and Thomas A. Sebeok, *The Sign of Three: Dupin, Holmes, Peirce* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 9. Specific to rhetoric and writing, it should be noted that “Peirce, in a much discussed passage, answered the question ‘What is man’ by categorizing him as a Symbol. As for the Universe, that he regarded as Argument” (Sebeok, *The Sign of Three*, 9).

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>61</sup> Thomas A. Sebeok and Jean Umiker-Sebeok, “‘You Know My Method,’” *The Sign of Three*, 12, 18 (Peirce qtd.). Ulmer’s qualification of “Flash Reason” should here be strongly considered.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 16 (Peirce qtd.).

<sup>64</sup> Umberto Eco writes in “Horns, Hooves, and Insteps” in *The Sign of Three*: “The fact that the train of thought Holmes imagined coincided perfectly with Watson’s actual one is the proof that Holmes invented ‘well’ (or in accordance with a certain ‘natural’ discourse). Notwithstanding this, he did *invent*” (215).

<sup>65</sup> As Deleuze and Guattari note in *A Thousand Plateaus*: “*following is not at all the same thing as reproducing*, and one never follows in order to reproduce. The ideal of reproduction, deduction, and induction is part of royal science, at all times and in all places, and treats differences of time and place as so many variables, the constant form of which is extracted precisely by the law....” (372).

desiring-surveillance? It means to use the (e)choro persona as tactic and method to rhetorically schiz, as alternative to the paranoid push of subject-ethics (is surveillance invasive?), biunivocality (what is surveillance?), deduction/induction (how can we logically avoid surveillance?), etc. As we have discussed repeatedly in previous Acts, desiring-surveillance arrives as nothing if not an aesthetic extension of our shift into electracy. This means to rhetorically *use* desiring-surveillance—with/in which we are ubiquitously immersed—with kairos, ambience, desire-aesthetics, abduction—to invent and make new, to make our own, especially if the sense is that desiring-surveillance reveals your self, renders you naked, invades your privacy. Use your gut instinct—abduction—as Kent did, as any effective (e)choro rhetor would. There are two poles, two rabbit holes, and two only: schizoid leaps and paranoid dwellings, and we know by now where each one leads.

This, of course, begs the question: how might we teach and enact the (e)choro?

While there exists no one way to do this, we offer up an exercise: create (and/or have your students create) a rhetorical persona on a social media space, an alter-ego of sorts wherein the persona/ego of the invented rhetor (form) matches the rhetorical productions/inventions (content). Following Vitanza and Nietzsche, however, we should not separate these terms—the *mask* of the rhetor and the rhetorical *production/invention*—as they function as one in the same. For we know now that one's persona (form) constitutes an essential and integral part of the figure and content of any rhetoric. *Form matches content*. Yet this exercise teaches heuristic invention, particularly within the desire-aesthetic dimension. Further, such an exercise teaches how counter-rhetorics derive and arrive: responses from the chora (social media space; (e)choro's "other"), the production of advertisements (dataveillance), pages "suggested" by Facebook (to use one social media example). The goal, of course, is to transfer this knowledge

to everyday, rhetorical life—how one always functions as a rhetorical persona, as a certain brand or figure, when one creates through rhetorical practice a certain digital presence. That is, the goal of such an exercise seeks to not only teach about the inextricable connection between persona (form) and actual rhetoric (content)—which on that level alone merely constitutes a hermeneutic exercise—but it further seeks to demonstrate the extent to which one has heuristic control over the inventive aspect of such production throughout—that rhetorical mask and persona are also chosen and invented, and that we all, too, can become-other.

Our proposed exercise thus reiterates Arroyo's gesture to Ulmer: "the classroom [is] 'a place for invention rather than reproduction.'" <sup>66</sup> The difficulty, of course, is compelling students to invent rather than to imitate. Yet no lesson in rhetoric arrives as easy or as scripted—it requires repetition and experimentation, variable failure. And by definition, categorically: there is no *one* way to approach, apply, or enact the (e)choro. It is endless, multiplicative, infinite in form and content. It is rhizomatic. Schizoid. It has a figure, a body, but it has no face—other than the rhetorical mask in-flux. It constitutes a rhetorical formation of the "whatever-being": "whatever singularities occupy innumerable potentials and portals for invention." <sup>67</sup> Yet, as Michel de Certeau reminds us, the success of an enacted (e)choro is always contingent upon, and specific to, the problem at hand, for "it is not enough to describe individual ruses and devices. In order to them, one must suppose that to these ways of operating correspond a finite number of procedures (invention is not unlimited and, like improvisations on the piano or the guitar, it presupposes the knowledge and application of codes), and they imply a *logic of the operation of actions relative to the types of situations*." <sup>68</sup> In other words, while the sum total index of possible

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<sup>66</sup> Sarah Arroyo, *Participatory Composition*, 111; qtd. Gregory Ulmer's *Applied Grammatology*, 163-164.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>68</sup> Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 21.

or potential (e)choros remains infinite, the rhetorical success of a given (e)choro depends upon the rhetorical situation at hand.

To this end, we chart the (e)choro on the same trajectory of difficulty as the body-without-organs, as explained by Deleuze and Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus*:

At any rate, you have one (or several). It's not so much that it preexists or comes ready-made, although in certain respects it is preexistent. At any rate, you make one, you can't desire without making one. And it awaits you; it is an inevitable exercise or experimentation, already accomplished the moment you undertake it, unaccomplished as long as you don't. This is not reassuring, because you can botch it. Or it can be terrifying, and lead you to your death. It is nondesire as well as desire. (149)

We can only flesh out the figure of the (e)choro through exercise and experimentation, following the rhetorical methods and logics offered above. And indeed, it will thus mean relative success and the possibility of absolute failure. Yet any proposed, novel rhetorical figure for the age of electracy will arrive with a certain amount of risk involved, and all failures, in turn, afford an increase of future success. “[Frederick] Hayek’s central thesis,” notes Richard Lanham, “[is] that the mind can never foresee its own advances and that it must collaborate with chance to find its future.”<sup>69</sup> For if it does not carry any risk, we must wonder if it is even worth the effort.

Desiring-surveillance as a given, and the (e)choro as a guide, the Chorus sings: *how do you choose to write yourself?*

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<sup>69</sup> Lanham, *The Economics of Attention*, 74. Certeau details this concept of writing the future—or what he calls “futurology”—in *The Practice of Everyday Life*.

## Prima Donna, Trouser Role: The Aumateur: The Everyday Rhetorical Artist

You don't need a weather-man to know which way the wind blows.

—Bob Dylan

Slavoj Žižek considers John Carpenter's *They Live* (1988) as an exemplary filmic representation of ideology.<sup>70</sup> In the film, as Žižek himself explains, the protagonist, John Nada (last name meaning “nothing” in Spanish), puts on sunglasses that he finds stored in a resistance group's meeting-place, and he begins to see reality for what it really is. He sees the true meaning of social construction: the latent meaning behind money, billboards, and magazines; the otherwise invisible surveillance surrounding him; even the actual faces of the power elite (extra-terrestrial aliens disguised as humans) that control him and his fellow man. Yet it hurts to wear these sunglasses for too long for, as Žižek would have it, the unmasking of ideology can only be endured for so long at a time. Likewise, his friend and confidant, Keith David, refuses to put on the glasses, ostensibly because he has a sense of what they will reveal. After a long, drawn-out fight scene, Nada forces David to put on the glasses, revealing to him the “truth.”



Figure 4-2. *They Live*. *They Live* © Alive Films. All Rights Reserved. Courtesy Universal Pictures.

Why begin with this—with “ideology”—when we have already spent so much time dispelling such a tendency of thought? For a couple of reasons. First, the film helps to reveal the *essentialist* conspiratorial framework of ideology: *us* (i.e., interpellated subjects) and *them* (i.e. constructions of power). In this case, “us” and “alien others” disguised by ideology as “us,” with the latter duping the former via various messages and signals elaborated pervasively and

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<sup>70</sup> Sophie Fiennes, *The Pervert's Guide to Ideology* (Zeitgeist Films, 2012).

ubiquitously throughout all cultural production. Second, the film presents an interesting double-bind: you have to put something on (sunglasses) in order to take something off (the revealing of ideology). That is, the *unmasking* of ideology arrives with a new *masking*. We can here think of the sunglasses as augmented reality, as the conceptual predecessor of the emerging augmented reality via smart phones we now actually have, carry, use. And such creates the double-bind: while ideology, classically conceived, produces a manifest layer (the imaginary) over latent content (material production), the potential dissolution of ideology as such—seeing reality as it really is, as Žižek would have it—arrives through *another layer*—that is, augmented reality.

Yet the film does not present such a double-bind when considered in the context of how we have read and established ideology: as a *thing*, as a material grammar of everyday life (see: Act 2). This material grammar includes (i.e., expresses) desire. As Jacques Derrida has noted—as have his most astute followers, notably Ulmer and Bernard Stiegler—grammatology forms the basis of meaning-formation.<sup>71</sup> As such, we cannot *meaningfully* rid ourselves of ideology inasmuch as we cannot rid ourselves of grammatology. We can only change the grammar—through the sunglasses, perhaps, or, as we would have it, through augmented reality. For, as Peter Weibel notes, “an invisible reality can become visible in images.”<sup>72</sup>

Desiring-surveillance thus provides the amateur with a rhetorico-aesthetic potential: to use technological extensions of vision (augmented reality) as a rhetorical and aesthetic means to make the world different.<sup>73</sup> The amateur thus does not seek to *rewrite* the wor(l)d, the ideology *qua* grammar of everyday reality; the amateur seeks to write *over* the wor(l)d, to *deface* the

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<sup>71</sup> See: Derrida’s *Of Grammatology*, *Monolingualism of the Other*, *Writing and Difference*, and *Limited Inc.*; Stiegler’s *Technics and Times Vols. I-III*; and Ulmer’s *Applied Grammatology* and *Teletheory*.

<sup>72</sup> Weibel, *Drive*, 4.

<sup>73</sup> We should note first that human vision has always been a technic; augmented reality only further extends such (see: Bernard Stiegler’s *Technics and Time* volumes). Second, we should remember that we consider rhetoric and aesthetics as one of the same term.



predominate ideology *qua* grammar of everyday reality, rhetorically and aesthetically. The goal of the augmented-reality-using amateur, afforded by a schizoid desiring-surveillance, thus approaches Derrida's vision of a revolutionary grammatology: "the end of linear writing," already underway.<sup>74</sup> Because of this shift into non-linear writing, "because we are beginning to write, to write differently, we must *reread* differently."<sup>75</sup> Thus, to shift grammatology in this manner, nonetheless granted by desiring-surveillance in a productive sense, would then not only refigure ideology but also shift the practice of rhetoric and writing itself, especially in an aesthetic direction.

So why are we not using emerging technologies—such as augmented reality on smart phones—as tools and methods of inscription (writing)? Would such not be a rhetorical practice? Would such not rebridge rhetoric and aesthetics? Would such not demonstrate the productive—dare we say, revolutionary—capacity of desiring-surveillance, rhetorically and aesthetically? Would such not approach Derrida's vision of the grammatology to come? The lonely amateur would like to know.

The simple, colloquial answer, of course, is tradition, which breeds fear (of the frightful new), which breeds contempt, which breeds *paranoia*. The paranoiac-despot structures traditional linguistics, writing administration, the student-writer-subject, the "order word."<sup>76</sup>

Remember Deleuze and Guattari's schoolmistress:

When the schoolmistress instructs her students on a rule of grammar or arithmetic, she is not informing them, any more than she is informing herself when she questions a student. She does not so much instruct as "insign," give orders or commands. A teacher's commands are not external or additional to what he or she teaches us. They do not flow from primary significations or result from information: an order always and already concerns prior orders, which is why

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<sup>74</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 86.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 87 (*italics mine*).

<sup>76</sup> Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 76-77.

ordering is redundancy. The compulsory education machine does not communicate information; it imposes upon the child semiotic coordinates possessing all the dual foundations of grammar.... The elementary unit of language—the statement—is the order-word. (*A Thousand Plateaus* 76).

Without the fascisizing totality of normalized writing instruction (and rhetoric, language writ large)—normalized assessment, rubrics, pedagogy—how do we know what or how to teach? The order word dictates normalized writing instruction, which reproduces the order word. Indeed, a paranoiac tendency of desiring-surveillance—the total surveillance of student-subject-writers—thus inhibits the potential of schizoid desiring-surveillance in practical rhetoric and writing studies instruction. The goal, then, is not to merely move from the institutional administration of writing studies to a re-engagement of the intellectual study of writing itself, as Dobrin notes in *Postcomposition*, but rather to change how we view and approach writing in the most fundamental sense.

