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Of Piracy, Anonymity, and Parametric Politics. An Interview with Ned Rossiter and Soenke Zehle

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Publication date

2015

Document Version

Final published version

Published in

Krisis : Journal for contemporary philosophy

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Citation for published version (APA):

de Zeeuw, D. (2015). Of Piracy, Anonymity, and Parametric Politics. An Interview with Ned Rossiter and Soenke Zehle. *Krisis : Journal for contemporary philosophy*, 2015(1), 39-47. <https://archive.krisis.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Krisis-2015-1-PiratesPrivateers-completeissue.pdf?>

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Krisis

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OF PIRACY, ANONIMITY, AND PARAMETRIC POLITICS
AN INTERVIEW WITH NED ROSSITER AND SOENKE ZEHLE

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In an (in)famous postscript, Gilles Deleuze traces the emergence of a society of control, whose passive danger is jamming, and whose active danger lies in piracy and viruses. Media jamming and piracy, hacktivism and viruses are all rampant today: the internet is their natural breeding ground, to the point of becoming trivial occurrences in everyday life. Technology moves fast, but the means of understanding its movements do not, given the new media theory's obligate and persistent homage to Deleuze's early nineties programme. The gratuitousness of this reference today, combined with the lack of specificity concerning contemporary implementations of cybernetic modes of machinic governance, might just as well introduce a kind of theoretical laziness concerning the concrete stages of their development.

In their collaborative research efforts, Ned Rossiter and Soenke Zehle explore the consequences of new economies of capture and the enclosure of experience. For this edition of *Krisis*, they were willing to respond extensively via email to questions about their research, the directions it is taking, and the methodological and conceptual innovations they feel are needed in order to address the complexity of the present, so as to better grasp the most recent incarnation of that eternal and ambiguous figure at the center of this special issue, the pirate. The latter offers an entry node into some of the more intangible and abstract issues that permeate so-called network societies. As the focal point of a cognitive mapping, the interview addresses debates on the common(s) and its multitudes in their flight from wage labor, as well as the antinomies of informational capitalism, which frees up and mobilizes with one hand what it blocks entry to with the other. Fire and pay walls prevent access from what could be

freely available to all, an idea that drove Aaron Swartz to disclosing JSTOR's database of academic articles. As big data and dragnet surveillance increase the costs of identity, opting out becomes a viable alternative. What lies beyond is still uncertain, as the boundaries of the political implode to fuel a civil society whose weight existing democratic institutions cannot carry, without at least a sense of its 'parametric' dimensions.

Daniël de Zeeuw

Pirate practices often involve theft and property violations without clear-cut ideological motives, as is the case with most torrent trackers. For this reason they are often dubbed apolitical, in a pejorative, delegitimizing sense, namely as 'merely' criminal, directed towards private gain and against the public interest. More often than not, repression of what is deemed private is much stronger than what is said to be of public significance, making this repression less contested as well. Similarly, hackers' targeting of information and communication infrastructure is depoliticized, or delegitimized under criminal conspiracy acts. Instead you claim that contemporary forms of piracy involve both contestations of ownership, new forms of use and an alternative politics of the common. Does this mean you reject the above framing of piracy as apolitical? Under what conditions may pirate practices involve genuine political acts? Or should they be evaluated according to other norms and categories altogether?

To talk about how such framings operate as devices of depoliticization, we should perhaps revisit the distinction between politics and the political that also informs reflections on piracy. As Derrida has noted in his reading of Schmitt's account of the friend/enemy distinction as an existential antagonism – implying the ever-present possibility of physical killing – that is constitutive of the political, Schmitt's attempt to deduce the political from a place where it did not yet exist requires a definition of the enemy as such, one that is linked to the possibility of a proper war – that is, an existentially political war. It is a distinction whose disappearance in the wake of modern warfare Schmitt both acknowledges and resists. It should be noted that in his post-war writings, Schmitt has discouraged readings of

