Contents

Los Angeles as Moving Picture  1
Ken Hillis

Media Geographies in the Oaxacan Uprising:  10
Documenting the People’s Guelaguetza
Altha J. Cravey

Low Fidelity:  14
A-national Appeals in Rosenstrasse’s Funding, Production, and Use
Kimberly Coulter

Bodies that Work:  38
Aestheticizing the National Exception
Jacque Micieli-Voutsinas

The Magical Realism of Postmodern Gypsy Palaces  55
David J. Nemeth • Photographs by Carlo Gianferro

A Relay of Joy:  66
An Artist and a Geographer Reflect upon Cybernetic Assemblies
and an Embodied Digital Media Geography of Spätkapitalismus
Tim Long & Charles Travis

A Geography of Transnational News-Language:  88
How Foreign Correspondents used Place as an Instrument for and
a Topic of Communication About the Newly Independent Russia
Eric West

Book Review:  113
Geographies of Media and Communication, by Paul C. Adams
Philip E. Steinberg
The ways that a city (or at least its elites) represents itself to itself and to the world indicate something of that city’s overall sense of self. The manufactured image of Los Angeles, as McClung suggests, is part of the city’s structure, part of its historical memory and collective sense of self. Max Pensky, assessing Walter Benjamin’s analysis of the influence of new technologies on social forms during the early twentieth-century rise of Berlin to world city status, notes that, for Benjamin, “the metropolis can only signify the structure of collective experience and collective memory by virtue of the
fact that in some sense it is this same structure” (Pensky, 2005, 207-208). Pensky’s interpretation of Benjamin speaks to McClung’s assessment of the relationship between the actual Los Angeles and the desire that it conform to the capitalized desires of its founders and inhabitants. Image, signification and figuration do not just represent the city. For collective experience and memory, they are the city.

A question then: What place image comes to mind when you think “Los Angeles”? While the central city has a recognizable downtown, complete with public square, many of the dozens of adjacent towns, outlying cities, and other L.A. County areas boast their own centers and squares. Unlike other major first-world cities that also have a strong orientation to media and which have achieved successful identification or branding through the effective circulation of place images of media-friendly material structures—Sydney and its Opera House, Paris and the Eiffel Tower, London’s Parliament and Big Ben, Toronto’s CN Tower—the image of Los Angeles retained by many people is not the city’s imposing 1928 ziggurat-capped city hall, adjacent government center, or pre-war central business district. Neither is it of other Spanish Colonial-inspired edifices or features, nor any particular beach, mountain, or other natural feature. Instead, this is the popular image of Los Angles:

In 1912, already comfortable with the logic of infinitely extensible Cartesian space, Pacific Electric Railroad magnate Henry Edwards Huntington (1850-1927) announced that “Los Angeles is destined to become the most important city in this country, if not the world, It can extend in any direction as far as you like” (cited in Rieff, 1992, 41). The sprawl that resulted from capitalized implementation of theories of Cartesian space and rampant boosterism such as Huntington’s has meant that Los Angeles has long relied on forms of transportation and communication technologies. Transportation still rules L.A.; an ethics of transmission founded it. Interurban street railways such as Huntington’s opened it to speculation. Telegraph and newspapers spread a Garden City message of prosperous bungalows in the sun, and pipelines needed to bring water to the
vast desert city made it so. One outcome is that Los Angeles’ spatial organization accords
to the Enlightenment logic of a disembodied public sphere—a individuals home alone or
alone together, each in his or her own car (or helicopter), connected through ubiquitous
communication technologies, now part of flow through transportation corridors.

In a city synonymous with film and media, it is not striking that visual
representations—the moving image of film and T.V., the television program set in
Los Angeles, the L.A. film in which the city itself acts as a character—arguably serve
collectively as the city’s principal form of mimetic “monument” and memory marker.
There are many such monuments, and I turn to a very abbreviated discussion of a few
L.A. films to indicate how the technology of moving images as a form of inscription
memorializes, politicizes and naturalizes the city as a “text,” as itself a representation. As
Figure 1, taken from the film Collateral, exemplifies, the films provide evidence that Los
Angeles embodies empiricist concepts of space and reality as independent, divisible and
ordered, while also serving to depict, promote and critique the city’s spatial vastness and
consequent progressive reliance on transportation and communication technologies.
The supremacy of Cartesian space and a related disembodied public sphere is reflected
in these films’ deployment of a conceptually disembodied masculine eye, often figured
literally by the use of a bird’s-eye point of view.

