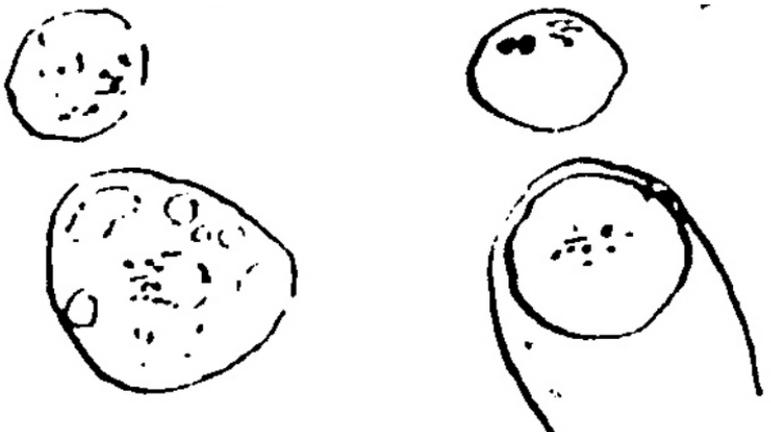


Friend/Ships

a Parasitic

Reading

Room





Reading Friendships.  
A continent. reading group, Paris. June 2016.  
Image: Paul Boshears, continent.

WE ARE TOLD THAT THE -SHIP OF "FRIENDSHIP"  
is not descended from the homonymous term for a boat,  
although the truth (*étumos*) that is raised by its etymology  
leaves us less certain of its relationship to seacraft. John  
Durham Peterson, in his *The Marvelous Clouds*, "trawls" the  
etymology of "-ship" and finds that this nautical vehicle is  
linked to creation, constitution, and condition.

—Paul Boshears  
"What Is This Craft Called 'Friendship'?"  
*Body of Us*, 2018

# Friend/Ships

## a Parasitic Reading Room

Friendship is amongst the most fundamental social practices of humankind. We experience and enact friendship in all its ambiguity – the concurrence of sameness and difference – from early childhood on. In as much as our practices of friendship shape and reflect our relation to the world, our relation to the world is reflected in our understanding of relations, connections, attachments – friendship. The space we give is the space we have.

But who are "we" when we talk about "us"? In times of an ever more destructive anthropocentrism, of growing nationalisms, in times of increasing social drift, such false assemblages have lost their innocence. Because what connects "us" might equally separate "us" from one, from the other. There are cracks in any such friendly narrative, cracks through which, as Leonard Cohen reminds, the light gets in.



Reading Friendships  
A continent. reading group, Paris 2016.  
Image: Paul Boshears, continent.

Facing critical developments in France, in Europe and across the globe, “our” evening at Centre culturel suisse centers on questions of the political potentials and worldbuilding implications of friendship as a means to navigate in between space – where I end and you begin.

How can the fundamental experience called friendship be mobilized as a political force today? What can democracy – or politics as such – be based on, if it accepts concepts of “difference” and “identity” (and thus: “subjectivity”) not as given categorical representations and pre-defined life categories but as movements of becoming and processes of change, matters of ongoing negotiation? Which friendly modes of doing and orienting together can empower new forms of co-existence that might escape the ways in which contemporary technologies and governing forces preemptively capture emotions and control bodies absorbing them into the exclusionary narratives inscribed into representational democracy? What support structures, modes of collective organization, institutional and technological frameworks could be developed to motivate, sustain and support forms of care and action, in solidarity, that would accommodate multiplicity and difference?

Based on previous conversations around the topic in the frame of “Body of Us”, the Swiss contribution to the London Design Biennale 2018, the project’s curator Rebekka Kiesewetter has invited friends to continue the discussion around political friendship: dpr-barcelona, initiators of the “Parasitic reading room” at the 4th Istanbul Design Biennial 2018, architect Ross Exo Adams, one of the contributors to *Body of Us* publication, and the continent. experimental

publishing collective, initiators of “Reading Friendships Paris“ at Centre culturel suisse 2016. At this same venue, three years later, the stage opens for an edition of the "Parasitic Reading Room" and a reprise of "Reading Friendships", an evening of readings, thinkings, creating and discussion.

You are welcome to bring friends and family, and to contribute vividly with your thoughts and note, reference, media, piece, book or object that comes to mind and comes to friendship. A collective reader will be produced, on stage, during the sessions in Paris on March 20th, 2019.

Can "we" be friends?



# Talking to Strangers

Annals of Contemporary Thought - Journal of Philosophy

BARBARA K. ALLEN

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

## Epiphany, a Good Thing

Epiphany is a good thing. It is a moment of clarity, a moment when the world seems to open up and we see things in a new light. It is a moment of grace, a moment when we are reminded of our place in the world and our responsibility to others. It is a moment of joy, a moment when we are filled with a sense of wonder and awe. It is a moment of hope, a moment when we are inspired to live our lives to the fullest. It is a moment of love, a moment when we are reminded of the love that God has for us and the love that we have for each other. It is a moment of peace, a moment when we are at last at home in the world. It is a moment of truth, a moment when we are reminded of the truth that we have always known but have often forgotten. It is a moment of life, a moment when we are reminded of the life that God has given us and the life that we have to live. It is a moment of death, a moment when we are reminded of the death that we have all experienced and the death that we will all experience. It is a moment of resurrection, a moment when we are reminded of the resurrection that God has wrought for us and the resurrection that we have to live. It is a moment of glory, a moment when we are reminded of the glory that God has for us and the glory that we have to live. It is a moment of triumph, a moment when we are reminded of the triumph that God has wrought for us and the triumph that we have to live. It is a moment of victory, a moment when we are reminded of the victory that God has for us and the victory that we have to live. It is a moment of peace, a moment when we are at last at home in the world. It is a moment of truth, a moment when we are reminded of the truth that we have always known but have often forgotten. It is a moment of life, a moment when we are reminded of the life that God has given us and the life that we have to live. It is a moment of death, a moment when we are reminded of the death that we have all experienced and the death that we will all experience. It is a moment of resurrection, a moment when we are reminded of the resurrection that God has wrought for us and the resurrection that we have to live. It is a moment of glory, a moment when we are reminded of the glory that God has for us and the glory that we have to live. It is a moment of triumph, a moment when we are reminded of the triumph that God has wrought for us and the triumph that we have to live. It is a moment of victory, a moment when we are reminded of the victory that God has for us and the victory that we have to live.

# EDOUARD GLISSANT

## Poetics of Relation

Translated by Betsy Wing

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PRESS

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# JEAN-LUC NANCY

## Corpus

Translated by Richard A. Ross

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PRESS

Corpus is a collection of essays by Jean-Luc Nancy, one of the most important philosophers of the late 20th century. The essays explore the relationship between the individual and the community, the self and the other, and the finite and the infinite. Nancy's philosophy is characterized by a deep concern for the question of how we can live together in a world that is fundamentally divided and yet somehow unified. He argues that the only way to overcome this division is through a process of sharing, or what he calls "communion." This communion is not a simple act of sharing, but a complex process of mutual recognition and respect. It is a process that requires us to acknowledge our own limitations and the limitations of others, and to find a way to live together in a world that is fundamentally divided. Nancy's philosophy is a challenge to the traditional view of the self as a separate, self-contained entity. Instead, he sees the self as always already in relation to others, and as always already in the process of becoming. This view of the self has profound implications for our understanding of community, politics, and ethics. It is a view that offers a new way of thinking about the world and our place in it.