this distinction that stress annihilation as the inevitable telos of such an antagonism, but affirmed the need to think the ‘enemy’ as that which binds any one sphere of the political as an ethico-political space. Schmitt’s desire for distinction is alive in contemporary legal orthodoxy. The prosecution of piracy as a crime (rather than an act of war) has been lamented by current adherents of Schmitt such as John Yoo, for instance, Deputy Assistant US Attorney General in the George W. Bush Administration, who would like to see the public enemy status extended to terrorists (i.e. combatants that are ‘illegal’ in that they do not act on behalf of a sovereign state) more generally. But the definition of piracy that opens Daniel Heller-Roazen’s (2009) genealogy of the ‘enemy of humanity’ also echoes Schmitt’s attempt to deduce the political from non-subjective, non-anthropological categories.

This question is not limited to piracy, of course; it is one of the characteristics of the current conjuncture that statelessness, a key concern in the political philosophies of Hannah Arendt and Giorgio Agamben, is once again considered an instrument of governance (take the call to revoke the citizenship of jihadists, coming, needless to say, mainly from states who are signatories to the two UN conventions on the reduction of statelessness). So, the political character of piratical practices refers to the ways in which they modify the conditions of possibility for politics and political action. In this sense there is some correlation here with hacker practices, frequently subsumed under the governance meme of ‘cyberterrorism’. While following this line of thought leads us beyond the terrain of this interview, it should be noted that the association of piracy with terror is itself in need of a conjunctural explanation.

What interests us here is the scope available for tinkering with social and technological systems, the linkages that are foregrounded by reapproaching the question of piracy in terms of the infrastructural implications of its practices. The centrality of infrastructural and logistical registers to piratical practices cuts across public/private distinctions and calls for a parametric sense of the political, rather than the fall-back on a public sphere model that always-already depoliticizes piratical practices as private acts of appropriation without authorization. There is no necessarily progressive vision in the political dimensions of piracy. This is of course also

true for any politics organized around the principles of identity and representation, but it nevertheless bears repetition. The point of departure for our reflections on piracy is not the romance of disruption, but a sense that piracy offers a particularly useful point of departure for analyses of the varying perspectives in the way we delineate the boundaries of the political.

For instance, we do not think of piracy primarily in terms of property violations. Such a framing is of extremely limited analytical reach. Instead, we want to know what is left of piracy when it is not exclusively understood in relation to property. There is a sense of piracy that simply involves illicit changes in ownership. But we are more interested in how piracy opens an exploration of the boundaries of sovereignty. Historically, the idea of a contiguous space of sovereignty (where one boundary touches the next, without non-sovereign territories in between) is rather recent, and in many parts of the world does not exist in practice – permanent policing of these boundaries is needed to produce them as boundaries, and pirates play a key role in how the predictive policing strategies of these semi-open spaces are determined and designed by public (states) and private actors (Private Military Corporations, NGOs). Within such a geopolitical imaginary, we move instead to practices of anonymity as exemplary acts of piracy situated within logistical worlds, whose techniques and technologies of governance seek to extract value through the capture of experience. With such a movement, we register the extent to which the infrastructural dimension of digital economies demands analytical attention, from the shift to low-latency networks and centralized storage systems (e.g. data centres) to the logistical technologies ensuring the synchronization of networked activities across the topologies of these new economies of capture.

Data pirates often narrate their own identities in terms of invisibility and anonymity: Anonymous is a recent example, but it goes back to the early cypherpunk scene. What is it about digital culture that invokes this persistent association with anonymity as a form of power, and political strategy?