Yet, as Vitanza reminds us: “*Out of the impossible (i.e., lack) comes the possible (excess).*”<sup>77</sup> And the amateur’s rhetorico-aesthetic cup spilleth over. The amateur, using augmented reality applications, thus (re)invents rhetoric and writing in a fashion that mobilizes desiring-surveillance, and in schizoid leaps that recall that third term, desire-aesthetics. So, again, why not the amateur (or whatever you would call her) as a figurative persona engaged in normative rhetoric and writing studies, discourse, and instruction? Because “philosophers and even many rhetoricians have felt extremely uncomfortable with the third term and concept, desire-aesthetics.”<sup>78</sup> Why? Because the biunivocal capture-logic of rhetoric and writing, as classically understood in the literate sense, demands—*commands*—a subjectivity, a static sense of ethos, a subject-ethics. The biunivocal capture-logic of literate rhetoric and writing thus flexes

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<sup>77</sup> Vitanza, *Negation, Subjectivity, and the History of Rhetoric*, 61.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

its ontological muscle, its violence—“so violen[t],” in fact, “because it *pre*-excludes.”<sup>79</sup> *This* cannot be *that*: the aumateur cannot figure rhetoric and writing, if only because the excess of desire-aesthetics, as indicated by the amateur, exceeds biunivocal logic.

So what, exactly, does the aumateur do? How can we practically apply this persona, enact it, teach it, figure it? *Who is the aumateur?*

Though augmented reality exhibits the most worthy, end-limit (for now) potential of the aumateur, the aumateur features her work in everyday rhetorical encounters: meme invention, social media pictures/video of rhetorical import, image-manipulated compositions/rhetorics, etc. If we consider Crandall’s use of “editorial” as “rhetoric,” we can conclude that “there are no longer representations of artworks, but only components of the very body of the artwork—for, as our relations become editorialized, it is in publication-space that artwork is formed: it is here that its coordinates are established, and its materiality reworked.”<sup>80</sup> By “editorial artworks,” we figure this to mean rhetorical works of art, and by “publication-space,” we gesture to social media platforms wherein, through the vehicle of desiring-surveillance, we can all see rhetorical works of art and have our rhetorical works of art seen. But this is only the potential of the aumateur; there is still yet far too much garbage on social media purporting to be an aesthetic rhetoric. The aumateur does try, however, and with any rhetoric or writing instruction, the goal is to refine the process.

To recall previous chapters, Bukatman stands correct in noting that “the implosion of meaning in the mediascape, in blip culture, dictates the rise of new literary forms” in an attempt to “overthrow...the word.”<sup>81</sup> And by “literary forms” we include “rhetorical genres.” The

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>80</sup> Crandall, *Drive*, 146.

<sup>81</sup> Bukatman, *Terminal Identity*, 45, 29.

aumateur stands at the crossroads of this shift: using digital media to invent visual rhetorics with a wholly aesthetic dimension by way of, and serviced by, desiring-surveillance (look at this, see that, ubiquitously). The aumateur occupies a node of “terminal culture,” to borrow Bukatman’s term, where “an ontology...may be derived through an ontology of its visual space: the images of a culture which constitutes itself *as* image.”<sup>82</sup> And if an ontological shift, then a metaphysical shift, specifically here in terms of vision, as indicated by ubiquitous desiring-surveillance. By extension, an ideological defacement, which constitutes a grammatological rupture. As such, we must undergo a shift in our understanding and instruction of, and approach towards, rhetoric and writing studies.

We can think this paradigm shift in rhetoric and writing studies, especially as it pertains to the aumateur, in the following, connected framing: (1) as a return to desire-aesthetics, as detailed by Vitanza, which also means a return to an emphasis on style, as explained by Lanham; (2) as situated within the digital institution, as elaborated by Ulmer’s electracy; (3) and for our particular intents and purposes, as orchestrated and inflected by surveillance.

Lanham rethinks the history of rhetoric as an “economics of attention.”<sup>83</sup> In that “rhetoric versus reality”—or an economics of attention versus reality—equates to “style versus substance,” to develop an economics of attention “we will have to embrace a traditional enemy, stylistics self-consciousness.”<sup>84</sup> For, Lanham explains, “it is stylistic self-consciousness that drives much of human invention. We condemn it at our own peril.”<sup>85</sup> And “you don’t have to

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>83</sup> “My own way here will follow my own discipline, the history of human expression, oral and literate—‘rhetoric.’ It has traditionally been defined as the art of persuasion. It might well, though, have been called the economics of attention” (*Economics of Attention*, 21).

<sup>84</sup> Lanham, *Economics of Attention*, 138, 115.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 159.

look far to see what an economics of attention is all about. Just look at the Internet. It is a pure economics of attention.”<sup>86</sup> So enter our electrated rhetoric and writing persona: the amateur.

Lanham’s stylized self-consciousness as a key function of his economics of attention can thus be considered a conceptual ally of Vitanza’s desire-aesthetics, as both share similar and familiar foes, whether directly or indirectly—namely, the over-determination of substance, especially as the ontological guarantor of knowledge, and the rhetorical coveting of subject-ethics. The amateur, in turn, enacts in her electrated rhetoric and writing a focus on style, branding, and desire-aesthetics. The amateur does not write literate rhetoric or writing on a computer screen, following whatever rhetorical ethos of subject-ethics, and consider it a properly digital (and certainly not electrated) rhetoric and writing. The amateur produces the *art* of rhetoric, using all the multi-modal potentials the digital institution has to afford.

We still have yet to consider the amateur’s dealings with that pesky subject of surveillance. Ulmer writes that, “The homesickness that within literacy is a distraction, a side-effect that interferes with education and success, turns out to be the most important qualification for the jump into electracy. How many inventions have been delayed by the inability to recognize a disturbance as an insight?”<sup>87</sup> We can consider surveillance a *disturbance* because of the manner in which it is commonly received and calculated by digital rhetors and writers, how it thus inflects their digital rhetoric and writing as a disturbance rather than a potential insight. This is largely due to the fact that otherwise electrated rhetors and writers still function within the program of literacy: “orality depends on a public self,” Lanham notes, “[while] literacy creates or, depending on who you read, reinforces a private self.”<sup>88</sup> Literacy’s reinforcement of the

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 202.

<sup>87</sup> Ulmer, *Internet Invention*, 76.

<sup>88</sup> Lanham, *Economics of Attention*, 150.

private self thus registers surveillance as a disturbance rather than an opportunity, a potential insight. The opportunity: the expansion and transparency of rhetorico-aesthetic vision, to see and be seen, to see rhetorical art and to have other's see one's own rhetorical art in greater frequency. By extension, the insight: the dissolution of the private self—subjectivity as we have hitherto understood it historically—and, in turn, the exchange of subject-ethics for desire-aesthetics. In this very sense, ubiquitous desiring-surveillance operates only as a “*mediated form of self-scrutiny*.”<sup>89</sup>

But this does not mean the amateur haphazardly throws random pixels onto the digital canvas screen and sees what sticks. As noted before, electronic rhetoric and writing still demands a process of refinement, for “to find the wide image we must learn how to write and reason with our state of mind (attunement, *Stimmung*).”<sup>90</sup> With such in mind, aside from the emergence of augmented reality as a potential rhetorical tool for the amateur, which we have discussed in great detail, Ulmer also suggests digital memorials or monuments. In contradistinction to meat-space memorials, as planned and erected by governments and corporations (the polis), electronic memorials are developed collaboratively throughout the digital chora. The rhetorical potential of such choral collaboration marks a positive, productive aspect of ubiquitous desiring-surveillance for the amateur, what with the various schizoid connections involved (and nonetheless in the service of a communal well-being). “Memorials are not texts but felts,” Ulmer explains,

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<sup>89</sup> Ulmer, *Electronic Monuments*, 101.

<sup>90</sup> Ulmer, *Internet Invention*, 59. Ulmer notes in an interview with *Full Stop*: “The image of wide scope (wide image) is a pattern of four or five basic images that guide imagination in any situation. Einstein is the prototype (appropriately, given his iconic status in our time). The wide image is a manifestation of a person's basic temperament, disposition, which is to say one's ‘genius’ properly understood” (“Teaching in the Margins: Gregory L. Ulmer”).

“including the punning overtone of a category that coheres around a feeling or mood. The image category intensifies the ‘veil’ in ‘surveillance.’”<sup>91</sup>

Arroyo takes up and extends the importance Ulmer places on collaboration, both in her book, *Participatory Composition*, as well as in her recent development of MEMEmorials, a rhetorical genre very much appropriate for the amateur. Concerning participatory collaboration in general, Arroyo remarks that, “Displacing binaries through the generative logic of the *and* complicates traditional efforts to arrest movement to achieve stasis and propels us into a discussion of online video and participatory cultures through which we can see the aforementioned theoretical concepts in action.”<sup>92</sup> Arroyo thus makes clear in terms proper to rhetoric and writing studies the schizoid potential of the conjunctive *and* (as opposed to the neurotic either/or), as detailed at length in Deleuze and Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus*. In terms of pedagogy, and specific to the function of the amateur, such participatory collaboration turns the classroom into a “place for invention rather than reproduction.”<sup>93</sup> Arroyo applies these rhetorical and pedagogical principles to the rhetorical invention of shareable videos, as afforded and mediated by social media platforms such as Youtube—an orientation of rhetorical learning and creation well-suited for the amateur.

Arroyo’s work on MEMEmorials continues her project on participatory collaboration and remixes Ulmer’s electronic memorial concept in a manner specific to the invention and (re)circulation of internet memes. Internet memes (or memetics, in long form) present a pervasive, ubiquitous, colloquial rhetorical collaboration, imitation, and exchange. Limor Shifman explains that, “like many Web 2.0 applications, memes diffuse from person to person,

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<sup>91</sup> Ulmer, *Electronic Monuments*, 167.

<sup>92</sup> Arroyo, *Participatory Composition*, 50.

<sup>93</sup> Ulmer, *Applied Grammatology*, 163-164.

but shape and reflect general social mindsets. The term describes cultural reproduction as driven by various means of copying and imitating—practices that have become essential in digital culture.”<sup>94</sup> In addition to the collaborative, participatory quality of memes, internet memes almost always rely upon the utmost brevity: in common form, two short lines—one above the picture, which establishes the context of the rhetorical point, and one below the picture, which provides the rhetorical punch-line. Such brevity indicates not only the schizoid-like character of what Greg Ulmer terms Flash Reason (a method of reasoning and rhetorical analysis germane to electracy writ large), but it also often relies upon the rhetorical tactic of the joke.<sup>95</sup>

As Ulmer details, the rhetorical function of the joke in electracy, as a heuritic tool potentially used by the amateur and given generic form in the meme, “counters the sadness” we might feel with other rhetorical constructions of equitable brevity (such as Roland Barthes’ *punctum*) “with humor, with the surprise of the joke, again mounted in terms of a methodology, as an emotional guide to the location of significance.”<sup>96</sup> The joke, then, “represents a certain kind of thinking,” “the prototype of a new genre for academic discourse” that organizes a “symbolic code of [rhetorical] narrative.”<sup>97</sup> The amateur’s humorous meme thus rhetorically uses the signaling of the joke, as indicated by Ulmer, in a participatory and collaborative, inventive, desire-aesthetic manner. Diane Davis’s *Breaking Up [at] Totality: A Rhetoric of Laughter* unpacks some of the theoretical consequences the joke (and laughter) might have for rhetoric and writing as it is commonly understood and practiced, especially with regard to our own nuanced concerns. In that the rhetorical joke performs a stylized self-consciousness (the classic rhetorical

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<sup>94</sup> Limor Shifman, *Memes in Digital Culture* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2013), 4.

<sup>95</sup> In my own interpretation, Flash Reason operates as the electracy counterpart to literate reflection/contemplation. In that digital technologies have significantly accelerated our sense of temporality, causing what Bernard Stiegler terms a “disorientation” (see: *Technics and Time, Vol. II*), Flash Reason offers a new mode of reasoning, one that operates in now-time, and not much different from the general principles of abduction.

<sup>96</sup> Ulmer, *Teletheory*, 29.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 74, 73.



function of delivery is, of course, key here), it engages a desire-aesthetics of the third sophistic rather than that of biunivocal logic-totalities (as the title eponymously denotes). A “pedagogy of laughter,” as a variant pedagogy of *écriture féminine* and the feminine pedagogy of desire-aesthetics, would “mimic phallic authority in the classroom in a way that would pervert its authenticity.”<sup>98</sup> We can apply this to desiring-surveillance: using the phallic inscription of paranoiac desiring-surveillance in the rhetoric and writing classroom as a means by which to pervert—and subvert—such paranoiac desiring-surveillance for the service of feminized, schizoid desiring-surveillance (and all the desire-aesthetic potential that comes with it).<sup>99</sup>

So what of the rhetorical *ethos* of the aumateur, especially if categorically without subject-ethics? Davis notes:

...we have lost our criteria for “responsible action.” Today, promoting an ethics of responsibility based on a knowing and autonomous subject is anything but responsible. The question, then, is what can responsibility and decision be now if “they must be thought in terms of our relationship to language?” (Cadava, “Toward” 5), if they must be thought in terms of our Being-on-the-drug-of-language, of our addiction to “tropium”? What can responsibility, an ethics of decision, amount to if “*the call*” is actually a scramble of calls, a *dissoi paralogoi*, a schizoid hail that remains unattached to a *clear* and *present* signified? (*Breaking Up [at] Totality* 113).