Opening a film or establishing location with a bird’s-eye panorama makes it easier
to identify a city lacking adequate recognizable vertical monuments. The technique is on
display in L.A. films as diverse as Collateral (Michael Mann, 2004) (Figure 1) and Blade
Runner (Ridley Scott, 1982). In his assessment of the local popularity of televising L.A.
car chases, Tad Friend observes that “from the cameras above, the customary vantage
for tracking the city’s televised pursuits, you could see that this most sprawling and
motorized of our great metropolitan areas is a huge web that is easily apprehended
from the air…” (2006, 64). The bird’s eye aerial view confirms for viewers the validity of
the conceptually disembodied and inscribed Cartesian subject, even as the mobile gaze

Figure 2.
Establishing shot, Blade Runner (©Warner Brothers, 1982).
of the panoramic camera must cut the city up—must frame it within the screen as a sequence of moving images—in order to show the wide plain that exceeds the bounds of any one frame. At the same time, because the bird’s eye panorama frees vision of any one perspective, it confers on viewers a distancing form of visual power and spatial control through mobilizing their view and introducing an experiential space between them and that which they view. For the modern subject increasingly organized through technologies of representation and inscription, experientially, the cinema, and more recently television, has been discursively positioned as a form of lived space rather than as a set of produced representations forming part of a broader historical reality. A remarkable similarity links these cinematic views and the actual views afforded visitors by two of the city’s principal tourist destinations: the Getty Museum and the Griffith Park Observatory. Their prominent observation platforms provide viewers spatial and visual experiences that allow them to make aerial sense of L.A.‘s mega-city vastness and the dispersed clusters of more recent tall buildings that now pierce its earlier more horizontal skyline (McClung, 2000, 182).

This strategy has a history. Consider, for example, the opening credits for the 1949 police procedural, *He Walked By Night* (Alfred Werker and Anthony Mann). The body of the city is a map, an immense grid of two-dimensional flows and pinpointed triangulations The panoramic sequence of opening shots that immediately follows invites viewers to take pleasure in consuming the image of the great plain of development already constituting L.A. 50 years ago. In sure, masculine style, the film’s documentary-style voiceover instructs audiences that governing such immensity and the social polyvalency and rootlessness suggested to obtain from this inherently difficult-to-govern kind of space requires the most up-to-date communication technologies. *He Walked by Night*‘s working title was *The L.A. Investigator*, and the film inspired the empiricist TV program *Dragnet*, whose producer and star, Jack Webb, at the beginning of each episode would intone, “This is the city, Los Angeles, California.” *Dragnet* asserts that at least in L.A. representation *is* ontology; the image of the city and its gridded social relations is a straightforward transcription of nature itself. In such a way do we
see the ongoing blurring of conventions of representation with the embodied referent. Frances Barker (1984) identifies this confusion between text and self as the principal difficulty to have issued from seventeenth-century Enlightenment reading and writing practices that allowed the modern subject to reconstitute itself in forms of text that subsequently came to stand in for actual bodies.

Clip 2 includes the opening sequences from Sam Fuller’s *The Crimson Kimono* (1959). Like *He Walked By Night*, *The Crimson Kimono*’s initial establishing shot also depicts the city as a grid, although from above, as if in flight. Both films’ sequences of establishing shots invite viewers to move along a scale descending from panoramic bird’s eye views to that of the pedestrian. Both, like the view paintings that once emphasized the urban landscape’s drama, also promote understanding the space of Los Angeles as primarily a *view*. Vision, and by extension the viewer, is freed from any one perspective and thereby *mobilized* in the service of comprehending a city that, recalling Huntington’s modern prophesy of movement and mobility, extends “in any direction” and which, therefore, exceeds any one frame, emotion, or subjective point-of-view. *The Crimson Kimono* depicts Los Angeles as a network of intersecting transportation corridors, and the film invites viewers, including Angelenos, to identify with automobility and omnipotent viewing positions impossible for an embodied individual to achieve.