In this world, anonymity is a central principle of operation. While anonymity is most often understood in terms of a refusal of the principle of identity, it acquires additional meaning in the shift from causation to correlation that lies at the core of a data analytics in which pattern recognition is more important than the logic of accountability and attribution. At the same time, the epistemological binding of data to empirical conditions is difficult to refute, even for practices of anonymity, not only because of the weight of legitimacy bestowed upon big data analytics to ‘explain’ the patterning of the world. But quite simply because once we acknowledge the extent to which identity is distributed across the topologies of our communicative enmeshments, stretching far beyond the sphere of signification to a much more encompassing semiotics of intensities, we realize that the dispersal of subjective traces far exceeds the economy of anonymity. It is too soon to tell, of course, how well anonymity scales, beyond encryption and the facile move of an exodus from commercial social media systems. But the space of a politics of anonymity is so much wider than the deliberative dimensions of the politics of representation. It is for this reason that we hold on to the concept of the political to at least lay claim to political possibility, even if we are not sure how and across which social and technological registers such a politics of anonymity can be articulated. Here, the question of anonymity becomes intimately intertwined with the question of how we approach the transformation of agency within machinic assemblages, of technical systems whose dispositions confront us with forms of agency we are not sure how best to comprehend. But rather than assuming at the outset that forms of agency that cannot be folded into a politics of representation lie beyond the scope of the political, part of the question of a politics of anonymity is to ask how we engage the disposition of these new technical systems in ways that acknowledge the actuality of machinic agency (without being reduced to a Latourian or STS world view, whose flat ontologies of thick description tend to occlude the instantiation of the political).

The question of traceability across computational systems, a significant concern in the analysis of such forms of agency, lies at the heart of the practice of piracy as well. There is nothing at the ontological level that ties data to the externalities from which it arises. Part of an economic logic of recursion, data speaks to itself before it addresses the world around it. To

distinguish between the epistemological and ontological layers is itself a political thought, for as long as the data trails of anonymity are linked to empirics, then subjects become culpable of acts of piracy (among others). The ways in which the empirical dimensions of data are articulated epistemologically and ontologically also concerns parametric politics, as politics is increasingly drawn to explore and incorporate these registers of algorithmic cultures into new forms of governance.

Can you expand on what you mean by parametric politics and its relation to piracy?

By parametric politics we mean an engagement with the technical parameters of the infrastructural and logistical registers of politics. Understood as such, piracy is political in this broader sense regardless of its legitimacy, and there are faint echoes of this acknowledgement even in the generative visions of celebrity architects that have also popularized the term ‘parametric’ in the context of neoliberal urban development schemes. The political dimension of these practices is separate from their legitimacy: we have often seen the same practices de- and relegitimized rather quickly in relation to shifting geopolitical agendas, for instance. What was once considered legitimate reverse engineering has been recast as illegitimate in the name of intellectual property protection, mirroring shifts in the way we have come to speak about creativity and innovation.

Parametric politics is the politics of design. We need to develop a collective language – an idiom of expression, which entails the singularity of practice – that helps organize the production of subjectivity and social relations in ways that are not constrained by the (pre)formatting of action in algorithmic architectures. While we approach the Rancierian attentiveness to the autonomization of the aesthetic as an aspect of the real subsumption of aesthetic experience, we also draw on the notion of ‘procedural literacy’ popularized by the game theorist Ian Bogost: ‘When we play games, we operate those models, our actions constrained by those rules’ (Bogost 2011: 4). A parametric politics for us means identifying, testing and, where possible, transforming the rules that delimit how we oper-

ate within the machinic arrangements of logistical media apparatuses. Maker movements have embraced the collective ability to appropriate the infrastructures of informatized production, social philosophy has rediscovered craft. Our variety of design thinking also draws on the philosophies of machinism we think we need to engage in to escape the presentist politics of isolating algorithms as autonomous digital agents, as useful as algorithmic accountability analyses can be. Software studies has drawn attention to the semiotics of software, while Maurizio Lazzarato calls attention to the asignifying semiotics of machinic assemblages.

Finally, parametric politics is an attempt to bring the machine back into view, into the comprehension of a specific politics (where we understand the machine in the sense of Marx's *Grundrisse*, i.e. a distributed assemblage whose operational logic both enables and limits the autonomy of its constituent elements as well as the extent of its involvement in the production of subjectivity). Piratical practices operate at the boundaries of such a parametric politics. Their machinic scope is neither comprehended nor governed by the traditional juridical problematization of piracy and the conception of politics it presupposes.