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# BARBARA K. ALLEN

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

# LETTER FROM NANCY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Barbara K. Allen is a professor of Philosophy at the University of California, Berkeley. She has published several books and articles on the philosophy of Jean-Luc Nancy. Her most recent book is *Corpus*, a collection of essays on the relationship between the individual and the community. She is also the author of *Who Comes After the Subject?* and *The Inoperative Community*.

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# prophelia, 2011, vol. 1, no. 1, 1-13

## Friendship

George Burt Foster

I studied that day after that morning when the sunlight under the trees  
shines, the world is so bright, the world is so bright, the world is so bright.

Just the simple that it is in the presence of God, the world is so bright,  
the world is so bright, the world is so bright, the world is so bright.

prophelia, 2011, vol. 1, no. 1, 1-13

# NOTES

This special edition of *prophelia* was created for the  
centennial of the birth of Jean-Luc Nancy. It is a collection  
of essays on the philosophy of Jean-Luc Nancy, one of the  
most important philosophers of the late 20th century.

- EDITORS: Jean-Luc Nancy, Paul Ricoeur, Jürgen Habermas
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A. Author, Editor and Photographer  
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Philosophy and the Department of Literature, University of  
California, Berkeley.



# What Is This Craft Called “Friendship”?

by Paul Boshears

AN ESSAY ON HOW TO BECOME PARTICULAR

---

WE ARE TOLD THAT THE -SHIP OF “FRIENDSHIP” is not descended from the homonymous term for a boat, although the truth (*étumos*) that is raised by its etymology leaves us less certain of its relationship to seacraft. John Durham Peterson, in his *The Marvelous Clouds*, “trawls” the etymology of “ship” and finds that this nautical vehicle is linked to creation, constitution, and condition. The English *friendship* finds its analog in its Germanic cousins *Freundschaft* (German), *venskab* (Danish), and *vriendschap* (Dutch). In each of these the suffix indicates the condition of being a friend, that is, the state of acting in the manner of a friend. But *-ship*, *-schaft*, *-skab*, and *-schap* each also can connote the quality or art of the nouns they modify. The Dutch term *schepping* (creation) and German *Schöpfung* (creation) find their cognate in the English term *shape*. This constellation of associations can also be seen in the term *landscape* which names the vision painters create of the earth before them. Furthermore, there is the archaic English meaning of shaft as “creation, origin, make, nature, or constitution.”<sup>1</sup> Here we are led to wonder and ask, what does it mean, then, to say, in English, that we “make friends”?

## Paul Boshears

### What Is This Craft Called “Friendship”?

Source: *Body of Us*, 2018.

Image: Nina Jäger, continent.

What This Cook Book "Is/Isn't"

We are in the habit of "reading" it and discussing from the beginning to the end... I would like to see the book...

This expression is based on the proposition of a collection of friends who made a publication and then... I would like to see the book...

1. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 2. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 3. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher...

degrees of one another through the mediation of a State in the broad genus of people living in a society... I have a number of reasons...

I have the above reasons, and it is also obvious because my country... I have a number of reasons...

1. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 2. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 3. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher...

but it seems that we discuss our "readings"... I would like to see the book...

1. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 2. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 3. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher...

As an act in the above discussion of the two modes of review, the general act of reading and... I would like to see the book...

offering is a choice of distributing what is available, it is fundamentally an available choice... I would like to see the book...

1. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 2. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 3. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher...

1. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 2. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 3. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher...

Provisioning an infrastructure that is needed for generating meaningful community activity... I would like to see the book...

1. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 2. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 3. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher...

1. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 2. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 3. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher...

1. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 2. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 3. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher...

However, from which we derive our word "community" is also a critical term for the analysis... I would like to see the book...

1. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 2. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 3. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher...

1. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 2. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 3. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher...

1. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 2. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 3. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher...

It is to be clear that we are in a situation of "readings" and all such things to read... I would like to see the book...

1. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 2. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 3. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher...

1. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 2. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 3. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher...

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1. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 2. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher... 3. The author, Thomas, is a philosopher...

26. Regan, J. and David, L. 'The Philosophy of the Good', *Journal of Philosophical Investigation*, 1998, pp. 1-15.

27. David, L. 'The Philosophy of the Good', *Journal of Philosophical Investigation*, 1998, pp. 16-30.

28. Regan, J. and David, L. 'The Philosophy of the Good', *Journal of Philosophical Investigation*, 1998, pp. 31-45.

which they withdraw themselves. The books themselves refer to an existence. This existence, because it is no longer a presence, begins to be deployed in history, and in the worst of histories, literary history. Literary history, inquisitive, painstaking, in search of documents, takes hold of a deceased will and transforms into knowledge its own purchase on what has fallen to posterity. This is the moment of complete works. One wants to publish "everything," one wants to say "everything," as if one were anxious about only one thing: that everything be said; as if the "everything is said" would finally allow us to stop a dead voice, to stop the pitiful silence that arises from it and to contain firmly within a well-circumscribed horizon what the equivocal, posthumous anticipation still mixes in illusorily with the words of the living. As long as the one who is close to us exists and, with him, the thought in which he affirms himself, his thought opens itself to us, but preserved in this very relation, and what preserves it is not only the mobility of life (this would be very little), but the unpredictability introduced into this thought by the strangeness of the end. And this movement, unpredictable and always hidden in its infinite imminence—that of dying, perhaps—arises not because its term could not be given in advance, but because it never constitutes an event that takes place, even when it occurs, never a reality that can be grasped: ungraspable and hence forth entirely in the ungraspable is the one destined to this movement. It is this unpredictable that speaks when he speaks, it is this which in his lifetime conceals and reserves his thought, separates and frees it from all seizure, that of the outside as well as that of the inside.

I also know that, in his books, Georges Bataille seems to speak of himself with a freedom without restraint that should free us from all discretion—but that does not give us the right to put ourselves in his place, nor does it give us the power to speak in his absence. And is it himself? The "I" whose presence his search when it expresses itself, toward whom does an I very different from the ego that those and unhappy particularity of life would stake a memory. Everything leads one to think that stake in such a movement introduces an existence of him who indeed decided to

## Maurice Blanchot

### Friendship.

Source: *Friendship*, Stanford University Press, 1997.

speaking of it but not to claim it as his own, still less to make of it an event of his biography (rather, a gap in which the biography disappears). And when we ask ourselves the question "Who was the subject of this experience?" this question is perhaps already an answer if, even to him who led it, the experience asserted itself in this interrogative form, by substituting the openness of a "Who?" without answer for the closed and singular "I"; not that this means that he had simply to ask himself "What is this I that I am?" but much more radically to recover himself without reprieve, no longer as "I" but as a "Who?" the unknown and slipping being of an indefinite "Who?"