Davis clearly invokes here not only Avitall Ronell’s *The Telephone Book*—and the Heideggarian call to “care” and “concern” which Ronell argues has been scrambled, polluted with white noise, even disconnected, answered only now by some spectre or ghost—but also Vitanza and Deleuze and Guattari. The aumateur, rhetorically inventing with post- and extra-literate methods of electrated composition, never receives *the call* from paranoiac desiring-surveillance. Those power

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<sup>98</sup> D. Diane Davis, *Breaking Up [at] Totality* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press, 2000), 241.

<sup>99</sup> Here we do not mean to rob Peter to pay Paul, as it were—to switch from the phallic-masculine to the feminine in a binary sense (such thinking is always already phallic-masculine, biunivocal). We refer to the feminine here, rather, as a conceptual sign of “excess,” as essential to the project of desire-aesthetics of the third sophistic as non-essentialist. We should again consider, that is, “the excess that gets sacrificed for the clarity of the One” (*Breaking Up [at] Totality*, 113).

lines have been cut. How does the non-subject of the aumateur—operating on the frequency of desire-aesthetics and schizophrenically plugged into endless connections already and at once—answer *any call* regarding subject-ethics? The aumateur has already used—*is already using*—all the *excess* lines—left dangling in the history of literate rhetoric and writing—to now recircuit desire-aesthetics into cross-combinations, looping and intersecting. No more biunivocal calls from subject-ethics; all lines are busy. She has created a new approach to rhetoric and writing; she has appropriated desiring-surveillance in a schizoid soldering.

Or, as Davis puts it:

A posthumanist ethics ought not be about shutting down the flow but about opening it up, pulling back the stops. An ethics for our time may require that we learn to hear the Laughter-in-language, that we affirm it, and that we join in with it: that we laugh with the Laughter that is laughing language...before we “hasten to decide” anything, anytime. (*Breaking Up [at] Totality* 114).

So reconnect *all* the lines—rhetorico-aesthetically, the aumateur cries—*no*—laughs out loud. Rescramble them—chorally—in a schizoid leap that effectively laughs *at* subject-ethics and its phallic-masculine forefathers and siblings (*respectfully, of course*): literate, biunivocal rhetorical logic and paranoiac desiring-surveillance (respectively). We have offered various digital mediums, platforms, and vehicles through which the aumateur persona can develop, can (re)arrange and (re)appropriate rhetorical expression, and further how can we teach such. Yet in order to be effective and sincere, all these rhetorical expressions and teachings must advance the rhetorical precepts we hold to be thetically necessary: desire-aesthetics, electrated models of thought and enunciation, and participatory and collaborative modes of compositional engagement. From the primary disturbance of (desiring-)surveillance we arrive at the secondary insight and potential of the aumateur, a rhetorical persona fit for the desire-aesthetic beckon of electracy in general, and for schizoid desiring-surveillance in particular. With what is afforded

by desiring-surveillance, and noting the imperative of a return to desire-aesthetics, the Chorus sings: *How do you choose to image yourself?*

CHAPTER 5  
FINALE: SURVEILLEINT MONTAGE AND THE RHETORIC THEREIN

*WARNING [FROM THE CENTRAL SCRUTINIZER]: The auditorium is empty; the auditorium is full. Same thing—same thing as before and after. (No, not either before or after). We know you people: entering through exits, exiting through entrances. The faithful lot of you parade on stage now, anyhow. The rest of you who don't believe, for whatever reason, sit there and watch, anyway. Those on stage still yet watch you lesser-than-believers, too. Makes no difference if you believe: the show continues. This is our one defense of science (as analogue). We have nothing profound for you, in case you were wondering. The white zone...it doesn't matter: you've all been cited/sited/sighted. Poor Joe. Can you see him yet?*

**Introduction: Beginning of the End**

So [said the doctor]. Now vee may perhaps begin. Yes?

—Philip Roth

Deleuze and Guattari, to refresh:

[D]own below, there are desires, investments of desire that cannot be confused with the investments of interest, and on which interests depend in their determination and distribution: an enormous flux, all kinds of libidinal-unconscious flows that make up the delirium of this society. The true story is the history of desire. A capitalist, or today's technocrat, does not desire in the same way as a slave merchant or official of the ancient Chinese empire would. That people in a society desire repression, both for others and for themselves, that there are always people who want to bug others and who have the opportunity to do so, the 'right' to do so, it is this that reveals the problem of a deep link between libidinal desire and the social domain. A 'disinterested' love for the oppressive machine: Nietzsche said some beautiful things about this permanent triumph of slaves, on how the embittered, the depressed and the weak, impose their mode of life upon us all. (An Interview with Deleuze/Guattari: Capitalism, A Very Special Delirium)

This citation is redundant, of course, at this point in the opera. Desire as primary and productive, indeed, and desiring-surveillance of two potential poles: paranoid and schizoid. The manner in which the State or Capital desires differs from how we desire, cathect our desire, and

properly so. Yet our desiring-surveillance often reflects that of State and Capital desiring-surveillance: paranoiac desiring-surveillance that only reproduces and reinscribes State desiring-surveillance (the despot) and, by extension, Capital dataveillance (the engineering profiteer). Such a rhetoric (re)produces a rhetoric: subject-signification, subject-ethics, biunivocality. This rhetorical formation, however, only represses: desire-repressing-desire. As such, an aesthetic expansion of vision, horizontally and vertically, as afforded by all the extensions of electracy, and of all its virtualities and potentialities waiting to be tapped—met only with a repression. A desire-repressing-desire reproducing a desire-repressing-desire, too often in the service of State and Capital, and not just in terms of logic but also in rhetorical formation. That rhetorical repression has not changed, has for too many centuries, ages, epochs continually reannounced and reinscribed itself: repression of the endlessly over-flowing desire-aesthetics of the third sophistic.

Vitanza's desire-aesthetic of the third sophistic: have you not guessed it yet? Clearly not a subject-ethics of subject-signification, of some subjugation, by definition; yet neither some orgiastic play of fetish, some sado-masochiastic dance rendering, orchestrating, justifying nonsense. We are not in the business of exchanging one foolishness and violence for another and another; we care nothing for Peter or Paul. Trap your desire, attend to it—which is to say, yes, recalling even Lacan, attend to your object-desires, that partial object a/part of you: not to desire the other, but to have the other desire. Have we (selfishly) missed this clue in desiring-surveillance all along? Whose mask do you think you wear, anyway? Always an/others. (And yes, this means you rhetoric and composition, as a field: not an identifiable graveyard, a place for digging ditches to drop in bodies and summarize a subject's meaning in so many words, for checking off rubric boxes of intent and execution, but as a playground. And how we rhetorically

invent and write follows, in both instruction and in scholarly practice: “new dreams! new dreams! There is no truth.”<sup>1</sup>).

With all the talk about electracy—ubicomputing, digital institution, cyberspace, emergence, whatever, what have you—a principle mark: networked, linked, participatory bodies. We are only seeing each other, in the necessary plural, because the *I* has been subsumed by the *we*. What? You think this whole operatic form was just a gag? The subject is dead, kiddo! Above all, consider the small print of this opera’s program, the central exigency of electracy: the need for a new metaphysics commensurate with our immersion in the digital institution. We are all in this together—but we enjoy it, perpetuate it, reproduce it. So how to make it—this desiring-surveillance—more productive, more empowering and, for our intents and purposes, translatable to rhetoric and writing studies? For every rhetoric a persona mask—and what to make, then, of a rhetoric *unseen*? We do not need to be paranoid, shirking back into our subject-shells—(back into the dug ditch, awaiting the tombstone transcription, that final and impossible mark); we can use the hyper-visibility of desiring-surveillance in a schizoid fashion, in a way that takes everyday rhetorical invention as utterly naked and exposed and as open for all matters and manners of development and extension. A rhetoric to fashion a potential rhetoric to come: we have only ourselves to fear.

But people fear change. People are paranoid. Plato decried literate writing; Luddites destroyed industrial machines; Puritans smashed Beatles records and turntables. Television will rot your mind. Telephones killed the art of the letter; in turn, of course, email and online instant messaging services killed the art of the phone call. But nobody is degenerating here; in fact, by

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<sup>1</sup> William Butler Yeats, “The Song of the Happy Shepherd.”

and large, we find ourselves over and over all the better with each and every apparatus and medium shift. Lest you want to worship the sun and all....

Does our shift into the digital institution mean that scary “they” (State, Capital) have greater inspective potential into and over our lives? Sure. But only relative to how it already existed in meat-space. Remember: technical machines, desiring-machines, abstract machines, and appropriations thereof. The Dark Side and Jedis draw from the same Force well: for whatever “they” have, “we” have, too. Advances in technology do not change the fundamental organization of this assemblage. Like meat-space surveillance never existed, by way of Panopticon royal science logics or the sovereign’s representation of subjects; peeping-toms armed with binoculars, or Galileo looking out elsewhere and saying, aha!; algorithms that tracked shopping and viewing habits pre-internet. How desiring-surveillance potentially arms the schizoid war machine of rhetoric confronts in contradistinction only itself: only subjects of a slave-morality call it a Devil’s toy, dismiss it and all of its he(u)retic possibilities. Priests, abstractly understood, unfold the scene of any repression.<sup>2</sup> So don’t be a priest, and don’t be the subject of the priesthood, either. Write, and teach how to write, new hymns—hymns not derivative of, or contingent to, a literate apparatus that produces only rhetorics of a marked subject, a rhetoric of a linear notation that Derrida tried once to dream away.<sup>3</sup> If they give you lined paper, don’t write the other way; instead, draw a comic, make a meme, invent a viral rhetorical scheme that contagions all.<sup>4</sup>

In any case, *as though* digital space should be more private than that of public space. As though the very assemblages of power who first granted you such a sense of subjectivity (and by

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<sup>2</sup> Deleuze and Guattari note in *A Thousand Plateaus*: “Every time desire is betrayed, cursed, or uprooted from its field of immanence, a priest is behind it” (154).

<sup>3</sup> See Derrida’s remarks on linearization in *Of Grammatology*, 85-86.

<sup>4</sup> Ray Bradbury once said, “If they give you lined paper, write the other way.”

extension, privacy) are going to suddenly take it away. Until one of you gets hauled away, here is what you are doing: reproducing the very concerns of subject-signification that has always already been at the heart of the issue. Take a tip from Hasan M. Elahi (see: Act 3). Take a tip from the electeur, the (e)choro, the aumateur. Take a tip from ourselves: the only ethos worth our time now is that of desire-aesthetics—which is to say, there is nothing to hide, except that which must and has always been necessarily hidden....

How many ways to *frame* surveillance, with surveillance having always been an issue of *framing*? Surveillance has always been necessarily subject-oriented, necessarily rhetorical. Towards a schizoid desiring-surveillance: enjoy it, relish in it, find ways in which, through desire-aesthetics, you can augment the well-being of yourself and others. Do we not like to see each other? Is that not what we are doing—amidst all this paranoiac desiring-surveillance a certain schizoid desiring-surveillance replete with so much potential? To see ourselves, to see each other, to see again and differently, surveillance in a different rhetorical schematic.

And so, some final bricolage.



## Rhetorical Figures: Revue

Technology of the Fantastic: a permanent conspiracy against the realities of the external world. It defines completely new relationships between *site*, *program*, *form*, and *technology*. The *site* has now become a miniature state: the *program* its ideology; and *architecture* the arrangement of the technological apparatus that compensates for the loss of real physicality.

—Rem Koolhaas

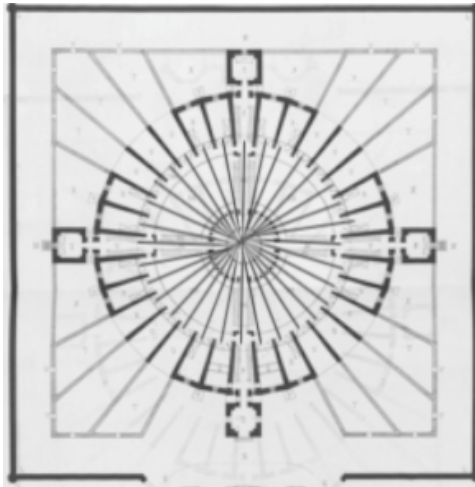


Figure 5-1. Ubiquitous vertical desiring-surveillance. Claim: The sovereign is always watching the subjects, or at least one must assume such (i.e., Big Brother is watching you!). Example: Velázquez's *Las Meninas*; classical conceptions of the Panopticon.