In your research, as well as in your answer just now, you try to relate pirate practices to what you call a politics of anonymity (Rossiter and Zehle 2014b). Can you further elaborate as to what anonymity in this context refers to?

As argued above, piracy is neither adequately nor exhaustively comprehended in terms of the legality or illegality of its practices. What must come into view is what used to be referred to as so-called primitive accumulation (or, as David Harvey called it, accumulation by dispossession, which links these processes more directly to the dynamics of commoning) – how something becomes property, a 'resource' to begin with, and not start with its status as property as a given. The shift from a comparatively open destination web to the walled gardens of commercial media is a prime example of this process of exploiting and extracting value from the common (a social relation) in order to enclose the commons (the expressive form of social relations).

Anonymity is likewise a non-proprietary resource, and a key element in commoning strategies. The refusal to be identified and captured by processes of subjectivation links practices of anonymity to the social production of the common, but also to what we might call the *a priori* of any politics of rights – what Étienne Balibar has, following Hannah Arendt, referred to as the right to have rights. If there is a right to have rights, there has to be political subjectivity prior to citizenship. Hobbes knew this, of course, but what struck him as a dangerous thought experiment was limited as a potential attribute of the indigenous peoples of the new world. Today, the renaissance of animist thought serves as yet another reminder that humanity and subjectivity are coupled only within specific cosmopolitical horizons. So anonymity refers to a type of political subjectivity that is not articulated in terms of citizenship, identity, representation.

All that remains is expression and action without enclosure. At the same time, anonymity communicates with itself and to the world through, more often than not, commercial infrastructures. This is not insignificant, and it is one reason why anonymity operates differently online. At this point we note the intersection between the political economy and territorial mediations of digital infrastructures such as data centres or server farms and the internal operations of anonymity. To be anonymous, in other words, is not to be severed from relations of control. We are not romantics in that sense, but questions relating to anonymity and autonomy at the level of infrastructures that have been a core register of net-cultural engagement since the very beginning are also and necessarily a concern of parametric politics, of the creation of interfaces with relations of control that allow us to address whatever effects of subjective constitution these relations establish.

The territorial consists of juridical, geological, economic and social-political struggles over spatial imaginaries, formations and their temporal variations. As an object of computational measure and calculation, territory works to contain and govern through techniques of deduction and exclusion. It does this through the design of parametric politics. That which does not conform to the rule-set of parameters is beyond measure and therefore free. Yet, paradoxically, this freedom is accompanied by a

form of illegitimacy vis-à-vis the struggle for power, since it is existence beyond accountability. This is also the paradox of anonymity: it only exists as a collective ensemble of sociality (beyond itself) once it registers within the parameters of control, even if it does so as disruption. Which is why we not only want to think piracy beyond its determination by property, but anonymity beyond its determination by identity.

Expression has to pass through infrastructure, whether that is the body or the machine (the body as machine). So even when communication is secured with sophisticated encryption technologies, it is also being indexed as data within server stacks. And while data may enjoy a life without identity, someone or some entity is footing the power bill for energy consumed and costs related to the construction and maintenance of data infrastructures. This inevitably means they want a return on investment, since the idea of public infrastructures for communication no longer attracts much support from the neoliberal state. Such forces and material conditions constitute an ethico-political dimension that all too often goes overlooked within the cult of anonymity. Expression is not just a practice of multiplication (of discourse, practice, relations, subjectivities). It is also a practice of subtraction. And this is also an important attribute that we invoke through the practices of piracy. Subtraction not of value from property, but more the subtraction of resources from the common. Piracy, then, is also a practice of depletion. Our interest is in asking how we think of practices of design, of invention and orchestration as the work of politics within networked ecologies situated within zones of depletion and economies of exhaustion. Depletion is where the common begins, in sites to which no one lays claims anymore because they have been exhausted. Exhaustion leaves fragments, ruins, waste – it is what comes after production, after use, after work (Zehle 2015). Piracy not only operates in this space, its movements across machinic assemblages facilitate our comprehension of the role of informatization in the structural transformation of work more generally (Rossiter and Zehle 2015).