We must give up trying to know those to whom we are linked by something essential; by this I mean we must greet them in the relation with the unknown in which they greet us as well, in our estrangement. Friendship, this relation without dependence, without episode, yet into which all of the simplicity of life enters, passes by way of the recognition of the common strangeness that does not allow us to speak of our friends but only to speak to them, not to make of them a topic of conversations (or essays), but the movement of understanding in which, speaking to us, they reserve, even on the most familiar terms, an infinite distance, the fundamental separation on the basis of which what separates becomes relation. Here discretion lies not in the simple refusal to put forward confidences (how vulgar this would be, even to think of it), but it is the interval, the pure interval that, from me to this other who is a friend, measures all that is between us, the interruption of being that never authorizes me to use him, or my knowledge of him (were it to praise him), and that, far from preventing all communication, brings us together in the difference and sometimes the silence of speech.

It is true that at a certain moment this discretion becomes the fissure of death. I could imagine that in one sense nothing has changed: in the "secret" between us that was capable of taking place, in the continuity of discourse, without interrupting it, there was already, from the time in which we were in the presence of one another, this imminent presence, though tacit, of the final discretion, and it is on the basis of this discretion that the precaution of friendly words calmly affirmed itself.

concerned with the common world, which remains 'inhuman' in a very literal sense unless it is constantly talked about by human beings.<sup>39</sup> Rather than to intimacy or connection, Arendt compares political friendship to respect, 'the regard for the person from the distance which the space of the world puts between us'.<sup>40</sup> The world is the substance of the distance between friends, which is the very condition for an effective exercise of plurality. The differences between friends that make them situated individuals, is conditioned by their mutual equality. The friend is both irreducibly different from, and equal to, though not the same as, the self. In other words, friendship has a political quality to the extent that it, firstly, constitutes a space in which the uniqueness of friends, i.e. their irreducibility, can become visible. The dialogue between friends 'doesn't need a conclusion in order to be meaningful', Arendt states.<sup>41</sup> Secondly, friendship is predicated on equality: "The equalization in friendship does not of course mean that the friends become the same or equal to each other, but rather that they become equal partners in a common world."<sup>42</sup> The acknowledgement of the irreducible plurality of visions on the world that is possible in friendship, enables the, polemic and never-ceasing, conversation about the common world, and maintains the differences between the friends. That is why respecting, instead of erasing, differences between people is for Arendt an important quality of friendship. Equality also and mainly implies that friendship is a horizontal relationship, because, given that, authority, i.e. rule, is not necessary.<sup>43</sup>

In conclusion, the conversation between friends about the world contributes to the maintenance of the world, because it brings into being a mode of community. 'Community is what friendship achieves.'<sup>44</sup> This happens in the conversation, in which we try to 'see the world (...) from the other fellow's point of view'.<sup>45</sup> In this conversation, each friend understands how and in what specific way the other is different from the other, who as a person is forever unconnected with what is for Arendt the political *Denkungsart* or enlarged mentality.<sup>47</sup>

## Marieke Borren

Arendt and Derrida on friendship and the problem of political community.

Source: *Amor mundi: Hannah Arendt's political phenomenology of world*. F & N Eigen Beheer, 2010.

39 'On humanity in dark times', MDT, 24-25.

40 HC, 243.

41 Arendt, 1990, 'Philosophy and politics', 1990 [1954]

42 'Philosophy and politics', 82-83.

43 'Philosophy and politics', 82-84.

44 'Philosophy and politics', 82-83.

45 'Philosophy and politics', 83-84.

46 'Philosophy and politics', 83-84.

47 See chapter 1.



'Friends With Self,' by Sara Krugman  
A CORRESPONDENCE OF, WITH AND BETWEEN HANDS  
*Body of Us*, 2018

Ring the bells (ring the bells)  
that still can ring  
Forget your perfect offering.

There is a crack in everything  
(there is a crack in everything)

That's how the light gets in...

## **Leonard Cohen**

Anthem.

Source: [youtube.com/mDTph7mer3I](https://www.youtube.com/mDTph7mer3I)

© Sony/ATV Music Publishing  
LLC, 1992

Performed by LEONARD COHEN

# Anthem

For SATB\* and Piano with Optional Instrumental Accompaniment

Duration: ca. 3:45

Arranged by  
KIRBY SHAW

Words and Music by  
LEONARD COHEN

Soulfully, with inspiration (♩. = ca. 72)

Soprano  
Alto

Tenor  
Bass

*mf*

Oo.

Soulfully, with inspiration (♩. = ca. 72)

Piano

*mf*

B<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup>(add9)/D

oo.

E<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup>/F B<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup>(add9)/D

\*Available separately:  
SATB (00269786), SAB (00269787), SSA (00269788), ShowTrax CD (00269790)  
Combo parts available as a digital download (00269789)  
(tp1 1-2, tsx, tbn, gtr, b, dm)  
hal Leonard.com/choral  
Visit [choralmusicdirect.com](http://choralmusicdirect.com) to purchase and download digital scores and audio mp3s.

DO NOT  
PHOTOCOPY



Image: Nina Jäger, continent.

DEAR READER,  
DEAR FRIEND,

A CONTINENT. SPECIAL EDITION  
LONDON, SEPT. 2018

Its limits are inherent in the fact that strength and power are not the same; that power arises only where people act together, but not where people grow stronger as individuals. No strength is ever great enough to replace power; wherever strength is confronted by power, strength will always succumb. But even the sheer strength to escape and to resist while fleeing cannot materialize where reality is bypassed or forgotten—as when an individual thinks himself too good and noble to pit himself against such a world, or when he fails to face up to the absolute “negativeness” of prevailing world conditions at a given time. How tempting it was, for example, simply to ignore the intolerably stupid blabber of the Nazis. But seductive though it may be to yield to such temptations and to hole up in the refuge of one’s own psyche, the result will always be a loss of humanness along with the forsaking of reality.

Thus, in the case of a friendship between a German and a Jew under the conditions of the Third Reich it would scarcely have been a sign of humanness for the friends to have said: Are we not both human beings? It would have been mere evasion of reality and of the world common to both at that time; they would not have been resisting the world as it was. A law that prohibited the intercourse of Jews and Germans could be evaded but could not be defied by people who denied the reality of the distinction. In keeping with a humanness that had not lost the solid ground of reality, a humanness in the midst of the reality of persecution, they would have had to say to each other: A German and a Jew, and friends. But wherever such a friendship succeeded at that time (of course the situation is completely changed, nowadays) and was maintained in purity, that is to say without false guilt complexes on the one side and false complexes of superiority or inferiority on the other, a bit of humanness in a world become inhuman had been achieved.

## IV

The example of friendship, which I have adduced because it seems to me for a variety of reasons to be specially pertinent to

## **Hannah Arendt**

On humanity in dark times.  
Thoughts about Lessing.

Source: *Men in dark Times*, Harcourt  
Brace Jovanovich, 1995.

What if, to paraphrase James Baldwin, to redefine 'we' today may demand that we redefine the terms of the western world? What if, in other words, the practical, material and ideological conditions of 'our' democracy today (i.e. that shining ideological edifice in which we are currently suffocating ourselves and expunge those who are reluctant to adopt it as a universal truth) are precisely those which have precluded from the very beginning the emergence of a 'body of us'? What if democracy, or, if we might expand a bit, modernity more broadly prefigured the (highly uneven) instrumentalization of all bodies as both its means and ends? From the invention of race and the enslavement of African bodies, to the unwaged enslavement of women's bodies in domestic labor, to the political liminality of laboring immigrant bodies today, to the hyper-individuated, secular consumer/property owner, to the 'databodies' that will make of the human a field of instrumental nodes to be managed... What might it mean to imagine bodies as not the site of some kind of invention of rationality or instrumental reason may find purchase (even if conceived toward a radical politics), but rather one which can, collectively, 're-enchant the world' as Bouteldja compels us to think?