Film historians consider *He Walked By Night* and *The Crimson Kimono* examples of *film noir*, and *films noir* set in sunny Los Angeles tend to naturalize, yet sometimes subtly critique, the social and spatial practices and relations that flow from the implementation of the Cartesian spatial ideals noted above. With its shots of moving cars, *The Crimson Kimono* reveals how the street has almost entirely been given over to a corridor for transportation, and intercut sequences featuring advertising and neon streetscapes are all about an appeal to the auto-mobile eye. When scantily-clad stripper Sugar Torch (Gloria Pall) flees her dressing room and is gunned down by her killer in the middle of the street as vehicles pass by without stopping, the film depicts that to be out on the street as a body without sufficient armor, to make a too-abrupt transition from private space to the public corridor of transmission, can be deadly.
Billy Wilder’s 1944 film noir classic, *Double Indemnity*, captures something of an earlier era’s interest in depicting the use of technology in L.A. to indicate the relationship between social and spatial distance and, as is also the case in other L.A. films, is organized according to a logic whereby the use of a communications device, most often by the protagonist, frequently is followed by and articulated to a framing shot depicting automobility and metropolitan vastness. Forms of electrical communication merge seamlessly with the need for automotive forms of transportation. In this sequence, immediately following the scene in which protagonist Walter Neff (Fred MacMurray) speaks his confession into a Dictaphone, a transition shot shows a fade-out of Neff and the Dictaphone superimposed over a commanding high-angle view of L.A. In the final shot the superimposition of Neff and the Dictaphone has disappeared, and viewers are left with the image of Neff in his car as he navigates a cliff-side curve on his way to what will ultimately prove a fatal encounter with Phyllis Dietrichson (Barbara Stanwyck), one of Hollywood’s and Los Angeles’ most famous *femmes fatale*.

The same recognition of the city’s sprawl and corresponding need for innovative transportation and communication solutions to the problems this raises is on view in Robert Aldrich’s *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), arguably the first film to show the use of a telephone answering machine to negotiate increasingly networked sets of social relations over space and time. Protagonist Mike Hammer’s (Ralph Meeker) alienated mobile privatization (see Williams, 2003) already depends on such a device that also allows him a selective form of private impenetrability. Hammer’s pioneering relationship with his answering machine is essential to his erotic and commercial practices and any success their mutual intersections may generate. In similar fashion to *Double Indemnity*, in the scene that immediately follows Hammer’s first use of the answering machine, viewers see, from the window of Hammer’s high-rise apartment, the city spread out beneath them, though in *Kiss Me Deadly* the city also takes the form of a smooth automotive flow of which Hammer constitutes an atomized component. The film and its protagonist darkly critique, in advance, Rayner Banham’s utopian observation that the city’s freeway system “is where the Angeleno is most himself, most integrally identified with his great city” (1971, 203).

![Figure 3. Sequence of three shots, Double Indemnity (©Paramount Pictures Corp., 1944).](image-url)
These thematics are on display in two more recent neo-noir L.A. films—*Collateral* and *Crash* (2004). Both films establish location through relentless association of the city with roads and, in particular, its freeway network. Both, then, propose that automobility and “freeway culture” constitute advanced forms of alienation specific to L.A. and akin to a sense of lived disembodiment radically at odds with, for example, the get-your-kicks logic of *Route 66*, Bobby Troup’s 1946 paean to the freedom and romance of automobility. The *mise-en-scene* of Paul Haggis’ *Crash* overtly argues that individuals are separated by automobiles and freeways; they are players of an alienating end-game where no one touches anyone else in public. In this film, trauma comes to stand in for personal encounter – encounter with other individuals and with history itself.