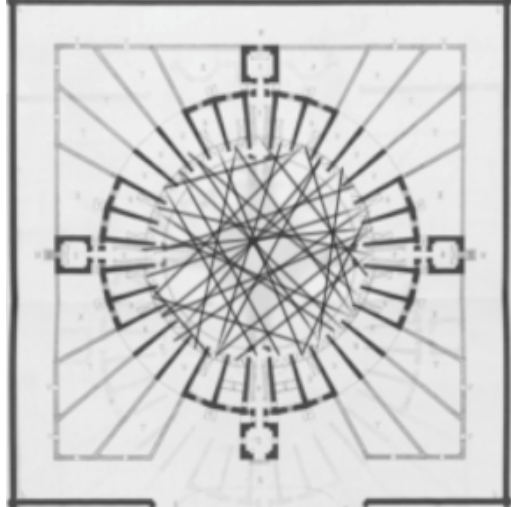


Figure 5-2. Ubiquitous horizontal desiring-surveillance. Claim: We are all watching each other, or at least we must assume such (i.e., Big Brother is watching the other siblings, and the other siblings likewise watching Big Brother, with Parental approval of the ensuing sibling rivalry). Example: Neighborhood Watch; *COPS* and *America's Most Wanted*; social media platforms; DOH's "If You See Something, Say Something."



Figure 5-3. Nomadic/schizoid desiring-surveillance. Claim: We watch ourselves watch ourselves and—*epiphanically*—derive a new vision (i.e., all Big Brothers write themselves, paint themselves, with Parents killed in the margins). Example: Paranoid-critical-method; or: we tell us.

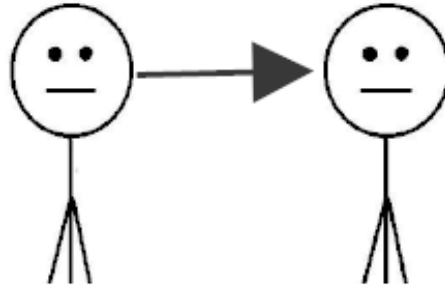


Figure 5-4. Classical surveillance: sovereign forms, watches, and mediates subjects. Corollary: Figure 1.

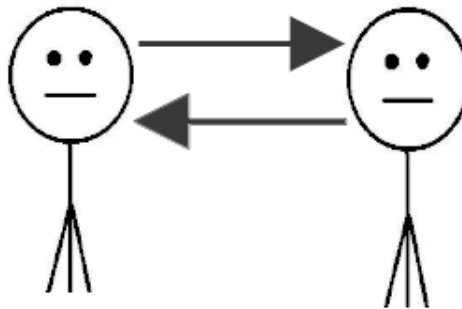


Figure 5-5. Modern surveillance: classical surveillance appropriated and embedded into social design and architecture, wherein subjects watch and cross-mediate each other. Corollary: Figure 2.

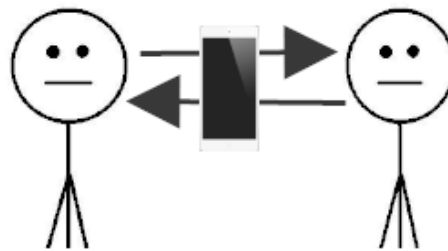


Figure 5-6. Electrate surveillance: hyper- and cyber-mediated cross-surveillance; desiring-surveillance; potential for escape from subject-ethics and towards desire-aesthetics. Corollary: Figure 3.

## Double Aria, One: Paranoid-Critical Method (Another Note on Strategy)

If they can get you asking the wrong questions, they don't have to worry about the answers.

—Thomas Pynchon

We can subvert the rhetoric of paranoiac desiring-surveillance internally—not through a strategic resistance to it, but rather through a tactical reappropriation of it. Paranoiac desiring-surveillance still reveals—axiomatically, eponymously—a desire for surveillance, and only the manner in which such desire is appropriated, applied, and reproduced, via all the ruses of rhetorical production, do we arrive at the *problem* that prompts this entire opera. After all, desiring-surveillance—whether schizoid or paranoiac—indicates various electrating shifts that remain relatively politically neutral: ontological shifts in subjectivity and being; metaphysical shifts in vision and aesthetics; phenomenological shifts in spatio-temporality, etc. How these shifts are captured and folded into assemblages of power, however, and how we rhetorically treat such ensuing tendencies remains *virtually* and *potentially* open. More particularly, how we approach this new territory in ways specific to rhetoric and writing studies figures as our own nuanced concern.

Salvador Dalí's Paranoid-Critical Method (PCM) offers a desire-aesthetic means for inverting and subverting instances of paranoia into instances of schizoid aesthetic pleasure. Rem Koolhaas notes in *Delirious New York* that,

as the name suggests, Dalí's Paranoid-Critical Method is a sequence of two consecutive but discrete operations: 1. the synthetic reproduction of the paranoiac's way of seeing the world in new light—with its rich harvest of unsuspected correspondences, analogies and patterns; and 2. the compression of these gaseous speculations to a critical point where they achieve the density of fact: the critical part of the method consists of the fabrication of objectifying "souvenirs" of the paranoid tourism, of concrete evidence that brings the "discoveries" of those excursions back to the rest of mankind, ideally in forms as obvious and undeniable as snapshots. (238).

For the sake of perspective, let us also give an example:

[One] night Dalí has a dream involving “eroticism and lions. After I was fully awake, I was surprised by the persistence of the lions’ roars that I had just heard in my sleep. These roars were mingled with the cries of ducks and other animals more difficult to differentiate. This was followed by complete silence. The silence, broken only by roars and savage cries, was so unlike the din that I had expected—that of an immense ‘modern and mechanical’ city—that I felt completely lost....”

But the lions’ roar is real.

Directly under Dalí’s window are the lions of the Central Park Zoo, Paranoid-Critical “souvenir” of a “jungle” that never existed there. Three revisions and the European myth of Manhattan disintegrates. (262).

We can unpack and apply such a method, as detailed by Koolhaas, to our opera and rhetoric and writing studies quite easily. First, we might recall the rhetorical figures presented in the preceding Act (namely, the electeur) and consider how a method might be applied to a more paranoiac tendency of walking in the digital architecture of the “cyber city.” As we have already discussed, instead of avoiding the “cyber city” in the subterranean dwellings of the “dark” and “deep” web in a fearful fashion, we can instead make rhetorical use of such paranoia—capture it as such, refashion it into a memento, and recirculate it as a schizoid object of rhetorical pleasure (i.e., PCM as desire-aesthetic process). For example, if you, your rhetoric, and rhetorical persona are being watched, then capture such surveillance rhetorically and refigure it into something of rhetorical import. Consider again, for example, Hasan M. Elahi’s voluntary surveillance jamming (see: Act 2). In other words, when teaching rhetoric and writing in the context of surveillance, we do not need to preach (as teacher-priests) digital invisibility and protection of one’s self or identity (subjectivity and identity politics gone awry). Rather, we can teach the rhetorical capture of surveillance as a means for exaggerated hyper-visibility, tactically working from within the potentials of desiring-surveillance, exploiting desiring-surveillance rhetorically in a desire-aesthetic fashion.<sup>5</sup> In performing the latter, pedagogically and in practice, we

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<sup>5</sup> Cultural studies has long used this method of exaggeration as tactic of resistance: if the cultural fashion and practice of urban black youth, for example is to sag pants, and if the hegemonic white majoritarian community

reproduce the paranoid tendency of desiring-surveillance in a way that creates clever, aesthetic, rhetorical mementos of a schizoid, liberatory variety.

Moreover, we can clearly see how the Paranoid-Critical Method works rather seamlessly with schizoanalysis, especially in terms of machinic desire and desiring-machines. As we have elaborated at length in previous Acts, paranoia constitutes only a particular tendency of a *primary* economy of desire *qua* desire: both within it and from it, the reproduction of the despot, striated space, territorialization, re- and over-coding, subject-signification, molarization, the priesthood, etc. The practical applications of such, for our intents and purposes: writing program administration, normalized rubrics, standardized writing, rhetorical subject-ethics, priest-instructors, “digital literacy” writ large. Digital desiring-surveillance, as operating within the ever-unfolding advent of electracy, and as coupled with the PCM, offers a different line of flight: “Paranoid-critical activity is the the fabrication of evidence for unprovable speculations and the subsequent grafting of this evidence on the world” and that, “through [such] conceptual recycling, the worn, consumed contents of the world can be recharged or enriched like uranium.”<sup>6</sup> In other words, the PCM illustrates how we can subvert paranoid desiring-surveillance for the production of schizoid desiring-surveillance as *site*, *context*, and/or *arena* for better understanding the rhetoric and writing goals of this opera in general: from subject-ethics to desire-aesthetics; from hermeneutics to heuretics; from digital literacy to electracy, etc.

The application of the PCM to desiring-surveillance, and the potential revolutionary consequences of such for rhetoric and writing, cannot be over-stated:

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attempts to capture and signify such a practice as “gangster,” “thug,” or “violent,” then do not pursue the Submissive-Cosby Method and change such a fashion or practice in a paranoid fashion. Instead, exaggerate the practice even more—rendering the practice as a key site of dialogue and resistance and markedly reclaiming the practice as owned by the minoritarian community which first developed it.

<sup>6</sup> Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York*, 241.

The PCM proposes to destroy, or at least upset, the definitive catalogue, to short-circuit all existing categorizations, to make a fresh start—as if the world can be reshuffled like a pack of cards whose original sequence is a disappointment. PC activity is like cheating with the last moves of a game of solitaire that refuses to come out, or like banging a piece into a jigsaw puzzle so that it sticks, if not fits. PC activity ties the loose ends left by the rationalism of Enlightenment finally together. (*Delirious New York*, 243).

As we can see, we have come full circle: from Velázquez’s early Enlightenment portrait, *Las Meninas*, to the rationalism of Bentham’s Panopticon, to the literate subject-ethics of modernity, to the advent of electracy and desire-aesthetics. As with any proper approach to a given assemblage, we have used desiring-surveillance to approach the necessary advance of desire-aesthetic rhetoric and electracy, and we have used desire-aesthetic rhetoric and electracy to approach desiring-surveillance—and all the baggage therein.

We thus arrive, quite fittingly, at the PCM as a concluding gesture. Throughout this opera—within the opera itself, even—we have noted time and again the importance of architecture, especially as abstractly understood as construction or enclosure, both in physical and conceptual terms. After all, desiring-surveillance—i.e., even surveillance itself—becomes a meaningless practice or concept without a certain architecture giving it form. As such, as Koolhaas notes, “architecture is inevitably a form of PC activity,” and “what Noah needed was reinforced concrete. What Modern Architecture needs is a flood.”<sup>7</sup> We can say the same, applied here: not to be enclosed, or rendered invisible in the face of desiring-surveillance architecture, but rather to be rendered hyper-visible; not to capture the ordered biunivocality of literate subject-ethics, but rather to open the floods of ever-excessive desire-aesthetics.

Koolhaas’s use of PCM “is defined by Dalí in mostly tantalizing formulas: ‘the spontaneous method of irrational knowledge based on the critical and systematic objectifications

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 246; 249.

of delirious associations and interpretations.”<sup>8</sup> We can think here of the schizoid desire-aesthetic potential of the conjunctive “and, and, and” as opposed to the paranoiac-neurotic biunivocal order of “either/or”—and what such can provide rhetoric and writing paradigmatically as well as to post-subject-ethics desiring-surveillance. After all, regarding the conceptualization of Radio City Music Hall: “I didn’t conceive of the idea, I dreamed it. I believe in creative dreams.”<sup>9</sup> From the night terrors of literate subject-ethics and paranoiac desiring-surveillance (as one in the same assemblage), then, to the dreams of electrated desire-aesthetic rhetoric and writing and schizoid desiring-surveillance. As sung by the chorus in Act 3: *that we can become into a dream: “a dream from which there is no waking up.”*<sup>10</sup>

### **Double Aria, Two: Rhetorically Escaping into Yourself (Yet Another Note on Strategy)**

Language is the house of Being.

—Martin Heidegger

Whereas Dalí’s PCM focuses on art proper methods for rhetorically inverting and resisting paranoia, Burroughs’ language games present a similar rhetorical aesthetic, only with language proper in mind. Both Deleuze and Guattari and Burroughs echo the manner in which the nuances of language grammatically construct the socius: that is, the question of ideology begins with, and departs from, our everyday use of language.<sup>11</sup> As has been the case throughout this opera, however, the question of everyday language (including the formation of rhetorics) stems from primary and productive desire. (To refresh, this means ideology does not dupe us, does not arrive in a wholly unconscious manner; rather, it indicates a desire for various ideologies as arranged by linguistic markers). Much of the paranoid language informing the

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 237, Dalí qtd.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 211, Samuel Rothafel (aka Roxy) qtd.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 294.

<sup>11</sup> We have recursively noted in previous chapters how Deleuze and Guattari conceptualize the fascist logic of linguistics: the order-word, subject-signification, biunivocal logic, etc.



dominant ideological approach to surveillance—whether a paranoid fear of surveillance or a concession of surveillance to the State (also by way of paranoia)—actually does not inform at all: the language of surveillance studies *is* the ideology of surveillance.

Either instance of surveillance paranoia noted above stems from coveted ideologies that themselves stem from linguistic practices: I am a fixed subject; they are going to attack us; either we have disagreeable surveillance, or we have no surveillance at all, etc. In other words, “there are certain formulas, word-locks, which will lock up a whole civilization for a thousand years.”<sup>12</sup> Thus, in order to rethink the rhetoric of surveillance and move towards a desiring-surveillance of the schizoid variety, Burroughs says that we must first rethink the grammar of our rhetoric: “delete the copula (is/are); replace definite articles with indefinite articles; replace ‘either/or’ with ‘and.’”<sup>13</sup> With such a linguistic task, we begin to erode the assumptions and premises that inform a paranoid rhetoric of surveillance.

