

## Topics in Art Worlds: Aesthetics and Politics in New Media



**Yes Men Performance**



**Debord's Society of the Spectacle**



**Barbie Liberation Organization**

Aesthetics and politics cross paths and sometimes merge in the field of new media. Weaving together theory from Debord, Bloch, Baudrillard, and Brecht with examples of new media including The Yes Men, the Bureau of Inverse Technology, and the Barbie Liberation Organization, we will take a broad view of what constitutes new media, its syndication, and its use. This course will not trace a historical progression but instead will seek to study the influences, as constructed by contemporary political activists who utilize new media. We will consider their reasons for selecting their influences, seek to understand their aims, and evaluate the reception of their work.

### Theories of Aesthetics and Politics

**Week 1:** Bloch, Ernst. 2007. *Aesthetics and Politics, with Afterward by Fredric Jameson*. London: Verso.

Eagleton, Terry. 1990. *The ideology of the aesthetic*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell. Chapters 1,5,8,14.

**Week 2:** Rancière, Jacques. 2004. *The politics of aesthetics: the distribution of the sensible*. London: Continuum.

MacPhee, Josh, and Erik Reuland. 2007. *Realizing the impossible: art against authority*. Oakland, CA: AK Press.

### The Situationists

**Week 3:** Debord, Guy. 1994. *The Society of the Spectacle*. New York: Zone Books.

Ball, Edward. 1987. "The Great Sideshow of the Situationist International". *Yale French Studies*. 1987 (73): 21-37.

### Something is Happening: Staging the Streets

**Week 4:** Braunstein, Peter, and Michael William Doyle. 2002. *Imagine nation: the American counterculture of the 1960s and '70s*. New York: Routledge.

The Digger Archives. July 22, 2010. "Overview: who were (are) the Diggers?" The Digger Archives. <http://www.diggers.org/overview.htm> (accessed February 18, 2011).

### New Media Activism

**Week 5:** *Interventionists Handbook*: Thompson, Nato, and Arjen Noordeman. 2004.

*Interventionists: Users' Manual for the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life*. North Adams, Mass: MASS MoCA.

Certeau, Michel de. 1984. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

**Week 6:** Future Active: Meikle, Graham. 2002. *Future Active: Media Activism and the Internet*. Annandale, N.S.W.: Pluto Press.

Electronic disobedience: Critical Art Ensemble. 1996. *Electronic Civil Disobedience and Other Unpopular Ideas*. Brooklyn, N.Y.: Autonomedia & Critical Art Ensemble.

### **New Media Critiques of Capitalism**

**Week 7:** Garcia, David, and Geert Lovink. "The ABCs of Tactical Media."  
<<http://www.nettime.org>>.

Southern, Terry. 1960. *The Magic Christian*. New York: Random House.

Smith, Chris, Dan Ollman, Sarah Price, Mike Bonanno, Andy Bichlbaum, Michael Moore, Patrick Lichty, and Sal Salamone. 2005. *The Yes Men*. Los Angeles, CA: MGM Home Entertainment.

®TMark, Inc. 2000. *Homepage*. <http://www.RTMark.com>

The Yes Men. *Homepage*. <http://theyesmen.org/>

### **Sometimes Digital, Always Tactical**

**Week 8:** da Costa, Beatriz, and Kavita Philip. 2008. *Tactical Biopolitics: Art, Activism, and Technoscience*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Jeremijenko, Natalie, and Kate Rich. February 2004. "Bureau of Inverse Technology."  
<http://www.bureauit.org/decade/>

### **Images of Disappearance**

**Week 9:** Baudrillard, Jean, and Alain Willaume. 2009. Why hasn't everything already disappeared? London: Seagull Books.

**Week 10:** ®TMark, Inc. 2000. "The Barbie Liberation Organization." ®Tmark.  
<http://www.rtmark.com/blo.html> (accessed June 30, 2010).

Bonin, Vincent. 2002. "Igor Vamos (Troy, New York, United States)." *La fondation Daniel Langlois*. <http://www.fondation-langlois.org/html/e/page.php?NumPage=37> (accessed February 18, 2011).