Some thoughts to spark discussion...

Lovingly hopeful,  
Ross

**Ross Exo Adams, Nina Jäger,**  
**Ethel Baraona Pohl and**  
**César Reyes Najera**

Infrastructures Of Otherwise.

Source: Source: *Body of Us*, 2018.

might we stay in the wake with and as those whom the state positions to die ungrivable deaths and live lives meant to be unlivable? These are questions of temporality, the *longue durée*, the residence and hold time of the wake. At stake, then is to stay in this wake time toward inhabiting a blackened consciousness that would rupture the structural silences produced and facilitated by, and that produce and facilitate, Black social and physical death.

For, if we are lucky, we live in the knowledge that the wake has positioned us as no-citizen.<sup>30</sup> If we are lucky, the knowledge of this positioning avails us particular ways of re/seeing, re/inhabiting, and re/imagining the world. And we might use these ways of being in the wake in our responses to terror and the varied and various ways that our Black lives are lived under occupation. I want *In the Wake* to declare that we are Black peoples in the wake with no state or nation to protect us, with no citizenship bound to be respected, and to position us in the modalities of Black life lived in, as, under, despite Black death: to think and be and act from there. It is my particular hope that the praxis of the wake and wake work, the theory and performance of the wake and wake work, as modes of attending to Black life and Black suffering, are imagined and performed here with enough specificity to attend to the direness of the multiple and overlapping presents that we face; it is also my hope that the praxis of the wake and wake work might have enough capaciousness to travel and do work that I have not here been able to imagine or anticipate.

## **Christina Sharpe**

The Wake.

Source: *In The Wake. On Blackness and Being*, Duke University Press, 2016.



**1.4** The wake of a cruise ship on the open ocean. Photo taken on March 10, 2011.  
© Bcbounders | Dreamstime.com — Cruise Ship Wake Photo

etc.). It is this unspoken, presupposed oppositional relation that invented racism and its colonial institutions just as it sits at the foundations of capitalism and democracy, inscribing itself as both the form and limits of politics. Their rejection of critique is thus also an acknowledgement of the fact that its products, such as democracy or Reconstruction are themselves not oppositional to capitalism and the violent institutions on which it is based. Perhaps it is seeking recognition of injustices from the very systems that deny justice that is the left's greatest trap?

Instead, Moten and Harney offer (or rather acknowledge) the undercommons as a site constituted by a shared debt that sits both with and against the various institutions and technologies of the modern world. From here emerges something of a source of friendship—an indebtedness (or what Roberto Esposito would have as the co-munus of a community—and at times perhaps love, that may be closer to what I understand as a 'Body of Us'. The undercommons is a kind of coalition of thinking-together for those who recognize themselves not as a kind of 'subjectivity' per-se, but in their shared separation from the State, from institutions and from accepted forms of knowledge production. Their goal is a much more complex one than of the typical rupture we imagine in the term 'revolution', consisting instead in the preparation for a kind of unimagined revolution yet to come—a process likened to improvisation that plays to the sites and zones that have been refused by the State, democracy, the university, capitalism etc. They write "Can this being together in homelessness, this interplay of the refusal of what has been refused, this undercommon oppositionality, be a place from which emerges neither self-consciousness nor knowledge of the other but an improvisation that proceeds from somewhere on the other side of an unasked question?"

If we can return to Bouteldja's passage that I started with, we can see that the 'we' she is speaking to is far from a call to bring together a universal community (which is, perhaps, a contradiction in itself) in universal love, but to encounter the other at the threshold of annihilation—a relationship that is articulated not (merely) on the chaos of the struggle of oppositional subjects (oppressor-oppressed), but on the very foundations of thought on which such a struggle is made legible in the first place.

Perhaps something like the undercommons is close to the 'otherwise' that you mention in your last mail?

Lovingly improvising,  
Ross

**Ross Exo Adams, Nina Jäger,  
Ethel Baraona Pohl and  
César Reyes Najera**

Infrastructures Of Otherwise.

Source: *Body of Us*, 2018.

Image: Nina Jäger, continent.



# A PROPERLY POLITICAL Approaches in Ten Pages

LAUREN BERLANT  
University of Chicago

## Lauren Berlant

A Properly Political Concept of Love: Three Approaches in Ten Pages.

Source: *Cultural Anthropology* 26(4), 2011.

### ONE: LIP (INTRODUCTION TO AMBIVALENCE)

There's a part of me that wants to give a little lip and simply reject that we have never had a properly political concept of love. It's been floated by so many as a solution—literally, a loosening or an unfastening, a dissolution—to the problem of social antagonism, or fractured community. I take the genre of Michael's essay to be propositional, though, as it references only a sliver of what our conversations suggest he actually thinks might be done with love. But I will focus on what's here, because to love is to deal with what's here amid the noise of projected out pasts, futures, and states. But "dealing with" might point too much toward exchange and bargaining, the forging of false equivalences. Maybe I should say what I always say, which is that I propose love to involve a rhythm of an ambition and an intention to stay in sync, which is a lower bar than staying attuned, but still hard and awkward enough.<sup>1</sup> The anxiety to define—a key feature of being in proximity to all magnetic ideas—especially cleaves to love, and so the conversion of a love into a properly political concept must induce attention to what to do with the freight the term ports with it: in this case, quite a huge dust ball.

Michael proposes to release the sensorium from capital, which means from the habits of attention and mediation that translate objects immediately into property, equate possessive individualism with sovereign freedom, and conflate narcissism with recognition, ethics, and justice. He begins with a question of equivalence: if not the money form as the engine of social exchange, then what? What mode of

CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY, Vol. 26, Issue 4, pp. 683–691. ISSN 0886-7356, online ISSN 1548-1360. © 2011 by the American Anthropological Association. All rights reserved. DOI: 10.1111/j.1548-1360.2011.01120.x

## Navigating movements

always go together. When you affect something, you are at the same time opening yourself up to being affected in turn, and in a slightly different way than you might have been the moment before. You have made a transition, however slight. You have stepped over a threshold. Affect is this passing of a threshold, seen from the point of view of the change in capacity. It's crucial to remember that Spinoza uses this to talk about the body. What a body is, he says, is what it can do as it goes along. This is a totally pragmatic definition. A body is defined by what capacities it carries from step to step. What these are exactly is changing constantly. A body's ability to affect or be affected – its charge of affect – isn't something fixed.

So depending on the circumstances, it goes up and down gently like a tide, or maybe storms and crests like a wave, or at times simply bottoms out. It's because this is all attached to the movements of the body that it can't be reduced to emotion. It's not just subjective, which is not to say that there is nothing subjective about it. Spinoza says that every transition is accompanied by a feeling of the change in capacity. The affect and the feeling of the transition are not two different things.

They're two sides of the same coin, just like affecting and being affected. That's the first sense in which affect

is about intensity – every affect is a doubling. The experience of a change, an affecting-being affected, is redoubled by an experience of the experience. This gives the

of depth that stays with it accumulating in memory, in tendency. Emotion is the long experience registers per-

### **Brian Massumi**

Navigating movements.

Source: *Politics of Affect*, Wiley, 2015.