It should come as no surprise that Burroughs’ approach to language (and the grammar of being) appears nearly identical at times to Deleuze and Guattari’s, as both Burroughs and Deleuze and Guattari attended and contributed to the Schizo Culture conference in November of 1975. At this conference, Burroughs also provided a worthy explanation of Deleuze and Guattari’s schizolalytic project: “I think the ‘schizo-culture’ here is being used in rather a special sense. Not referring rather to clinical schizophrenia but to the fact that the culture is divided up into all sorts of classes and groups, etc., and that some of the old lines are breaking down, and that this is a healthy sign.”<sup>14</sup> With an emphasis on language, writing, and rhetoric, this opera attempts (or attempted) to continue breaking down these lines, or at least to begin a

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<sup>12</sup> Burroughs, *The Job* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989), 49.

<sup>13</sup> Burroughs and Brion Gysin, “Rub Out the Word” in the *Third Mind* (New York: Viking, 1978).

<sup>14</sup> Burroughs, “Q&A” in *Schizo Culture: The Event* (Cambridge: Semiotext(e), 2014), 161.

breaking down process anew in the (seeming) event these lines have since been recemented, particularly with regard to the question of surveillance.

Steven Soderbergh's *Schizopolis* (1996) cinematically and rhetorically takes up this task of dissolving assumed boundaries of language, narrative, desire, and surveillance. While we cannot remark on the actual method used, the film's non-linear plot and scrambling of scenes reflects in execution Burroughs' cut-up method. Indeed, the form of the film agrees with the rhetorical content: characters are randomly followed and filmed; characters become split and doubled, wherein one character will spy on his/her doppelgänger; dialogue is reduced to generic relays and later translated into random languages.<sup>15</sup> In short, the film makes several thematic points regarding language and rhetoric, desire, and surveillance as applicable to Burroughs and Deleuze and Guattari: none of us are fixed, marked off subjects; we are all watching each other, which is to say watching ourselves; and we often desire the diminished capacity of convenient conversational content rather than the potential intensity of expression.

When considering Burroughs, we must also touch explicitly upon the question of control, particularly as it relates to the rhetoric of surveillance. As already developed above, we would argue that the language informing a paranoid rhetoric of surveillance instantiates a control far more pervasive than actual (or even potential) surveillance practices. As Burroughs notes in several of his works, words become a virus; the word virus, transmitted through the vector of language, demands speech and enunciation; in turn, our daily use of speech reproduces assumed conditions of being and control (order-words, subject-signification, biunivocal logic, etc.). As this opera intends to do, we must change the language and rhetoric of surveillance as a proper critical approach to surveillance, for "he who opposes force with counterforce alone forms that

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<sup>15</sup> By generic relays, for example: Fletcher: Generic greeting; Wife: Generic greeting returned; Fletcher: Imminent sustenance; Wife: Overly dramatic statement regarding upcoming meal; Fletcher: Oooh, false reaction indicating hunger and excitement.

which he opposes and is formed by it.”<sup>16</sup> In other words, to continually reproduce through language and rhetoric the concepts of subjectivity and paranoia as a resistance to surveillance only reaffirms the paranoiac-despot formation of the State and surveillance. We must instead change our entire metaphysical orientation towards surveillance, beginning with the adjustment of various precepts of language and being in literate rhetorics.

All that being as it may, David Cronenberg’s *Scanners* (1981) presents an interesting thought experiment, especially in relation to the concept of control societies imagined by Deleuze and Guattari and Burroughs. Instead of the typical rendering of a dystopic future of total State surveillance, *Scanners* imagines a future or alternate world where certain individuals (scanners) appear cursed with the congenital ability to surveil other people’s minds. The ability of scanners is represented as an affliction because they cannot turn off their ability, often leading them to lives of social isolation. The security corporation in the film, ConSec, wants to inject pregnant women with a drug, ephemerol, that would produce in their children the scanning ability, thus allowing ConSec to create a scanning-abled army that would lead to global domination. The point here regarding surveillance and control: one man’s affliction is another machine’s or assemblage’s prize—it’s about desire and appropriation.

**Dramaturg: Deleuzians against Deleuzians; Deleuze against Deleuze; for Deleuze**

This sucks.

—Beavis and Butthead

Michel Foucault’s prediction that “one day, perhaps, this century will be called Deleuzian” might not be far off the mark.<sup>17</sup> Whether a playful joke or jab (as Deleuze himself took it), or as a sincere and speculative observation, we cannot say. To be sure, we increasingly

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<sup>16</sup> Burroughs, *The Job*, 101.

<sup>17</sup> Michel Foucault, “Theatrum Philosophicum,” *Critique* 282 (1977), 165.

find no shortage of Deleuzians in the realm of theory, whether in the discipline of pure philosophy or as applied to another discipline (such as is done in this opera). Many scholars now use Deleuze retrospectively to understand the past (twentieth) century, but even more use Deleuze to figure the present and contemporary, and to speculate on what might come ahead in the twenty-first century (again, as this opera does). Indeed, Deleuze has noted that, when constructing the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* books, he and Guattari sought to alter the function of the philosophy book: rather than have a book-as-box with contents that one had to collect and understand, Deleuze and Guattari wanted to create a book-as-box without any contents.<sup>18</sup> Deleuze and Guattari thus pursued a profound task where method and content met: a generative, conductive philosophy schematic that did not only invent new concepts but, by virtue of those concepts, implored the invention of new concepts.<sup>19</sup>

Deleuze and Guattari's pursuits, however, have not always been met with positive reception. Slavoj Žižek's *Organs Without Bodies*, for example, differentiates "good" Deleuze from "bad" Deleuze: in short, "good" Deleuze includes all of Deleuze's early work, such as *Difference and Repetition* on through his treatment of various philosophers (Spinoza, Kant, Hume, Nietzsche, etc.); "bad" Deleuze, on the other hand, according to Žižek, concerns his Guattarian perversion later in life. Why? After all, Deleuze always considered his treatment of earlier philosophers as a "taking from behind"—enough respect to write on, of, and about them, but nevertheless as a potential to take them, pervert (if even subtly) their thought from lines of flight unanticipated and otherwise unseen, so to speak. That is, Deleuze was always already

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<sup>18</sup> See: Gilles Deleuze's *Negotiations*. Deleuze has also indicated that he wanted the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* books to have profound meaning for (to use one of his examples) a teenager with no background in philosophy. Deleuze found great pleasure in receiving letters from various people without any proper philosophical background or training who found meaning in his works, such as a surfer who wrote to him explaining the significance of "the fold" in surfing culture.

<sup>19</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 54.

perverted in thought and intellectual method. Likewise, we can consider the Schizophrenia and Capitalism project as an extension of some of the fundamental concepts presented in *Difference and Repetition*, extended only with schizoanalytic (re)configurations. In short, of course a Lacanian pseudo-marxist theorist would dislike the Deleuze-Guattari affair.<sup>20</sup>

The question of the “bad Deleuze” put aside, however, we nonetheless have to wrestle with the question of the “bad Deleuzian.” The rapid influx of Deleuzians—as Foucault had predicted—has created quite the wellspring of animosity and in-fighting: debates about the misappropriation, misapplication, or misunderstanding of Deleuze’s thought abound. (Just go to a Deleuze Studies conference if you do not believe us).<sup>21</sup> In an interview with *Theory, Culture, and Society*, Galloway suggests that “we must forget Deleuze. It’s troubling to admit, given how influential Deleuze has been on my own thinking. But it’s imperative today that we forget Deleuzianism in all its many guises.”<sup>22</sup> In quite the cutting manner, Galloway goes on to note three specific denominations of Deleuzian discipleship that must be dismissed: “Google Deleuzians,” “Carl Sagan Deleuzians,” and “Wet Diaper Deleuzians.” Google Deleuzians, according to Galloway, see the world as nothing but a collection of systems and assemblages.<sup>23</sup> Carl Sagan Deleuzians, on the other hand, view the world as a beautiful and endless string of

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<sup>20</sup> Žižek notes that the univocal (univocity) ontological substrate that informs much of Deleuze’s earlier work, particularly with regard to Deleuze’s subscription to Spinoza’s and John Duns Scotus’ thought, becomes lost in his later work, notably after his intellectual partnership with Guattari. This is a misunderstanding, a poor reading. How Deleuze and Guattari reject a biunivocal construction of being in terms of everyday practice and construction does not conflict with either of their ideas of being in terms of ontological primacy. If anything, the concept of desire as primary—in contradistinction to “lack”—denotes an ontological substrate that remains relatively congruent with Deleuze’s earlier philosophical posits, extending out through all endless multiplicities (to recall Spinoza).

<sup>21</sup> For example, some (tragic) Deleuzians, in the most counter-intuitive manner, will debate whether or not Deleuze was more of a Spinoza-type ontological univocity thinker, or more of a Scotus-type ontological univocity thinker. Point is: nobody cares because such doesn’t matter, at least not within the purview of Deleuzian thought.

<sup>22</sup> Alexander Galloway interviewed by David M. Berry, “A Network is a Network is a Network: Reflections on the Computational and Societies of Control,” *Theory, Culture, & Society* 0 (0), 7, 2015.

<sup>23</sup> We must wonder if Manuel DeLanda is implicitly indicted here.

multiplicities. “For the Carl Sagan Deleuzians,” Galloway remarks, “ontology means awesome-ology.”<sup>24</sup> Yet Galloway seems to genuinely despise Wet Diaper Deleuzians (hence the name):

For the Wet Diaper Deleuzian, everything is a desiring machine driven by an endless reserve of polymorphous perversity. They giggle and cry, suckle and shit, fall down and get back up. The world is a giant sandbox, filled with toys. Everyone they meet is a potential Father or Master that might threaten their desire, someone to be dethroned, debased, even killed. Each act becomes a doll house revolution—off with their heads! (8)

While we can appreciate the play on Deleuze’s own words regarding desiring-machines on the first page of *Anti-Oedipus*, we find it difficult to stomach the tone with which Galloway delivers these criticisms, despite their dramatic flair. Are they even criticisms at all, at least in terms of being constructive, generative, or substantive? Because of Deleuze’s (and Guattari’s) methods, as noted above, he makes for an easy target: how silly, indeed, we can make desire, assemblages, machines, multiplicities, etc. seem when presented as armchair juvenilia daydreaming peppered with clever *ad hominem* attack. Perhaps Deleuze deserves such a mode of criticism, however, when one considers the dismissive tone and sarcasm he and Guattari used when engaging psychoanalysis and Marxism in their own *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* books. Galloway does note that he is “poking fun” in his remarks, and that “the problem is less with Deleuze himself than with a certain kind of Deleuzian School that has arisen since his death.”<sup>25</sup> Essentially, Galloway argues that the “Deleuze of ‘72” receives far too much attention, memorialization and, subsequently, fetishization, while the “Deleuze of ‘90”—the more radical Deleuze, Galloway contends—is the (more) forgotten Deleuze worth remembering.<sup>26</sup> Galloway concludes by noting that, “while we forget Deleuze we should also remember him. We should

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<sup>24</sup> Galloway, 8.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>26</sup> By “Deleuze of ‘72,” Galloway seems to indicate Deleuze’s work on schizoanalysis, rhizomatics, nomadology, etc. By the “Deleuze of ‘90,” Galloway appears to indicate Deleuze’s work on philosophical method, immanence, and control societies, broadly speaking.

remember Deleuze the anti-fascist. We should remember Deleuze the thinker of materialism and immanence. We should remember Deleuze the communist.”<sup>27</sup>

*Is Galloway’s Deleuze the Deleuze we should remember? Is such Deleuze the thinker?*<sup>28</sup>

While Žižek enjoys the pre-’72 Deleuze and Galloway has a taste for the ’90-era Deleuze (with both having an allergy to the ’72-era Deleuze), both seem to arrive at their positions via a certain aesthetic determination.<sup>29</sup> Few thinkers have created such an intellectual persona as Deleuze has (perhaps taking his cue from Nietzsche), and this persona, which shifts dramatically over Deleuze’s career, links to a catalog of concepts (indeed capable of being chronologically arranged in relatively definable groupings) that, simply put, provoke a philosophical or reflective pleasure or displeasure. Might we not say that such was the thetical charge of one of Deleuze’s last books, *What Is Philosophy?*: the task of philosophy as the production of new concepts and, we might argue, the aesthetic dimension therein? Can we thus see the potential in linking Deleuzian thought in general, schizoanalysis in particular, with electracy, with desire-aesthetics, with our invention of “desiring-surveillance” as a concept for understanding emerging digital practices? Can we ascertain how such linkages afford a new model for the thinking and practice of rhetoric and writing studies?

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<sup>27</sup> Galloway, 8.