You mention the rise of a culture driven by a desire for invisibility and escape from neoliberal networks of capture. Alexander Galloway and Eu-

gene Thacker have employed a similar vocabulary, just as Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri speak of an exodus of the multitude. You also seem to conceive of invisibility as a form of withdrawal of free labour from the digital economy and as an immunitary device against overly 'imperial ambitions'. Yet you acknowledge its utopian-romantic bend, and stress the continuing need for institutional engagement (the figure of the whistleblower, for example). How do you situate yourself in relation to these other approaches? And, furthermore, as it appears that, instead, the emancipatory struggles of the previous decades were mostly aimed precisely at 'becoming visible' (in an institutional sense, through the acquisition of rights, the recognition of identities, etc.) has there been a genuine shift in the logic of emancipatory practices?

As to the last question: in online communication, the trace is trackable, regardless of whether you block cookies or hide your IP address. But it's not a shift, at least not simply from one to the other – politics organized around representation is alive and well, including a politics of rights (just consider the occupy / pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong, or the electoral victories of anti-austerity parties across Europe). The freedom to organize includes the freedom from surveillance, involving both invisibility/visibility. A default setting for a politics of anonymity would be to proceed by way of encryption. Yet it has become increasingly apparent since Snowden, NSA, et al., that everyone follows everyone else. This is the mutual surveillance game. Interestingly, anti-surveillance tools have much in common with the double agency of a different era – and with a poetics of disappearance and desubjectivation. So again, this is part of what engaging piracy on its own terrain can do: it opens up our analysis of the computational conjuncture beyond the historical horizon of the digital society and the presumption that we need to comprehend it above all in the technological terms of informatization.

As to the apparent opposition between withdrawal and engagement: the latter might also manifest as collective practices of inventing new institutional forms. When movements organize, they are building political and social infrastructures whose dynamics will often take on properties specific to the media of communication, the architectures of code and, let's not forget, the materiality of the built environment. But as we mentioned ear-

lier, there is also a larger scale of political economic forces associated with the commercial infrastructures through which the communication practices of movements must necessarily pass. This raises the paradox of anonymity, or a politics of the invisible, which also registers as a technical trace. So whatever gestures of withdrawal one may attribute to labour-power, there remains the lingering problem of the trace and the economy it fosters. The general problem of post-autonomia as presented in the writings of Virno, Hardt and Negri is an insufficient knowledge of the politics and economy of the technical apparatuses of communication. This is less of a problem in the work of Franco 'Bifo' Berardi, and not one at all for writers of a new generation like Matteo Pasquinelli or Tiziana Teranova.

David Graeber has referred to figures associated with post-autonomia as 'impresarios of the historical moment' (Graeber 2008). The political character of multitudinal agency is notoriously difficult to grasp and gauge; and how useful a single-concept political ontology ultimately is remains unclear. But we can, at least, study the effects of its mobilization, as well as contextualize this usage – just as the activities of the multitude in the heydays of Atlantic piracy help us understand how the open spaces of the sea became mapped to operate like factories, the piratical multitudes of today help us understand the role of logistical infrastructures. In this context it bears repetition that withdrawal is a form of engagement. The moment of retreat is constitutive of new relations. People want to see this put to the test and are disappointed with outcomes when bloggers enter politics. Similar analyses have been made of the wide range of pirate parties; while we follow their activities, we are more interested in registers of the piratical that lie beyond the politics of representation.

The metaphor of the multitude has sharpened our analytical vision in the sense that we pay much closer attention to non-identitarian forms of collectivity and agency. The Italian post-autonomia thought has also paved the way for analyses and appreciations of post-union, or post-party practices of building capacities to intervene. So there is, in a sense, more politics than ever. But at the same time it cannot by definition tell us something about the directedness of these forces.