"But we don't intend harm, we are friendly."

"Are we? In the forest, when you picked me up, did you feel friendly?"

"No. Terrified. But that's—it, the forest, the plants, not my own fear, isn't it?"

"What's the difference? It's all you felt. Can't you see," and Osden's voice rose in exasperation, "why I dislike you and you dislike me, all of you? Can't you see that I retransmit every negative or aggressive affect you've felt towards me since we first met? I return your hostility, with thanks. I do it in self-defense. Like Porlock. It is self-defense, though, it's the only technique I developed to replace my original defense of total withdrawal from others. Unfortunately it creates a closed circuit, self-sustaining and self-reinforcing. Your initial reaction to me was the instinctive antipathy to a cripple; by now of course it's hatred. Can you fail to see my point? The forest-mind out there transmits only terror, now, and the only message I can send it is terror, because when exposed to it I can feel nothing except terror!"

"What must we do, then?" said Tomiko, and Mannon replied promptly, "Move camp. To another continent. If there are plant-minds there, they'll be slow to notice us, as this one was; maybe they won't notice us at all."

"It would be a considerable relief," Osden observed stiffly. The others had been watching him with a new curiosity. He had revealed himself, they had seen him as he was, a helpless man in a trap. Perhaps, like Tomiko, they had seen that the trap itself, his crass and cruel egotism, was their own construction, not his. They had built the cage and locked him in it, and like a caged ape he threw filth out through the bars. If, meeting him, they had offered trust, if they had been strong enough to offer him love, how might he have appeared to them?

None of them could have done so, and it was too late now. Given time, given solitude, Tomiko might have built up with him a slow resonance of feeling, a consonance of trust, a harmony; but there was no time, their job must be done. There was not room enough for

the cultivation of so great a thing, and they must make do with sympathy, with pity, the small change of love. Even that much had given her strength, but it was nowhere near enough for him. She could see in his flayed face now his savage resentment of their curiosity, even of her pity.

"Go lie down, that gash is bleeding again," she said, and he obeyed her.

Next morning they packed up, melted down the sprayform hangar and living quarters, lifted *Gum* on mechanical drive and took her halfway round World 4470, over the red and green lands, the many warm-green seas. They had picked out a likely spot on Continent G: a prairie, twenty thousand square kilos of windswept graminiformes. No forest was within a hundred kilos of the site, and there were no lone trees or groves on the plain. The plant-forms occurred only in large species-colonies, never intermingled, except for certain tiny ubiquitous saprophytes and spore-bearers. The team sprayed holomeld over structure forms, and by evening of the thirty-two-hour day were settled in to the new camp. Eskwana was still asleep and Porlock still sedated, but everyone else was cheerful. "You can breathe here!" they kept saying.

Osdan got on his feet and went shakily to the doorway; leaning there he looked through twilight over the dim reaches of the swaying grass that was not grass. There was a faint, sweet odor of pollen on the wind; no sound but the soft, vast sibilance of wind. His bandaged head cocked a little, the empath stood motionless for a long time. Darkness came, and windows of the distant house ceased, there was no sound. He

In the long night Haito Tomi and heard the blood in her as sleepers, the wind blowing, the dreams advancing, the vast stat the universe died slowly, the s She struggled out of her bed, i her cubicle. Eskwana alone straitjacketed, raving softly in h Olleroo and Jenny Chong were playing cards, grim-

### Ursula K. Le Guin

Vaster than Empires and More Slow.

Source: *New Dimensions 1*, Doubleday Books, 1971.

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Image: Nina Jäger, continent.

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# HOW TO ARGUE

VIBES

## FRIENDSHIP

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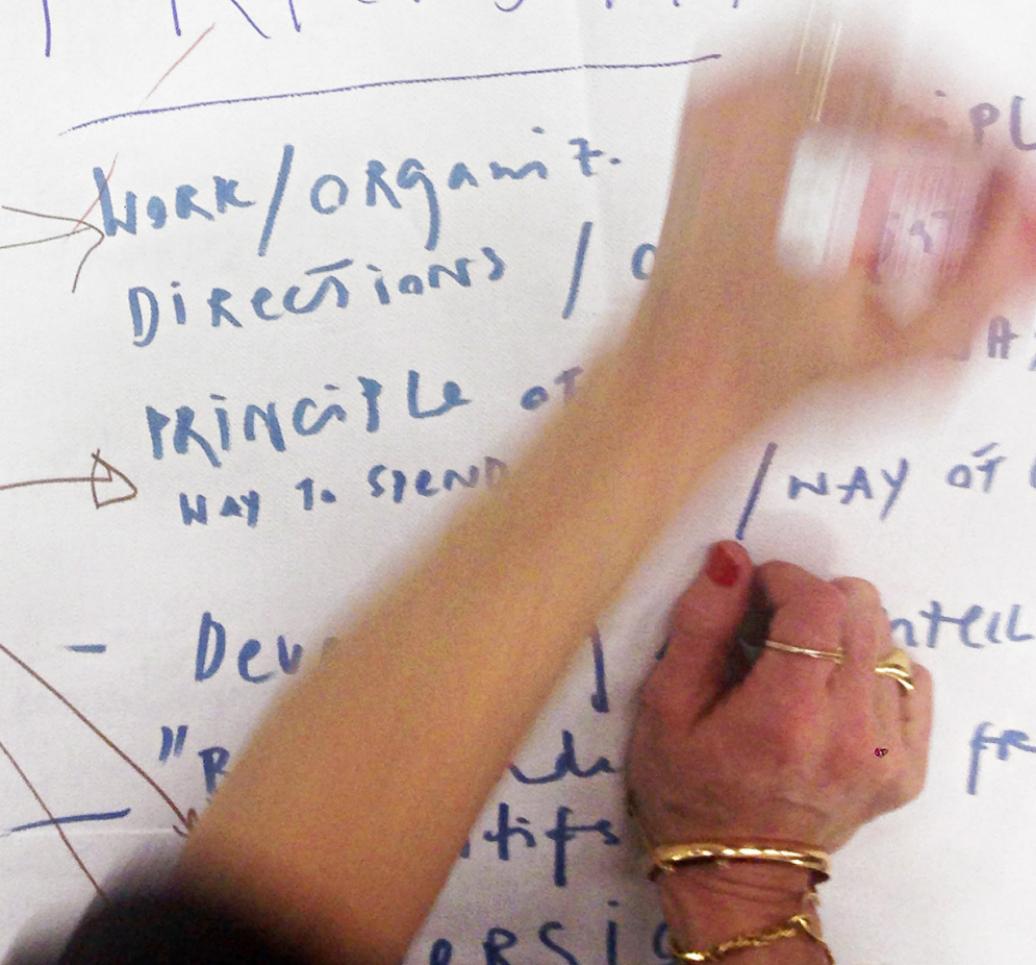
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José Manuel Ballester  
'The Raft of the Medusa,' 2010  
Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa

The Raft of the Medusa. This icon of French Romanticism by Gericault has been represented by Ballester after the rescue of the survivors and the disappearance of the dead corpses. Lacking human presence, the raft reveals the force of its fragility.