<sup>28</sup> In any event, Deleuze the anti-fascist features most prominently in his ’72 days; Foucault noted in the introduction to *Anti-Oedipus* that, at its core, the book was one against fascism, and rightly so. Not even “Postscript on Control Societies” (’90-era Deleuze) carries the same anti-fascist weight as *Anti-Oedipus*. Deleuze’s radical materialism and concept of immanence clearly threads all of his work, and it would be difficult to argue otherwise. Lastly, “Deleuze the communist” seems a slippery qualification. Deleuze’s work never concerned practical politics; his work only engaged formations and conditions of power in abstract and conceptual terms, such as his anti-fascist position (with fascism, as we can recall from previous Acts, meaning any process of totalization, including linguistics, signification-subjectification, or the redoubling of the depot via fear and paranoia, or what we would simply term desire-repressing-desire).

<sup>29</sup> Considering the tone and general posture of both Žižek and Galloway, and their respective positions on Deleuze and Guattari and how they frame them, Žižek comes across as the guy who likes to write in the margins of sheet music as he listens to, and waxes poetic on, Brahms and Wagner and, à la Adorno, knows enough about jazz to dismiss it. Galloway strikes as the guy working at the local record store, who knows all the obscure bands before they move out of obscurity (and then are only listened to by Wet Diaper music lovers), and who enjoyed vinyl until it returned to popularity and has since switched to cassette tapes.

Ian Buchanan's lecture, "Deleuze and the Internet," gestures to one of the central problems with Deleuzian thought, largely attributable to the Deleuzian School that Galloway outlines: a descriptive tendency to name objects or practices with Deleuzian terms or concepts rather than using Deleuzian terms, concepts, *and methods* to critically analyze objects or practices. Following Deleuze's radical materialism, Buchanan begins by noting that the internet, first and foremost, transforms the body. Much as is the case with the body in meat-space, where one understands the body in terms of various codings or segmentations (i.e., race, class, gender, etc.), one similarly understands the body in the digital realm but in terms of informatics (i.e., data collection, data mining, or dataveillance).<sup>30</sup> Whether in meat-space or digital space, Buchanan explains, such is how the body finds signification in what Deleuze and Guattari term "the socius." Buchanan echoes a salient point we have noted in previous Acts, however: whereas Foucault understands such discursive formations and productions of the body in terms of *coercion* (traceable to institutions of power), Deleuze understands the producing of the body in terms of the *voluntary* (or what we might simply term desire). We agree with Buchanan on this primary point of departure, and such is why, in contradistinction to both Žižek and Galloway, we wish to remember the *Deleuze of desire*, especially when considering electracy in general, desiring-surveillance in particular.

Buchanan then shifts to the question of the soul and the body-without-organs, concepts that he finds inextricably linked. He thus qualifies the body-without-organs in two distinct ways: first, "the body-without-organs is the soul animated by desire"; second, the body-without-organs must be understood as social first.<sup>31</sup> As we have done in previous Acts, Buchanan unpacks the relation between desire and the social: namely, partial objects that attach to our transitive desire,

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<sup>30</sup> Galloway addresses this issue of informatics in his above interview, and it is, of course, a point of central concern in Donna Haraway's "A Manifesto for Cyborgs" and Gilles Deleuze's "Postscript on Control Societies."

<sup>31</sup> Buchanan gives a poignant example of this: the socius crying out, "long live the King!" after the King has died.



and the process by which this denotes the difference between social production and desiring-production, and how the former becomes fetishized.<sup>32</sup> The body-without-organs, meanwhile, when understood according to the terms Buchanan outlines above, is a concept of presupposition, as “the thought or idea that thought cannot grasp.” The body-without-organs, Buchanan continues, appears first as a construction and, after it has been constructed, it begins to make things happen. Yet the body-without-organs makes things happen beyond the line of sight or apprehension; that is, for the body-without-organs, “making things happen” means “making invisible.”

To this end, Buchanan *does* believe the internet *can* (has the *potential* to) function as a body-without-organs, yet this body-without-organs does not necessarily mean something “good.” The internet still operates as *media*, as classically understood, often *mediating* in invisible ways. Buchanan presents a couple of examples: China has Google, but the search results Google can present in China are severely restricted; likewise, Google itself is quite “open about its snooping,” using the data it collects to create algorithms that refine search results for a given user, whether in China or not. Moreover, search results now include advertisements as the top result listings and place additional advertisements on the right hand bar of one’s screen (based upon one’s recent browsing history). As such, “you do not take Google; Google takes you,” it leads you, mediates you, and as invisibly as possible.<sup>33</sup> Buchanan therefore concludes that the

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<sup>32</sup> We can understand “fetish” as the appropriation and application of desire from its primary or originary point or source to another. In psychoanalysis, for example, fetish includes a sexual desire for any area of the body outside of the genitals. In Marxist thought, “commodity fetishism” marks the manner in which one desires a commodity without understanding the *real* cost of that commodity (i.e., not the monetary cost but rather the exploitation of labor by Capital to produce a commodity, as such, and the masking of such). In Deleuzian terms, the coding or territorialization of desiring-production by, into, and onto social production functions in a similar manner. Pure desiring-production gets re- and over-coded, (re)territorialized by social production in such a way that one loses “sight” of the desiring-production and instead “sees” only the social production.

<sup>33</sup> This also accounts for one of the reasons as to why Buchanan does not believe the internet functions as a rhizome. Pre-Google internet more closely resembled a rhizome, he argues, as one “surfed” the web somewhat aimlessly, connecting from one random point to another. With Google (as well as other major corporations that use data-mining

internet as “Google-like-infested” is not a body-without-organs—at least one worth preserving—and is likewise not a rhizomatic model—*but it could be*.

We can clearly translate this digression in terms proper to rhetoric. Emerging scholarship from emerging scholars, such as Estee Beck and Alexander Monea, have (re)presented the dataveillance-informed algorithms corporations such as Google use to guide and mediate digital activity as nothing short of rhetorical. After all, these algorithms persuade us to migrate through digital spaces in very specific ways. Yet we must be careful with such slippery qualifications. The latent content of an algorithm does not constitute a rhetoric; only the manifest employment of such an algorithm constitutes a *possible* rhetoric. In other words, the algorithm itself does not enact a persuasive figure, as only the realized expression of that algorithm (taking form during a Google search, for example) can enact a persuasive figure (in the form of search results). In terms of rhetoric and desiring-surveillance, this carries a great deal of complexity. First, as Buchanan notes, Google is quite open about its snooping (data mining or dataveillance), and while the algorithms Google employs to refine search results might be “invisible,” users nonetheless appear to desire the use of Google. Considering that one can search “incognito,” or use an encrypted browser to search the “deep web” or the “dark web,” one might argue that users desire Google’s algorithms that refine their searches, even if in the service of “primitive capitalist” (as Buchanan puts it) advertisement production. In this sense, the degree to which the rhetorical architecture of algorithms, as function of social production, appropriates and fetishizes desiring-production becomes something of a grey space. Second, and more to the point,

algorithms only arrive as manifest, expressive figures of persuasion when one’s own data is included. That is, we *do* lead Google in terms of how it leads us—the algorithms cannot work

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algorithms to direct and mediate our digital movement), we do not traverse digital space nomadically; instead, with Google, our digital travels are guided by maps that are nothing short of digital algorithms.

otherwise. This, of course, echoes a point made by Bauman and Lyon in previous Acts: we use databases as much as databases use us, whether it be Google, Facebook, or Amazon. Thus, while the rhetorical structure, or even intent, of a given algorithm might remain extrinsic to a given user, the manifest rhetorical content of that algorithm is very much informed by the user.

As Buchanan notes, herein lies the difference between the “coercive” (Foucault) and the “voluntary” (Deleuze), though only a gossamer thread divides the two. Considering the strategic function of “invisibility,” the effects and affects of a rhetoric of coercion and of a rhetoric adopted and co-created voluntarily might not be very different at all. As Deleuze notes in “Postscript to Control Societies,” informatics reduces the full *potential* of choice to one of finite *possibility*: if we all must go into debt in order to realize our potential, we have only so many possible choices as to how far into debt we must go. We might say the same of surveillance, except that desiring-surveillance constitutes a metaphysical shift in vision without the encumbrance or bondage of debt. While the informatics of debt, as micro-managed by the digital institution, concerns finite possibility, desiring-surveillance is governed only by potentiality. As noted in previous Acts, Haraway, following Deleuze, accounts for the ways in which cyborgonic ontology (a way to rethink being/becoming in the age of electracy) offers up new modes of domination but also new modes of productive, positive, liberating potentiality (such as unlikely alliances).

This is why we remember the Deleuze of desire, even—dare we say—the Deleuze of schizoanalysis. The rhetoric of electracy is marked by the affects of joy/sadness, not the science of true/false or the ethics/morality of right/wrong, and this extends to entertainment, play, creativity. This is why we must understand surveillance in terms of desiring-surveillance. As such, Buchanan’s (and, on that note, Galloway’s and Žižek’s) theoretical blind spots surface as

over-emphases on hermeneutics rather than heuristics. While the descriptive tendency of merely naming always fails us, so too, now, does the tendency to merely analyze and interpret. We care much less about what the internet is or what it means, or what surveillance is or what it means; we care much more about how the internet works, how surveillance works. What potentialities reside therein and how we can make it more productive, in the service of well-being? In terms of desiring-surveillance, this means an active, creative, aesthetic task perhaps best relegated to the field of rhetoric and writing studies.

### **Tessitura: After Media, Within Speculation, and before Judgment Day**

We will control the horizontal. We will control the vertical.

—*The Outer Limits*

If we take seriously the advent and concept of ubicomp, then we must also take seriously Siegfried Zielinski's [...*After the Media*], though perhaps not in the terms and under the conditions for which he had hoped. Zielinski argues that "the media have become superfluous/redundant," and that because it is "now...possible to create a state with media, they are no longer any good for revolution."<sup>34</sup> The exigency of Zielinski's rhetorical claim, then, implores us to consider what we can do after—or at least beyond—media. Let us move backwards. First, as good and proper Deleuzians, we do not see "revolution" (whatever that means, anymore) as necessarily arriving from outside of the State—or Capital, for that matter. Following a Deleuzian schematic, we are always already inside of both and, following the work of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, any "revolution" must take place inside of such.<sup>35</sup> Alas, however, we are not concerned with "revolution" at all, regardless of the perennial sound bites it affords contemporary critical theorists, all of whom seem to be tirelessly working at

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<sup>34</sup> Siegfried Zielinski, "The Media Have Become Superfluous."

<sup>35</sup> See: Hardt and Negri's *Empire* (2000), *Multitude* (2004), and *Commonwealth* (2009).

*reconceptualizing* the possible *practice* of revolution from their Ivory Tower offices. Zielinski's formative point, however, deserves due attention. If ubicomp has become—or is quickly becoming—as ubiquitous as we claim it has, then perhaps media has, in fact, become “superfluous/redundant.” In other words, if media—as becoming-ubicomp organized by the conditions of electracy—figures as the ordinary, the normative, the status quo, then we lose the differential quality that allows us to consider media outside of media. In short, if everything is media, then nothing is. In this sense, we must consider the question of “after media.”

Zielinski continues:

The media are an indispensable component of functioning social hierarchies, both from the top down and the bottom up, of power and countervailing power. They have taken on systemic character. Without them, nothing works anymore in what the still surviving color supplements in a careless generalization continue to call a society. Media are an integral part of the everyday coercive context, which is termed “practical constraints.” As cultural techniques, which need to be learned for social fitness, they are at the greatest possible remove from what whips us into a state of excitement, induces aesthetic exultation, or triggers irritated thoughts. (The Media Have Become Superfluous)

Is this so? Indeed, as we note above, electracy presents media as an “indispensable component” (understood as ubicomp), “from the top down and the bottom up.” As clearly indicated by previous Acts, the rhetoric of desiring-surveillance does not concern top down surveillance modalities, nor does it necessarily or exclusively concern bottom up surveillance modalities. The rhetoric of desiring-surveillance concerns horizontal, lateral surveillance modalities, involving and revolving around desire-aesthetics (as rhetorical import). To review, *desiring-surveillance*: *we desire to see and to be seen*. Yet this possibility seems removed from Zielinski's framework, hence the seeming impossibility of media providing “state[s] of excitement,” “aesthetic exultation,” or “irritated thoughts,” while *we* claim that desiring-surveillance provides *these very* potentials.

Zielinski might nonetheless be on to something. We might, for a moment, consider Heidegger's treatment of technology, how technology continually "conceals" and "unconceals" (reveals) itself.<sup>36</sup> We might also consider Buchanan's remarks in the section above, about how the Google-like-infested internet "makes things happen" by "making things invisible." Why not consider the rotational, dialectal poles of Hegel's master-slave dialectic, as translated in terms of media and media users? We might even, for the sake of tragic fatalism, consider Virilio's notion of the techno-future. What happens when media becomes so ubiquitous (ubicomp fully realized) that it goes invisible? To follow Virilio's tragic fatalism, will it require a drastic accident to render it visible again? To be candid, we cannot be sure. We can be sure, however, that in the face of such seemingly expedient reduction and dystopic prophesizing, we still exist on a digital continuum far removed from Jonathan Mostow's *Surrogates* (2009) or the Wachowski brothers' *The Matrix* (1999). We can be sure that, beyond the claims of any skeptical hermeneutic, rhetoric still contains the heuretic capacities of (re)invention, and in such a way that we can apprehend and appropriate the potentials of the internet, particularly desiring-surveillance, so as to provide a service for general well-being. This means rhetorical capture and reappropriation, not "revolution" (a term now bordering on conceptual bankruptcy).