In keeping with my focus on L.A.’s complex articulations of disembodiment, space, real estate and images, the final film I reference is Nicholas Ray’s *In A Lonely Place* (1950), the director’s investigation of Hollywood alienation and the film industry. A key scene depicts protagonist Laurel Graves (Gloria Grahame) receiving a massage from her masseuse, Martha (Ruth Gillette). Initially Graves had sought fame as a starlet in the old Hollywood Studio System. Unsuccessful, she became the kept companion

---

**Clip 3.**


**Figure 4.**

*Freeway Interchange, Collateral* (©DreamWorks LLC and Paramount Pictures Corp., 2004).
of a “Mr. Davis,” a wealthy L.A. real estate developer mentioned but not seen onscreen. Graves rejects the relationship as unduly restrictive, telling Martha that “it wouldn’t have worked.” Martha, however, counsels Graves to remember that however complicated the intersection of gender and real estate might be that she is still a material body with material needs. Martha does so by referring to the complex fiduciary relationships that flow from L.A.’s success in having collapsed an idea of the natural world into real estate as commodity: “Remember angel, in the beginning was the land. Motion pictures came later.” In the beginning was Huntington’s conception of Los Angeles as infinite real estate as far as, and even farther than, the eye could see – “as far as you like.” Hollywood would later develop and refine the mimetic techniques necessary for depicting the spatial logic undergirding the desire given voice by Huntington and subsequently built. Collectively, the images of the city included in films set in Los Angeles continue to constitute the city’s principal monuments.

Endnotes
1 Ronald Schmidt Jr. argues that Los Angeles’ city elites have long relied on the skillful deployment of mimetic strategies to maintain control of local politics. These elites “have been either involved directly in the mass media…or adept at their use; the mass production of media in Los Angeles has provided the resources for an enormous mimetic project” (2005:xx).

2 Jürgen Habermas’ well-known account of the Enlightenment (1982) argues that in the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-centuries, a society organized through textuality developed in tandem with and relied on what he identifies as the bourgeois public sphere. This public sphere is a conceptual, disembodied place of communicability and discourse within which ideas, set down in forms of print, circulate independently of their human authors or actual places. Los Angeles, I have argued elsewhere (Hillis, 2008), can be understood as an unanticipated outcome – a building of this bourgeois public sphere and the ideals of communicability upon which it rests.

The 1994 saturation coverage, from overhead helicopters and other bird’s-eye vantage points, of the freeway police “pursuit” of O.J. Simpson in his white Bronco is emblematic of the success of this naturalizing mimetic strategy.

References
Media Geographies in the Oaxacan Uprising:
Documenting the People’s Guelaguetza

Altha J. Cravey
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Soy Zapoteco.
Tu has querido negar mi existencia [...] 
Yo nací para ser hermano de mis hermanos pero
Esclavo a nadie.
Nosotros luchamos para todos. Nosotros sembramos para todos.
Mi voz celebrará el cielo y se unirá con tu voz y más y
Juntos gritaremos: Somos Zapotecos!

I am Zapotec.
You have wanted to deny my existence [...] 
I was born to be brother to my brother
And a slave to no one.
We struggle for all. We plant for all.
My voice will celebrate the sky and it will join with you and more.
Together we will shout: We are Zapotec!

Poem from the People’s Guelaguetza: Oaxacans Take it to the Streets
(Bishop and Cravey 2007)

Media geographies inspired People’s Guelaguetza: Oaxacans Take it to the Streets.
In Oaxaca’s central marketplace in summer 2006, call-in commentary on Sit-In Radio
(Radio Plantón) wafted through the air and, from time-to-time, people stopped what
they were doing to listen intently to a compelling narrative. Woman-run Saucepan Radio
(Radio Cacerola) blared from taxis as they navigated to the edges of the permenantly barricaded central city. And, over a period of weeks, University Radio
(Radio Universidad) slowly brought the city to a boil with the calm voice of la doctora
alerting neighborhoods or institutions when they might need to prepare themselves for paramilitary attack on a certain evening.