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## Fw: Contribution to conversation on FRIEND/SHIPS at Centre Culturel Suisse in Paris

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Cesar Reyes Najera <cesareyes@gmail.com>

Wed, Mar 13, 2019 at 2:01 PM

Dear Rebekka, Nina, Ethel and Ross

I'm jumping into this wonderful conversation with a significant delay... there are some personal circumstances that will prevent me to join you in person in Paris :(

I'm just letting know that the wonderful reading excerpts woven by Rebekka, Nina and Ethel have given special meaning to the moment I'm going through... and as Ross, I would like to join your beautiful choreography in Paris.

If it's still possible, I would suggest to include an analogy to friendship that I see in the simple but strong figure of a raft noted by Fernand Deligny (primordial communist, pedagogue, writer, and film director). This analogy could connect with the structure in the sections of *Friend/Ship* or *We & Exclusion*

Deligny points out that a raft is made by trunks tied together in a loose way, so the waves of water pass through them, as they are separated. A raft is not a boat which is stronger but not so flexible; the stiffer a boat is the more easily it breaks. We demand that a boat provides security, speed, certainty... from a raft (like in friendship) we just have the will to explore a body of water or the wish survive a shipwreck. As in friendship, the link of a raft is given by its separation. The best proximity is the distance that lets the free movement of each component. Here you can see the primordial importance of the links, the binding, and the distance that the trunks have between each other. Link and separation, structure and fragility, navigation above and below the waterline, survival and temporality. The raft is a rudimentary technology, reappropriate and replicable that is built where it is needed and according to the means in which it becomes essential. In its simplicity, available to anyone, the navigation is played all or nothing. One trunk is not a raft, but two of them are sometimes enough to make one. The raft is not a barricade, but with all that was left of the barricades (those shields we use to protect from the traps of life), rafts could be built.

Thanks, dear friends for [this collection of texts](#) that you have tied together... I have made my raft with them and life in waves is passing through.

Hugs from Barcelona

César

César Reyes Nájera

**César Reyes**

Source: *e-mail communication*

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?ik=5cac3ea9db&view=pt&search=al>

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be seen or sensed in general by itself and as itself. In other words, I'd say, very quickly, and using Spinoza's terms: God sees himself as *this* body, mine, yours. And, for Spinoza, God doesn't see himself as anything else. If God is the thought of extension, it's because he's the extension of thought. Which enables Spinoza to utter this famous sentence: "I feel I'm eternal." What does this mean? "I feel I'm eternal" in no way signifies that I feel that I last forever—how could I feel such a thing? "Eternal" doesn't mean sempiternal—Spinoza is very precise on this point. It doesn't mean that I last indefinitely. To sense that I last all the time, I'd have to last *the whole time*, waiting for time. No. Eternity is of the order of necessity. If I feel I'm eternal, this means that I feel I'm necessary. This means that in my body, or rather, as my body, as my body itself, along the extension and exposition of my body, God (or substance) feels itself necessary. In consequence, we understand that God feels and knows himself to be necessary in his contingency. To say that my body is eternal doesn't mean that it's sempiternal or immortal.

That's the complete schema of what I'd like to say: for Aristotle or Spinoza, the soul—or at least the fact that we have had recourse to a word other than the word *body* and that the word *soul* was chosen—signifies that *the body is what knows or senses it is necessary in its contingency*. The body is only this singular body, but this singularity is felt and sensed as necessary, as irreplaceable, as irreplaceable exposition. That's what the body is. And we can complete this with Descartes, as surprising as that may seem. We're used to thinking that the body, for Descartes, is geometrical extension, the thing extended—there's only figure and movement—and then there's the thinking thing, the famous *cogito* which is completely and entirely of itself and in itself. In the *Second Meditation*, when Descartes sets out the celebrated imaginary experiment of a piece of wax, he writes that a piece of wax has a figure, a color, that tapping it yields a sound. Then when we heat it, it melts, it loses all its qualities, and, to *is*, there's nothing left but extension. Quite clearly, on the one hand, pure cogitation, an outside-the-self completely pure. We could already very *ie another*? How does one touch the *ie another*. It's in Descartes' text. The *ell*, it no longer yields a sound, and *then the other touches*—we touch it *just barely* if at all," *just barely* because he can't say that we don't touch it any more. Of course, we always touch the wax. Since it's been melted, we might be under the impression

## Jean-Luc Nancy

On the soul.

Source: *Corpus*, Fordham University Press, 2008.

that we can't touch it because it's burning hot—but we can get burned, we always have to get burned in order to touch.

For Descartes, thought is sensing, and as sensing, it touches upon the extended thing, it's touching extension. We can say, to refine the analysis, that this barely but still touching, this sensing that still remains as touching, is the asymptote of seeing. Descartes seems to suppress the sight of the piece of wax: there's no more figure, no more color, but we certainly see something. This seeing is a touching. For Descartes himself, the famous *ego* (which I'm now using in place of the soul) is only *ego* by virtue of being outside itself, by touching the wax. And therefore, to put it in an arrogant way, I'm claiming to show that, for Descartes, the *res cogitans* is a body. Descartes knows this very well. At this point, we should develop everything he says about the union of the soul and the body, which is evidence as strong as that of the *ego sum* itself. *Ego* is being outside with reference to the *ego*. *Ego* is also being a body. A body is sensing, but sensing such that there's no sensing that wouldn't be a "sensing one's self." To sense, we have to sense ourselves sensing—this is also a proposition of Aristotle that we find in the *On the Soul*. Body means very precisely the soul that feels it's a body. Or: the soul is the name of the sensing of the body. We could say it with other pairs of terms: the body is the ego that senses itself to be other than ego. We could say it by using all the figures of the self's interiority facing exteriority: time, which is sensed as space; necessity, which is felt as contingency; sex, which is felt as another sex. The formula that sums up this thought would be: the inside, which senses it is outside.

That's what the body is. This means we shouldn't say, or we should try to stop saying, that being body, the body self, the being to itself of a body, the relation to self as a sensing oneself outside, as an inside that feels it is outside—we should say not that this is the property of a subject or of an ego, but that it *is* the "Subject." And even "subject" is extremely fragile, since we should say, not that "I," body, am touched and touch in turn—that I'm sensed—but rather try to say (and this is the whole difficulty) that "I" is a touch.

"I" is nothing other than the singularity of a touch, of a touch that is always at once active and passive, and that, as a touch, evokes something punctual—a touch in the sense of a touch of color, in the sense of a pianist's touch, and, why not?, in the sense of the old argot, when we would say that we put the touch on someone (scoring . . .). The unity of a body, its singularity, is the unity of a touch, of all the touches (of all the touchings) of this body. And it's this unity that can make a self, an identity. But it's not a matter of a self, an identity or a subject as the interior of an



## Rhetoric, a Good Thing

**WHAT NEW HABITS**, finally, should we adopt? I think we need a citizenship of political friendship. The phrase designates both a set of ideas and some core habits that might guide our relations to the strangers with whom we share our polity. I discussed the ideas implicit in political friendship in the last chapter; now I turn to the habits. How can the expertise of friendship be brought to bear on politics?