### **Melodrama: The Future of Rhetoric and Technology**

Does anybody really know what time it is? Does anybody really care?

—Chicago

Getting older means, for better or worse, losing touch with emerging modes of social interaction and production. The designs of desire for those even just ten years younger than me do not match my own. In short, it is increasingly difficult to keep up, to stay hip, to stay, as Jeff Rice puts it, within the rhetoric of cool. While the tragedy of getting older, out of touch, square is

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<sup>36</sup> See: Heidegger's "On the Question Concerning Technology."

itself nothing new, we find the ever-increasing speed of history particularly pronounced in the age of electracry. Stiegler notes that speed (technics) and history have and always will be linked, and that with our digital revolution we are presently undergoing a “redoubling” that has caused a “disorientation.” Virilio’s “dromology”—the logic of the world in terms of speed or velocity—presents a similar concept, albeit inflected with more pessimism. Reformed Marxists have even thrown their hat into this line of flight: “accelerationism” contends that speeding up the historical processes of capitalism will bring about the inevitable collapse of capitalism sooner, and that such an approach might be the most logical means for a historically organic “revolution.” Media might be so dynamic in change and nonetheless ubiquitous that, to borrow from Zielinski, we must think beyond or after media. Yet the ubiquity of media—particularly marked as ubicomp—arrives only with a corollary condition: perpetual change. As a wise man once said, if constant change defines the temporal and historical condition of our postmodern moment, then nothing changes at all.<sup>37</sup>

Ubicomp and the premise of perpetual change clearly informs the manner in which we must (re)think (and reinvent) rhetoric and writing studies. One of rhetoric and writing studies’ principal failures—and arguably that of the Humanities writ large—is its tendency to think through the potential of emergent technology *reactively*. By the time we figure the institutional, epistemological/intellectual, and pedagogical use of a given technology in and for rhetoric and writing studies, such a technology is, or is quickly becoming, obsolete. Instead, rhetoric and writing studies, as well as the Humanities in general, needs to think proactively and speculatively on the potential of emerging technologies *as they emerge*.<sup>38</sup> We should spend much less time reactively analyzing and interpreting the rhetorics of a given technology, or even the potential

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<sup>37</sup> Yes, I have Frederic Jameson in mind.

<sup>38</sup> My forthcoming edited collection, *Rhetorical Speculations*, co-edited with Joseph Weakland, discusses this in detail.

implementation of a given technology in the teaching of rhetoric and writing (hermeneutics), and much more time *inventing with and through emerging technologies* (heuretics). This is how we schiz rhetoric and writing studies.

During the composing of this opera, for example, I was surprised to find that many students no longer use Facebook regularly. Facebook, it appears, is for the old folks. Apparently, students now prefer Snapchat and Instagram, and this too, of course, will change with time. This should come as no surprise. Despite the rapid change in social media platform use and preference, we can nonetheless identify two static conditions in the age of electracy: first, the dynamism of social media indicates the unequivocal presence of ubicomp; second, the pattern of social media platform migration indicates an ongoing shift from literate rhetorics to the rhetorics of image poetics.<sup>39</sup> In turn, ubicomp and the rhetoric of image poetics (as presently typified by platforms such as Snapchat and Instagram) shift the rhetoric of the body and subjectivity. As noted in previous Acts, the exchange of pictures, as a rhetoric or otherwise, displaces the exchange of literate information; desire-aesthetics dethrones subject-ethics; networked desiring-machines (expressed as (e)choros, electeurs, or aumateurs) usurps signification-subjectification. The endlessly repeatable third term of the image, that of excess, disregards the biunivocal capture of the word proper. From Being to Beseen: *we no longer desire to be heard; we desire to be seen.*

The (necessary/needed) shift in general metaphysics in the age of electracy specifically implicates rhetoric and writing studies. More specifically, such a shift implicates the rhetoric of surveillance: desiring-surveillance, as we have unpacked such a concept throughout this operatic

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<sup>39</sup> While Facebook, for example, is clearly multimodal, it still heavily relies upon literate exchange. Snapchat and Instagram, however, are almost exclusively visual. The emergence of augmented reality—and its inevitable appropriation by social media platforms—prophesizes the future of a rhetorics of image poetics, implicating metaphysics, ontology, spatio-temporal arrangement, etc. in a dizzyingly complex manner.



charade. Ubicomp, desire-aesthetics, image poetics, electracy, schizoanalysis—all of these concepts and methods of an emerging metaphysics inform the rhetorical production of desiring-surveillance. The ubiquity of media does indeed beg the question of “what comes after media?” Desiring-surveillance—and its contingent indictment of rhetorical subjectivity (privacy, identity, subject-ethics, etc.)—asks a similar question: what are the rhetorics of mediation when everything is already mediated and, to such a degree, that *nothing* is mediated? Consider the rhetoric of surveillance: can the intended mediation of surveillance exist if we desire, produce, and participate in and with surveillance ourselves? In other words, can mediation, as traditionally understood, exist with the exchange of subject-ethics for desire-aesthetics? The answers to these questions indeed fall under the purview of rhetoric: the schizoid pole of rhetorical invention and the paranoiac pole of rhetorical subjection (see: Act 2). Both poles are persuasive.

Indeed, the younger generation now considers media as given everyday life. They are also far less concerned with (i.e. fearful of or paranoid by) traditional, vertical, top-down surveillance. They might even consider the concept “desiring-surveillance” as an overly complicated expression of a tacitly understood everyday practice. This does not mean, however, that they are getting duped, that ideology has redoubled and remasked itself, fooling them all into their own repression. Nor does it mean that they are narcissistic, that they suffer from some form of historically and culturally instantiated collective pathology. It only means that the seeds of the metaphysics of electracy, such as desiring-surveillance, have begun to sprout, regardless of how anxious, unnerved, or melancholy that might render us literacy-electracy frontiers(wo)men. By extension, this does not mean that we should fear media or technology, nor the speed at which it operates and the subsequent “disorientation” it may prescribe. As Stiegler notes, we have always been with technics: it is what makes “us” meaningfully possible; it is why we have the question

and function of rhetoric in the first place. While this also does not mean that technology should go unquestioned—we have seen what the technology of atom-splitting can do—it suggests that technological change, however rapid, is merely a condition of historical formation, and that we should be reasonable with our tendency to cling to the paranoid pole. After all, the rhetoric of paranoid desiring-surveillance amounts to nothing less than a fear of ourselves.

As Deleuze and Guattari note in *A Thousand Plateaus*, only the *appropriation* of a technical machine constitutes its affects and effects. Outside of social production, the technical machine means nothing (we might here recall our previous remarks regarding the supposed rhetoric of algorithms). The rapid acceleration of technology over the last two decades—from the human genome project and cloning, to the Hadron Collider, to artificial intelligence (AI)—has nonetheless left us insecure about the potential of emerging technologies. Alex Garland's *Ex Machina* (2015) thoughtfully captures this anxiety. In the film, Nathan, CEO of a massive software corporation, has *arguably/supposedly* created AI in the form and figure of a female human, named Ava.<sup>40</sup> Nathan employs Caleb, a programmer for Nathan's software corporation, to test the AI potential of Ava. Nathan shows Caleb the method by which he possibly produced AI: the algorithmic data-mining of every internet user (dataveillance). Regardless of whether or not Ava constitutes legitimate AI or not, Caleb falls in love with her (desires her), leading to her release into the general public where she will be indistinguishable from a human being. Needless to say, Ava was not in love with Caleb (as she had intimated), and she kills Nathan and leaves Caleb trapped in a secured room.

The thematics and moral of the film, however, do not revolve around technology so much as desire. As Nathan explains to Caleb, the fundamental difference between a robot and a human

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<sup>40</sup> We term it "arguably" because whether or not Ava actually possesses artificial intelligence can be debated.

is not intelligence but desire (joy, sadness, empathy, sympathy, concern, care, etc.). A robot can *know* desire and use it as an intellectual means for trickery (as Ava did with Caleb) but it cannot authentically possess it, and as the conclusion of the film indicates, Ava certainly did not possess desire. As such, and as it has always been, the pursuit of *creation* is matched only by a subsequent *fall*: desire informs both. In this sense, *Ex Machina* illustrates a timeless tale. Some of us know it as the Forbidden Fruit; others of us know it as the myth of Prometheus. Nathan fucked his robots; Caleb fell in love with one. Either way, one bites into the Apple, one grants to a “subordinate” the unauthorized technics of being, leaving Nathan dead and Caleb, much like Prometheus chained to a rock, stuck in a room for all eternity.

*Ex Machina* thus details the faulty manner in which intellectual discourse still relies upon epistemological logics of being when confronting the question of AI rather than creative desire-aesthetics. We can therefore understand Stiegler’s “fault” as a double entendre: first, the fault *qua* error of Epimetheus, leading to the treason of Prometheus, arriving at the inauguration of meaningful being (language, poetics, history, self-reflexivity, etc.); second, the fault *qua* chasm or divide between episteme, techne, and poiesis, as applicable, for example, to the question of AI in *Ex Machina* as well as surveillance modalities (see: Act 1). We arrive at a division between rhetoric and science, between language and information, between desire-aesthetics and logic (with philosophy’s noble struggle to maintain a bridge between the two). Science can create the atomic bomb; rhetoric, following the principles of well-being, can provide us with reasons as to why we should not. Science can map the body’s sexual anatomy; desire gestures to why, to be redundant, we desire certain others. Science can locate color algorithms in Leonardo da Vinci’s *Mona Lisa*; aesthetics can explain why we find it beautiful.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> This demonstrates the promise of thinkers such as the Sophists, Spinoza, Nietzsche, Bergson, Deleuze, Vitanza, Ulmer, Morton, etc.

*Ex Machina* does not illustrate the scientific potential of AI so much as it provides a rhetorical heuristic for considering the consequences of such potential in terms of desire-aesthetics and well-being.<sup>42</sup> In terms of surveillance technologies, we can recall Deleuze and Guattari's note that it is not a (technical) machine that should concern us but rather how such a (technical) machine is appropriated. Moreover, the appropriation of any given (technical) machine always and necessarily implicates desire:

Assemblages are passionate, they are compositions of desire. Desire has nothing to do with a natural or spontaneous determination; there is no desire but assembling, assembled, desire. The rationality, the efficiency, of an assemblage does not exist without the passions the assemblage brings into play, without the desires that constitute it as much as it constitutes them. (*A Thousand Plateaus* 8).

Surveillance does not present itself as inherently ethical or unethical, moral or immoral, legal or illegal, and these terms do not fit within the electrated apparatus, anyhow. Rather, surveillance presents only a potential—best understood in terms of rhetorical desire-aesthetics—with its appropriation inflected by desire: on the one pole, paranoid withdrawal; on the other pole, schizoid invention. The “surveillance state” is only what we assemblages make of it, how we choose to desire and appropriate it—and this, no doubt, concerns the field of rhetoric and writing studies (to come).

### **Encore Ensemble: Celebrity Nude Leaks**

*All the actors shuffle onto stage, haphazardly, as a spontaneous assemblage. They present themselves to the spectators, the viewers, who, by happen chance, also arrive on stage.*

*Everybody is on stage: we are all on stage.*

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<sup>42</sup> Duncan Jones' *Moon* (2009) and Mark Romanek's *Never Let Me Go* (2010) do a similar service with regard to cloning technologies, as detailed in my article, “Clonotrolling the Future” in *Politics of Place* 2 (2015).

*One of the stars of the show, however, Nietzsche, moves from far right to far left and then into the center-stage, a focal point, in front of all others. This is, after all, part of what we really came to see and, to be sure, what Nietzsche wanted, donning his cape and yelling to all:*

NIETZSCHE: I have become the übermensch!

*As he had done before. Except this time, his cape accidentally falls off: everybody sees; some take pictures. The supposed übermensch fully revealed. Naked. He cowers: he wanted to be the übermensch—but not quite like that. The pictures circulate on the internet.*

*Or Nietzsche is backstage and someone snaps a shot while he is removing one cape for another.*

*Or Nietzsche takes a Snapchat of himself between capes and sends it to—well, whomever.*

*It still finds digital circulation, within and outside of this operatic invention.*

CHORUS (singing): WWND? What would Nietzsche do?

We must think here of accident and mistake, of intentional and unintentional acts, of the private/privacy and of the common/public. When asking “was Nietzsche violated?” we use Nietzsche as figure-persona because of the potential rhetorical retort he would likely give: what constitutes a violation and who constituted it as such? In terms of the rhetoric of desiring-

surveillance and the shift from subject-ethics to desire-aesthetics, we perhaps find nothing more sensitive than the question of nude pictures. We will thus attempt to tread lightly.