A politics of the multitude that has nothing to say about the agency of machines seems of limited use to us. And we are not especially interested in teasing out the theoretical nuances of a concept better left to devotees of philosophy who in many ways are weary of the work of thinking the constitution of technical objects. Instead, we speak about piratical networks as machinic assemblages, which include clear and direct links to financial networks, the anonymous politics of offshore finance, of anonymous corporations, etc. We might also learn a thing or two about piratical practices from the errancy of algorithmic agency. Here, we think of the failure that comes with parameters in the design of algorithms for high frequency trading (HFT). Low-latency networks engineered to maximise the exploitation liquidity within markets are often promoted as reducing risk and exposure to market volatility for investors. Well, the 'flash crash' of 2010 brought that ruse to an end. Or at least it should have. No matter how carefully conceived, the algorithms of HFT are never able to completely account for unforeseen 'behaviour' in markets. Contingency, in other words, exceeds even the time of transaction within the speed of nano-seconds. This prompts us to think of the politics of the interval. How to identify, and exploit for political purposes, the uncertainty of time unaccounted for by even the most sophisticated algorithmic tools of inspection?

This brings us back to the question of visibility versus invisibility. In essence, this is a question of the power of discourse, of epistemology, to register presence and action in a world made operational. Anonymity offers one route toward a politics of the inactionable, a politics of relations without registration. This is what Foucault may have meant in privileging the status of the 'non-discursive' as a correlate of the 'limit-experience' of errant subjects, of desubjectification and a refusal to be governed, finding freedom in and as objects of experience. Such is the agency of machines, of a politics of the interval, of intervention in the logic of machinic self-organization, of modifications of parameters above or below the thresholds of perception of the laboring body. If cinematic practices indeed prefigure the computational, an ancestry worth keeping is the gesture of re-appropriating the machinic eye. No accident, perhaps, that the scanner (including surveillance cameras and in fact all implements of vision-based organization and logistical governance, along with non-human vision

such as infrared and a new generation of low-cost satellite-based imaging systems) has become an object of increasing political attention.

The title of one of your essays states that ‘privacy is theft’ (Rossiter and Zehle 2014a). This can be read (sarcastically?) as an affirmation of Dave Egger’s criticism of web 2.0 ideology, as advocating the elimination of privacy qua basic right/good. The elimination of anonymity is co-incidental with this, it suffers the same fate. But it seems that, as privacy designates a stance advocating a proprietary ‘keeping to oneself’ of data, anonymity can be dissociated from this, as it functions positively in online pirate practices by securing the collective sharing of data irrespective of ownership or authorization. Whereas in The Circle the elimination of privacy entails the total elimination of anonymity, here, privacy and anonymity seem to occupy different, perhaps even partly incompatible registers due to the notion of ownership implicit in privacy. Nevertheless, on an ideological level for most internet pirates anonymity is precisely a means to secure or regain privacy as a fundamental liberal value and condition, i.e. they make for a functional continuum. Is there a conflict, then, between what pirates do and the way they reflect politically on their own practice? And can you further elaborate how you conceive the relation between privacy and anonymity in general?

If communication is commerce, privacy involves reappropriation. Privacy nowadays is coincident with property, with technologies of enclosure. And indeed, as you point out, this has implications for anonymity, which is always-already entwined within juridical regimes of proprietarization. How to reclaim privacy in ways that shift acts of piracy beyond violating the rule of law in the pursuit of anonymity becomes a key political task of the present. As we note in our text (Rossiter and Zehle 2014a), it requires a collective work of invention to reroute – or as we put in that writing, to delink – our communicative relations from the capture of value by the infrastructural systems of lifestream logistics. Privacy, then, becomes one condition of possibility for anonymity. This came to the attention of many following the Snowden revelations about the NSA PRISM program. With the core of privacy under attack for individuals, governments and corporations, it dawned on many for the first time that piracy-as-anonymity is no longer exclusive to the bedroom follies of computer

geeks, but rather an ontological layer of techno-sociality that now occupies a central space within the pantheon of online rights. Unsurprisingly, this led to a blossoming in the tech industry with any number of encryption software and VPN products hitting the market.