I begin with a simple thought. Remember that Aristotle had described political friendship as differing from ordinary friendship in “not possessing the emotional factor (*anēu pathous*) of affection for one’s associates” (NE 4.6). This Aristotelian virtue of public life, concerning proper interaction with strangers, looks like friendship even if it doesn’t feel like it, since an emotional charge is missing. Political friendship is not mainly (or not only) a sentiment of fellow-feeling for other citizens. It is more importantly a way of acting in respect to them: friendship, known to all, defines the normative aspirations. One doesn’t even have to like one’s fellow citizens in order to act toward them as a political friend. There is a very easy way of transforming one’s relations to strangers. We might simply ask about all our encounters with others in our polity, “**Would I treat a friend this way?**” When we can answer “yes,” we are on the way to developing a citizenship that is neither domination nor acquiescence. When the answer is no, we have not escaped our old, bad habits.

Beyond this simple question, there exist several other specific techniques for cultivating political friendship. It is time to turn to the imperfect ideals for trust production crafted in the rhetorical tradi-



Image: Sara Giannini, *Unfold #1: A Library Where the Books Have Melted Into One Another and the Titles Have Faded Away*. The Volume Project, 2015.

## Danielle Allen

Rhetoric, a good thing.

Source: *Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education*, University of Chicago Press, 2004.

## Function: *Requirements*

“Corporality of speech, the voice is located at the articulation of body and discourse, and it is in this interspace that listening’s back and forth movement might be made: ‘To listen to someone, to hear his voice, requires on the listener’s part an attention open to the interspace of body and discourse, and which contracts neither at the impression of the voice nor at the expression of the discourse. And what such listening offers is precisely what the speaking subject doesn’t say.’ —Denis Vasse, quoted by Roland Barthes<sup>5</sup>

Everything starts from this intuition: that what I define as support structures can release potential, and that support is not to be reduced to a reactive, symptomatic, and redeeming gesture, but that through its uttering we may be able to hear the unspoken, the unsatisfied, the late and the latent, the in-process, the pre-thought, the not-yet manifest, the undeveloped, the unrecognised, the delayed, the unanswered, the unavailable, the not-deliverable, the discarded, the over-looked, the neglected, the hidden, the forgotten, the un-named, the un-paid, the missing, the longing, the invisible, the unseen, the behind-the-scene, the disappeared, the concealed, the unwanted, the dormant.

In order to follow this fragile lead in almost complete darkness, the unequivocal alternative is to not think about support, but—tautologically perhaps—be supportive to it, and think ‘in support’. There can be no discourse on support, only discourse in support. This choice, taken without reservations, entails a rejection of survey, investigation, and analytical study (the study of a subject from a hypothetical outside which positions work on and about its subject but can never speak with it) for the performance of its primary proposition (‘I support’), and can only talk in action through the voice of support.

Hence the impossibility of describing or even explaining support, but the need to expose its operation and propose a structure, a support structure for the formation of its discourse. Here, this is articulated as a manual for support, which offers parallel modes of entry into a field; these e do not attempt to trace boundaries, but are t This is the proposal for a discursive site for the e a register where its manifestations can be account bibliography of support structures.

**Céline Condorelli**

Function: *Requirements*.

Source: *Support Structures*,  
Sternberg Press, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> Roland Barthes, ‘Listening’, in *The Responsibility of Forms*, translated by Richard Howard, New York: Hill and Wang, 1985.

Also: becoming ungovernable. It's something that periodically occupies my thinking. Broadly it's a matter of how groups of folks want to arrange themselves together

[...]

I'm thinking of that phrase in English, "the truth lies between us."

"The truth lies between us" is typically said when two opposing sides of an argument can't come to terms and a third party begins with announcing that whatever the truth is, no one party has special access to it. The truth is necessarily a composite. It's necessarily a matter of groups working together to make the most of their situation.

**Paul Boshears**

Source: *e-mail communication*

## Yves Citton

### Navigation or filtration Vilém Flusser and the Vampiric Alternative of the Digital Imaginary.

Source: *Revue Hybrid*, n° 3, Labex Arts H2H, Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, 2016.

#### Full text (PDF file)

Over the last decades, what was sometimes ref often been thought to provide some (“virtual”) Earth, in our social space marked out by proper as well as physical, economic and administrative movement is demanding and tiring, since one c insurmountable obstacles. The digital alternati algorithmic inventiveness, its ninjas jumping fr of networking—lured one with the hope for the lightness. Everything seemed possible: the equ disidentified conscious entities, free movement genders, races and classes, the worldwide frate... network contributors. At the forefront of the anthropological issues resulting from the evolution of digital technologies, thinkers such as Félix Guattari mentioned the prospect of a “reshuffle of the mass media power crushing the contemporary subjectivity and of an entry into a post-media era consisting in a collective individual re-appropriation and interactive use of the information, communication, intelligence, art and culture mechanisms”<sup>1</sup>.

Over the last decade, discourses suggesting that we scale down these hopes have increased. The digital alternative would have been long-lived. The GAFa (Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon), soon followed by the NATU (Netflix, Airbnb, Tesla, and Uber), once again got hooks into the capitalist marketability of cyberspace. The NSA and general intelligence services collect any trace of our “free” digital movements, so as to better target the subversive elements to imprison, under the pretext of emergency laws or state of emergency. Our beautiful surges of contributive generosity end up crushing us under heaps of unmanageable e-mails. What used to shine beyond the promises of the “virtual,” like an alternative to the alienating state capitalism, would “in fact” only strengthen its hold. And everyone is complaining all together—about the end of utopias, reigning conformism and unconditional surrender of the digital to the deadly appeal of witch TINA (*There Is No Alternative*).

### From a world of data to a world of prehensions

One may laugh—for good reason—at the claim that “another reality is still possible,” for the current issue is not so much about abstractly stating vague possibilities, as it is about concretely defending areas from a capitalistic plunder (ZAD), developing other forms of collaboration and putting them into

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<sup>1</sup>Félix Guattari, “Vers une ère postmédia,” *Terminal*, n° 51, October 1990, republished in *Chimères*, issue 28, Spring-Summer 1996. Available online at <http://multitudes.samizdat.net/Vers-une-ere-postmedia>.

practice, and starting to learn how to live among the ruins of capitalism<sup>2</sup>. However, this task implies a disconcerting reversal of the perspectives through which we have learned to situate ourselves in this world. It is at this level—in order to negotiate this reversal of perspective and make it seem first acceptable and eventually intuitive—that one needs what Cornélius Castoriadis called “instituting imagination”<sup>3</sup>. One has to learn to see the same things differently, from another perspective, so as to spot other points to potentially cling to.

To define that work of collaborative imagination, two terms inspired by two great 20th-century English-speaking thinkers may prove useful. The first one is the notion of *prehension*, as formulated by philosopher Alfred North Whitehead<sup>4</sup>. Our attention to the world and practical behaviors determine what we make of this world. In the digital field especially, what we call “data” deserve to be systematically translated into “prehensions”: they do not constitute a “given,” something that we would be offered for free and lavishly, rather they have been extracted through generally costly, hence interested, calculation operations. As Bruno Latour stated numerous times, the supposedly “objective facts” of science have indeed been “made up” through processes which were overly determined by necessarily one-sided human interests. In the same way, isn’t our whole digital universe made up of necessarily one-sided prehensions and regarded as “data” only through a dangerously simplifying leap.