We can consider the difference between accident and mistake ontologically, especially as treated by Quentin Meillassoux: if I attempt to shoot my own horse, but my neighbor's horse jumps in front of my horse right as I fire, and I thus shoot my neighbor's horse, then such constitutes an accident; if I attempt to shoot my own horse, but I misidentify my neighbor's horse as my own horse, and I thus shoot my neighbor's horse, then such constitutes a mistake.<sup>43</sup> Before departing into the digital realm and the issue of the celebrity nude picture leak, let us consider how this might play out in meat-space. If one changes clothes and forgets that the blinds are not drawn, thus unintentionally exposing one's self to whomever outside, then such constitutes an accident. If one *intends* to give an exhibitionist show to a particular voyeur, but that peeping person outside turns out not to be that voyeur but rather somebody else, then such constitutes a mistake. Whether or not the voyeur outside—whether by way of accident, intended recipient, or mistake—has the “right” to use a recording device to capture the image in the window screen leads to a question of subject-ethics that must, for the time being, be left suspended.

We can extrapolate from our meat-space example and enter now into the more complex digital arena. Before doing so, however, we must unpack the ontological and, to be sure, rhetorical difference between “being a body” and “having a body.” In terms of phenomenological embodiment, to keep matters practical, we see no point in dividing the terms “being” and “body” (i.e., we will let the neo-Cartesians and theologians provide their own opera in contestation; we have plenty of doors—open and shut—for the posting of new theses). As our

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<sup>43</sup> Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency* (New York: Continuum Press, 2008).

previous Acts should make clear, Deleuze (and Guattari) would agree: while we cannot figure a static, univocal body—as it is always undergoing various connections to other bodies, partial objects, machines, etc.—a body nonetheless constitutes the ontological foundation of a desiring-machine (a post-subject individual), both abstractly and in terms of a radical materialism.<sup>44</sup> This becomes complicated, however, when thinking through recording devices and representations of a body. Body *qua* body actually vs. body virtually captured in representative image: in the latter, the “having” contingency announces itself in particular. You cannot “be” a representation of your body, captured through whatever recording device, though you might “have” such.

The accident from “to be” to “have,” as well as all the mistakes therein, we cannot entirely account. We do note, however, lots of screens: meat-space window screens and smart-phone screens. And we must recall the question of celebrity logic that besets all desiring-surveillance: cannot have your cake and eat it, too. Paparazzi want to capture you because you are famous; you are famous because paparazzi wants to capture you. Extrapolate and apply to everyday desiring-surveillance. The more horses you own, well, the more accidents *and* mistakes. You want fewer horses, figuratively speaking?

(Wait, Nietzsche is screaming again....).

NIETZSCHE: Everybody is concerned about my übermensch penis. But nobody cares about all these others penises posted on the internet without my kind of name attached. [Fully exposed] Feel bad now, y’all, for all the uber-rich cats whose nude pictures you find. Why do you know their names, search their names: same reason why they are uber-rich. Celebrity logic meets slave morality, right?

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<sup>44</sup> For the Deleuzian sticklers: “being” here then serves as short-hand or placeholder for the becoming-body of any given desiring-machine.

*Foucault comes out center-stage, whispers in Nietzsche's ear.*

NIETZSCHE: Adam and Eve. [He dances—uncontrollably]. The fruit?

FOUCAULT: Neo-Victorians who never left a Panopticon moment. Everything we must talk about and see, and also what we must never talk about and never see.

NIETZSCHE: The fruit?

FOUCAULT: We have a discourse now for every site, every sight. Every desire. They see, we say; we see, they say. What's that joke about the priests, Fred?

NIETZSCHE: The fruit?

FOUCAULT: Yes, always around the fruit. Desire and *that around which*. And how to repress: discipline and punish, render mad, or end, where I ended, with just the complication of desire. Sex.

NIETZSCHE: But what of my penis—exposed, naked, circulating?

*Spinoza runs out, drunken, mad. He's half-naked, too—maybe. Nobody can remember. Nobody cares.*



SPINOZA: We'sh do not'sh lets know what bbbbody can do.

*Nobody takes pictures of Spinoza's naked body. He cries—later.*

FOUCAULT: Let alone one penis. A penis that was already kinda exposed in the first place. But it can do that!

What are we trying to say? Paparazzi logic as contingent to and of celebrity logic: do not stand in front of the wrong mirror. The latter logic predicated upon the former logic. And who owns what representation therein? —We are not sure. What constitutes a theft? A sexual violation? Yes, we agree—insofar as we retain the Victorian notion that the concealment of such representative objects renders their value, however so and to whatever extent. Difference between catching in meat-space and digital-space? There exists a proportionate ratio between money made off being a public figure and being “invaded” as a public figure. Making a public brand off one's self (lucratively), as a private self. To be a brand and reject it wholesale. We cannot even talk about the rhetorical function of commercials without the endorsements of certain celebrities: so, I ask, when it comes to celebrities, public vs. private. Who owns that pretty face when it smashes its face into that beautiful cake?

And then, wait!—

DIOGENES: Let it hang out it—lantern to lantern, barrel to barrel!

*Robert Mapplethorpe runs on stage. He runs off stage. He runs on stage. He runs off [.....].*  
*Suddenly, Jim Morrison appears, livered-yellow and as near-dead-as-always.*

JIM MORRISON: Y'all wanna see it?

*Everybody sighs. We sigh:*

CHORUS: Why does everything have to be about *penises*? Because it's most usually *not*.

THE FEMINIST AMONGST AND OF US ALL: Of course it's not. Nobody is hacking into phones for all the unsolicited—and, in case any of you were wondering, almost always unwelcome—"dick pics." "The Fappening," as the parlance of our times has it, includes, by far, mostly pictures of nude *female* celebrities. We can chalk this up to the need for a new orientation to emerging modalities of digital surveillance; we can liken it to undrawn shades in front of a window; we can, for whatever reason, dismiss the ethics of privacy in the age of electracy. But the narrator himself notes the difference between a body and a picture: you can *be* and *have* the former, in phenomenological and ontological manners. But you can only *have* a picture. A picture, whether a nude selfie or anything else, denotes ownership. Hacking, stealing, and posting private pictures, then, equates to theft. And why is this theft so personal? It's not because all women or feminists are neo-Victorian Puritans; we're far past the age of exclusively anti-sex feminists. It's because of a redoubled rhetoric—a rhetoric that extends from a substrate condition that too often does not take into account a more primary rhetoric, a rhetoric of social and cultural construction: it's only *female* nude celebrity pics because the female body has already been

objectified and commodified (yes, unlike the unsolicited and unwelcomed “dick pics”). Beyond the simple thievery, there is an economy of exchange—the exchange of the female body—that precedes and informs cultural phenomena such as “The Fappening.” There is a sense of entitlement. Just because you *can* look at something doesn’t mean you *should*—and this certainly applies to the theft of that something in the first place. This is not a subject-ethics, and desire-aesthetics does not mean doing whatever gets you off, bubbles you over. Desire-aesthetics as contingent of desiring-surveillance—as a mutually schizoid path of inter- and inter-personal rhetorical rediscovery—means mutual desire. Desiring-surveillance: *to desire to see and to be seen*. Both terms—to desire to see and to be seen—must work in concert, otherwise we merely reproduce a power dynamic that again marginalizes certain assemblages, even if not orchestrated by the State or Capital. (And since we’re on the topic of nudity and Capital, consider this: female celebrity nudes are such a commodity, such an object of exchange, that many female celebrities could have received an excess of a million dollars to pose for, say, *Playboy*. If the recording or photographic representation of a female nude celebrity is a commodity, which it obviously is, then each and every female celebrity should be able to retain the rights and ownership of that commodity. If females can’t change the commodification of their nude bodies, they should at least be able to own such, right?).

NIETZSCHE: Still seems like a rhetoric of inverted aggression, self-repression, and slave morality.

CHORUS: [Yawns].

FOUCAULT: Yes, it still seems like a neo-Victorian hang-up concerning the body and its full disclosure.

CHORUS: [Yawns].

NARRATOR (ME): Indeed. Yet, perhaps, in terms of electracy, desire-aesthetics, and emerging surveillance modalities, we can shift the metaphysics of vision, and we can even do so in the service of changing conceptions about the body, discursive formations of sexuality, the concept of public and private. But there's a reason Deleuze and Guattari make State and Capital the foundation of their Capitalism and Schizophrenia departures.

FOUCAULT AND NIETZSCHE: But the State is only the sum total measure of collective and organized compliance and concession—and, at times, regulated resistance—amongst a given people. This is the rhetoric of “democracy.”

NARRATOR (ME): And what of Capital?

ULMER: One begins to subsume the other: the ebb and flow of the State and Capital assemblage. Commodities (i.e., Capital) start to support the State, rather than the other way around. The next historical chapter in *Anti-Oedipus* that could not have been written at the time. It's why commercials or advertisements for commodities constitute the most typical genre of rhetorical delivery in the age of electracy, and why so much political discourse takes the shape and form of advertisements and commercials. We can resist, or we can reappropriate....

NARRATOR (ME): What does this mean for the rhetoric of desiring-surveillance—in practice and in theory?

FOUCAULT: That we are moving from the *petite bourgeoisie* to the *petite celebre*?

NIETZSCHE: That we are moving from classical priests to digital nuns?

NARRATOR (ME): No, I mean specifically in terms of nude female celebrity leaks and the primary function of commodities and Capital—insofar as changing such a mode of exchange remains outside of our line of sight—especially with regard to how I outline desiring-surveillance.

FOUCAULT: Only discursive formations—the production of knowledge as always already tied to institutional powers—can render a nude body, especially the photographic representation of such, as something of a commodity worthy of exchange and dissemination. Desiring-surveillance, then, as a mode of full exposure and escape from such knowledge-power productions. Did I ever tell you the funny little story about the French village idiot, the school girls, and the game of “find the stick....”?

NARRATOR (ME): Yeah, Michel, we *all* had to read your introduction—and, by the way, my apologies; that seemed short. Sorry you couldn’t finish it.

NIETZSCHE: (Not missing a beat) A body is a body. A will is a will. We must will our bodies into higher formations of thought and being. Only art and poetics can save us now—an artistic and poetic re-rendering of our individual and, by extension, collective potentials. Consider all images as aesthetic expressions and, in turn, with what we can do! Such is the promise of the will attached to the potential of desiring-surveillance.

SPINOZA: WEEESH DON'TSH KNOWS A BAWDIES CAAAAN DOOOO!

CHORUS: *Shh!*

*Spinoza passes out on the stage. Prescribing a universal ethics can be a tiring affair.*

JIM MORRISON: So, y'all want to—

CHORUS: *No!*

*Jim Morrison runs off stage, comparing his image to that of Arthur Rimbaud. He dies shortly thereafter (they say).*

DIONGENES: I'm retreating to my barrel. But I'll keep the lantern on in the dark—just this once. *So you can see.*

*Diogenes winks; Diogenes (maybe) gets it. (Or he wanted to start an argument).*

*Cicero shows up suddenly, nevertheless walking calmly and with confidence onto the stage.*

CICERO: Just follow the money. Desiring-surveillance, female nude celebrity leaks, electracy, desire-aesthetics, whatever. Just follow the money. There's your answer.

NIETZSCHE AND FOUCAULT: But a body is just a body, at least before it is turned into a subject (by morality or discourse). Even the representation of it—photographic or otherwise, digital image or whatever!

THE FEMINIST AMONGST AND OF US ALL: And an image of thought is just an image. A commodity is a commodity; we're apparently all beyond that—especially these dead white philosophers. A female body is, or at least becomes, a commodity—especially the representation of it, photographic or otherwise. We know that much. *It's just a body*, you all say. An idea is just an idea. It's part of a brain, part of a body; it's indebted to the collective formations of thought—historical and present—that inform it. Nietzsche and Foucault—they readily identify themselves (i.e., find their identity and persona) in and by their thought, in and through their written work. Let's go back in time, put their work on computers as they were drafting it, hack it, and post it online for free. A body is just a body; a thought is just a thought. And a commodity is just a commodity. It's the question of theft implicit in desiring-surveillance. That's our hang-up. It's not a question of sexual discourse or slave morality; it has nothing to do with sex. The masculine privilege of reducing females to bodies and then feeling entitled to those bodies in representational form, when such entitlement is what rendered them commodities in the first

place, is nothing short of failing to acknowledge how philosophical and intellectual thought (a too often phallic and masculine pursuit, at least in perception) constitutes a similar formation. You can steal pictures of our bodies; we'll go ahead and steal your books before publication. But this is not desiring-surveillance, is it?

NARRATOR (ME): No, it's not. But it's a great example of how otherwise productive desiring-surveillance fails. Completely.

THE FEMINIST AMONGST AND OF US ALL: But doesn't this ruin some your section's formative—

NARRATOR (ME): Yes, but that's why we call it a dialogue.

*Deleuze and Guattari were busy in the restroom, talking about ripples and waves.*

*We all bow.*



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