Visual imagery also exploded with urgency in the city, providing alternative epistemologies of power (Hillis 1999). Throughout the summer, newspaper photos and stories hung from zigzagged twine throughout the insurgent zocalo. Meanwhile, tourists and other shoppers passed over clothing vendors in favor of a ten peso ($1) DVD that was selling faster than the famed Oaxacan rugs and pottery. Crowds gathered to watch the DVD’s violent moving images wherever vendors were selling it. The chaotic bloody scenes were captivating: hundreds of police officers with clubs and a helicopter shooting teargas into crowded city streets where teachers were sleeping during a prolonged, peaceful sit-in. Those who came under attack captured the extraordinary state-sponsored violence using cell phone videocams and quickly edited DVDs of the failed desalojo (eviction). While Governor Luis Ruiz Ortiz’s June 14 attack was certainly newsworthy, it was never broadcast on television until some six weeks later when women of Oaxaca seized the public television station. As we document in the video, the women’s first priority was to confront the governor’s impunity and use the airwaves to broadcast the violent images throughout the mostly rural and isolated state.

Media geographies of the political struggle included every type of creative expression imaginable – from parades and mega-marches, to music and dancing, to street theater, to banners and murals, to fine art and crafts. The city exploded in riotous self-expression over the summer, and the insurgent zones became so large and pervasive that the governor found it impossible to appear in public because he was held responsible for the June 14 attack, as well as the targeted paramilitary raids on activists, their low-powered radio stations, their offices, and their homes. Popular Assemblies of the Peoples of Oaxaca (APPO) activists took over government buildings one-by-one, claiming the city and its public spaces for the citizens, and creating an alternative governing structure. Graffiti throughout the city shouted asesino (assassin) and caricatured politicians holding bags of Guelaguetza tourism money on their way to make deposits in Swiss bank accounts. The synergy of these various media communications transformed unfathomable events into real, believable, and actionable ones for a period of time in Oaxaca.

Our video, of course, involved other networks of media geographies (Dixon and Zonn 2004). We interviewed local teachers, students, artists, a tamale vendor, and APPO activists in order to share these local stories with international audiences who were getting Associated Press stories that, for example, characterized the protestors as “urban guerrillas.” Mainstream accounts likewise said little, if anything, about the state-sponsored violence, or the hopes and goals of the protestors. Our film has aired in classrooms, film festivals, scholarly meetings, and public libraries. Some of the most potent moments in our documentary involve simple oral communication strategies.
such as the young girl declaiming the poem “I am Zapotec” (above) in a spine-tingling voice that blasts out from the stage and fills the arena during the "People’s Guelaguetza". Exclaiming “I was born to be a brother to my brother, and a slave to no one”, the enduring strength and resistance of the Oaxacan people is palpable. The poetry, and its forceful delivery, speaks to decolonial discourse as well as the values and the goals of the uprising (Mignolo 2005).

In closing, it is important to mention the Guelaguetza itself. For generations, distinct indigenous groups from various parts of the state have come together to perform and exchange traditional dances and celebrate pre-Hispanic ties of mutual interdependence in this annual event. An alternative, popular Guelaguetza in 2006 was a triumphant moment for APPO and teacher’s union activists. In a rebuke to the governor who cancelled the official Guelaguetza, they organized a “People’s Guelaguetza” attended by more than 20,000 tourists, journalists, and Oaxacan residents. Unlike the highly commercialized, government-sponsored Guelaguetza of recent years, in which international and domestic tourists paid up to $50 for the best seats, the event was absolutely free-of-charge. In order to have a large performance space for the alternative Guelaguetza, teachers and APPO activists used acetylene torches in the early morning hours to burn through and open the gates of the Instituto Technologico. In this way, APPO asserted control over public space and expanded beyond the zocalo, the barricaded streets, the public airwaves, and government buildings. On the day of the Guelaguetza, public performance and the participation of various regional groups became a way to link with, and expand to, remote villages throughout the state. In this way, public spaces themselves were a medium of power and political struggle (Marston 1988).³

Endnotes

³ More than 300 civil society groups came together to form APPO in response to the June 14 attack.

³ New York City-based journalist Brad Will was also inspired to videotape the Oaxaca uprising. Killed while filming on October 28, 2006, his final tape was posted to the Indymedia website shortly after his death and circulated to viewers around the world within hours. His death, and media attention to it, forced President Fox of Mexico to act decisively in his last few weeks of public office and send federal police to Oaxaca in an attempt to quell the uprising.