Lastly, you describe contemporary networks as sites where acts of communication are by definition acts of surveillance (Rossiter and Zehle 2014a). It is here that a desire for anonymity (as it intersects with an unaffected desire to communicate, but without being systematically monitored) becomes a stake in a political struggle. But by showing that surveillance has indeed become the main instrument for securing state and corporate governance and is intrinsic to the technico-legal standards and protocols enabling communication through which given power ratios are distributed and reproduced, does this preclude the emergence of a space in which such a desire for anonymity can be articulated?

Anonymity is worth pursuing if the price we pay for identity continues to rise. Part of the politics of anonymity is the on-going race between those who leave tracks and those who read them. Can we think of infrastructures that allow us to move anonymously? That’s where ghosts enter the stage, as they have in the theory of excommunication.

Another strategy is to lower the cost of identity. If identity constitutes an economy, and if we believe that something like the common helps articulate alternatives, this includes a commoning of identity. Anonymity is an element of that, but attribution and recognition play a major role in commons-based peer production and other forms of sharing.

We would also point to the ways in which low-latency networks (including high frequency trading systems and the associated ‘dark pools’ of anonymized financial automation) give rise to a different kind of anonymity, namely one that is subject to the architectures and economies of financialization. At this point, we begin to arrive at some of our core interests: the relation between labour and extraction machines, the centrality of black box design strategies for infrastructures whose operative logics

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are not easily folded back into the analytical and political horizons of representation, the general relation between anonymity and algorithmic architectures, the simultaneity of the structuring and capture of sociality and modes of relation. As ‘enemy of all’, piracy offers a powerful figure to a thinking that engages these practices and operations as logics of existentialization, as Félix Guattari put it, rather than from within the limited frame of public/private distinctions.

Perhaps most importantly, piracy continues to imply a non-sovereign imaginary that cuts across most of our conceptual concerns. We have long tried to somehow bring the local and the global into relation, and what we have gotten is a global civil society that mirrors the idea of an international community, both rooted firmly in the logic of sovereignty. Piracy is also a way to think about the political – parametric – registers of terrorist activity: Twitter welcomes free speech, but deletes links to the Foley killing by ISIS members, for instance. Social media editing is not necessarily censorship but the exercise of an editorial ethos, of course, so this is not really a debate about journalism ethics. It’s a debate about how much influence the figure of the ‘enemy of all’ has in shaping the logistical infrastructures that sustain the way we create and relate: no figure of (our) humanity without a satanic figure that hails from beyond its sovereign boundaries. And as long as we speak about the human, the enemy of all will be with us.

Biographies

Ned Rossiter is Professor of Communication at the Institute for Culture and Society, University of Western Sydney and teaches at the School of Humanities and Communication Arts. His forthcoming book is titled *Software, Infrastructure, Labor: A Media Theory of Logistical Nightmares*. Currently he is coordinating the tricontinental research project *Logistical Worlds: Infrastructure, Software, Labour* (<http://logisticalworlds.org>) with Brett Neilson.

Daniël de Zeeuw – Interview with Ned Rossiter & Soenke Zehle

Soenke Zehle is lecturer in Media Theory at the Academy of Fine Arts Saar, Germany, and co-founder and managing director of the academy's xm:lab – Experimental Media Lab. His recent research has focused on the relationship between algorithmic cultures and the status of aesthetic experience, with a particular focus on documentarisms as well as depletion design strategies.

Daniël de Zeeuw is an editor of *Krisis* and a PhD candidate at ASCA (University of Amsterdam) researching the political aesthetics of anonymity in popular culture, art and activism.

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