The second term, a counterpart to the first one, is that of *affordance* developed by psychologist James J. Gibson in his ecology of visual perception, in order to refer to what, in our environment, “allows” or *affords* a human action<sup>5</sup>. The handle of a pan is designed so that one can lift it without getting burned; the branches of a tree allow for one to climb, unlike the smooth surface of a metal pole, which provides no grip for one to climb it. Like the material world into which it fits and on which it feeds, the digital world develops through a complex interplay using certain affordances in the context of prehensions. Like our material world, and even to a greater extent, it pertains to a dynamic plasticity that leads the prehesion requirements to induce new affordances.

The reversal of perspective that is required for one to better comprehend the current deployment of digital possibilities, invites one to seek other imaginary models, bringing out (more clearly) *other* affordances that are likely to be

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2 Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World. On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*, Princeton University Press, 2015.

3 Cornélius Castoriadis, *L’institution imaginaire de la société*, Paris, Seuil, 1975.

4 See for example Alfred North Whitehead, *Procès et réalité. Essai de cosmogonie* [1929], Paris, Gallimard, 1995.

5 James J. Gibson, *L’Approche écologique de la perception visuelle* (1979), Paris, Editions Dehors, 2014.



## Video of “Judith Butler: This is What Resistance Looks Like”

March 15, 2017

We are delighted to share the complete video of “Judith Butler: This is What Resistance Looks Like” that took place on February 15, 2017 at Luskin School of Public Affairs, UCLA.

“The social and political transformation starts with the small step, the daily call, the weekly demonstration, moving outside our zone of comfort where we all identify with one another toward the uneasy alliance that stands against injustice.”

### **Judith Butler**

This Is What Resistance Looks Like.

Source: *Lecture*, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs, 2017.

## Michel Foucault

that has been gained will, at a certain n  
That's the way we live, that's the way  
human history. And I don't think that is  
ments or all those situations. But you are  
we always have to be quite careful and  
must move on to something else, that w  
S&M ghetto in San Francisco is a good  
has experimented with, and formed an  
ghettoization, this identification, this p  
on—all of these have, as well, produced  
use the word *dialectics*—but this comes

Interview on "Sex, Power  
and the Politics of Identity"  
conducted by B. Gallagher  
and A. Wilson in Toronto  
in June 1982.

Source: *The Advocate* 400, August,  
1984.

Q. You write that power is not just a  
one; that power is always there; that where there is power, there is  
resistance; and that resistance is never in a position of externality vis-  
à-vis power. If this is so, then how do we come to any other conclu-  
sion than that we are always trapped inside that relationship—that we  
can't somehow break out of it.

M.F. Well, I don't think the word *trapped* is a correct one. It is a  
struggle, but what I mean by *power relations* is the fact that we are in  
a strategic situation toward each other. For instance, being homosexu-  
als, we are in a struggle with the government, and the government is in  
a struggle with us. When we deal with the government, the struggle,  
of course, is not symmetrical, the power situation is not the same; but  
we are in this struggle, and the continuation of this situation can influ-  
ence the behavior or nonbehavior of the other. So we are not trapped.  
We are always in this kind of situation. It means that we always have  
possibilities, there are always possibilities of changing the situation. We  
cannot jump *outside* the situation, and there is no point where you are  
free from all power relations. But you can always change it. So what I've  
said does not mean that we are always trapped, but that we are always  
free—well, anyway, that there is always the possibility of changing.

Q. So resistance comes from within that dynamic?

M.F. Yes. You see, if there was no resistance, there would be no  
power relations. Because it would simply be a matter of obedience.  
You have to use power relations to refer to the situation where you're  
not doing what you want. So resistance comes first, and resistance re-  
mains superior to the forces of the process; power relations are obliged  
to change with the resistance. So I think that *resistance* is the main  
word, *the key word*, in this dynamic.



Image: Nina Jäger, continent.



20<sup>th</sup> August 1897

36) Mosq of 16<sup>th</sup> (4<sup>th</sup> day) dead. Brown with white wings etc. ... adhesion for granules ...

**Ronald Ross**

1897 original notebook records of the malaria parasite in mosquitoes.

Source: *Memoirs with a Full Account of the Great Malaria Problem and Its Solution*, J. Murray, 1923.

37) ...  
38) Mosq with white wings etc. ... the outer surface contains ... (? 9 numerous vacuoles)



The pigment sometimes oscillates, is quite black like that of *Lacuna annulata*; 9 is not found outside the cells. In 8 it is arranged in a circle. The vacuoles do not change position & the cells do not change shape. The outline of the cell is generally thick, but in the smaller ones sometimes delicate. About 12-15  $\mu$  - diameter.

This specimen irrigated with 40% formalin & sealed with Muller's glue.

21<sup>st</sup> August  
Yesterday sealed specimen. Pigmented bodies still present, but not more visible.



No I show signs of a nucleus & nos 5 & 6 are distinctly more fleshy & bright than yesterday.

39) Mosq of 16<sup>th</sup> (5<sup>th</sup> day) alive. Large, brown, white wings etc. The same cells in stomach under superficial layer - only a little larger & better defined.



46 | Friend/Ships  
Pigment oscillates in some. Largest about 20  $\mu$  in diam. Outline much thicker. 2/ of these in stomach, chiefly toward upper end.

## Disclaimer:

A parasite does not ask permission to interact, it nourishes itself from its host, and causes changes for good and for bad... it depends on who tells the story.

The parasitized texts in these reader are reproduced without asking permission, the only reason is its nutritional value for the survival of a non-mercantitized form of school.

As if a genetic trail  
the source is cited  
the result is uncertain  
and it only depends on who reads it.

**Body of Us**, the Swiss contribution to the 2018 London Design Biennale curated by Rebekka Kiesewetter, consisted of a physical installation and an audio piece in Somerset House, as well as of a publication and a website. It was an exercise in and a reflection on friendly relationships – elective, messy, open-ended and in constant flux, as are the emotions they generate – as potentially emancipatory connections. The project explored forms of togetherness that are able to challenge the broadly accepted norms, binaries and conditions of contemporary working and living environments, and modes of political, institutional and economic governance.

[www.bodyofus.com](http://www.bodyofus.com)

**continent.** is a para-academic, experimental publishing collective; a continuous effort to dynamically recompose publics, convene encounters and create open access online and offline collections of text, sound, image and media.

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**dpr-barcelona** is an architectural research practice and independent publishing house founded by Ethel Baraona Pohl and César Reyes Nájera, dealing with three main lines: publishing, criticism and curating. Their work explore how architecture as discipline reacts in the intersection with politics, technology, economy and social issues. dpr-barcelona is member of Future Architecture.

[www.dpr-barcelona.com](http://www.dpr-barcelona.com)  
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Based on previous conversations around the topic in the frame of “Body of Us”, the Swiss contribution to the London Design Biennale 2018, the project’s curator Rebekka Kiesewetter has invited friends to continue the discussion around political friendship: dpr-barcelona, initiators of the “Parasitic Reading Room” [along with the Open Raumlabor University] at the 4th Istanbul Design Biennial 2018, architect Ross Exo Adams, one of the contributors to *Body of Us* publication, and the continent. experimental publishing collective, initiators of “Reading Friendships Paris” at Centre culturel suisse 2016. At this same venue, three years later, the stage opens for an edition of the “Parasitic Reading Room” and a reprise of “Reading Friendships”, an evening of readings, thinkings, creating and discussion.

## **Friend/Ships** **a Parasitic Reading Room**

Body of Us + continent. + dpr-barcelona  
Centre culturel suisse, Paris. March 2019