³ For more information on the struggle in Oaxaca in English see the Narco News Bulletin, especially postings of Nancy Davies. For more information about the making of our film see the article in 2007 Endeavors.
References
Abstract
Feature films have long played a leading role in representing, reproducing, and reinventing the national: film industries fuel territorial economies, while their images construct borders in the mind. Yet as films cross more borders in their production and distribution, their appeals to territorial interest and identity become more interdependent and indirect. By examining economic and political impulses for films to affirm or cross borders, media geographers can augment representational studies with new insights into the contested and contingent processes around films’ lives. In this essay, I trace the life of *Rosenstrasse* (2003), Margarethe von Trotta’s film about the 1943 Rose Street protest by non-Jewish German women against the Nazis’ imprisonment of their Jewish husbands. To enhance its appeal for investors, audiences, and distributors, the film and its surrounding discourses make several a-national appeals: appeals to multiple territorial stakeholders, appeals to filmmakers’ authority and “cosmopolitan” credentials; and disassociations from national loyalty in favor of allegiance to universal values and personal fidelity. Finally, the film’s dramatization of devotion and longing for group identity provoked heated debate over whether or not the film is “true” to Germany’s past.
To their studies of film, geographers have brought sensitivity about space and mobility in cinematic images as well as an understanding of the reflexive relationship between representations and their social, cultural, economic, and geopolitical worlds (Dixon and Zonn 2003; Lukinbeal and Zimmermann 2006; Edensor 1997; Power and Crampton 2005; Cresswell and Dixon 2002; Aitken and Zonn 1990; Natter and Jones 1993; Burgess and Gold 1985; Bollhöfer 2003). In the spirit of Deborah Dixon’s and Leo Zonn’s call for geographical studies of film that keep “issues of inclusion and exclusion, hegemony and dependence...at the forefront of analysis” (2003, 246), I draw attention to the roles of fidelity in filmmaking processes. In addition to considering a film’s representational fidelity to its subject (“the reel vs. the real”), I focus on another meaning of fidelity: national or regional obligations, loyalties, and sympathies. We have long recognized feature films’ roles in reproducing nations: film industries fuel territorial economies, while their images construct borders in the mind. As films cross more borders in their production and distribution, they do not lose their territorial relevance;

German women, German fidelity
German wine and German song
Should retain throughout the world
Their old respected fame
To inspire us to noble deeds
For the length of our lives.

*Second verse of the German national anthem. Music by F. J. Haydn (1797). Text by A. H. Hoffmann (1841).*
rather, their appeals to territorial interest and identity become more interdependent and indirect. The negotiation of complex dependencies is especially important when to be commercially successful, filmmakers must appeal to audiences beyond the home market, and rely on combinations of subsidies, each designed to enhance its territory’s image or economy (Coulter 2007). Although neither territorial subsidies nor the market can dictate film content, they do influence what stories it is feasible—or profitable—to tell (Morley and Robins 1990). The filmmaker working in this context faces incentives to appeal to multiple territorial interests simultaneously. How can she negotiate these conflicting impulses—to affirm borders and to cross them?

This article demonstrates one “low-fidelity” strategy for negotiating these conflicting impulses: discursive appeals against national loyalty, in the case of Margarethe von Trotta’s film Rosenstrasse (2003). Rosenstrasse is based on a real historical event: from 27 February to 6 March 1943, non-Jewish German women protested on Berlin’s Rosenstrasse (Rose Street), demanding the release of their imprisoned Jewish husbands. The film celebrates the women’s “loyalty” and “civil courage,” suggesting that the women’s actions proved that resistance had been possible. Significantly, the story of the film’s production and distribution reveals effects of complex dependencies on the often reciprocal relationship between territorial support and legitimation. Rosenstrasse’s attraction for investors, audiences, and distributors is cultivated through several a-national appeals: appeals to multiple territorial investors, appeals to filmmakers’ authority and “cosmopolitan” credentials; and disassociations from national loyalty in favor of allegiance to universal values and personal fidelity. Yet this silence about “the national” only affirms its haunting presence in the dramatization of the need to know where, and to whom, one “belongs.” To trace the discursive paths through which Rosenstrasse is funded, produced, marketed, and talked about, I attend to territorial appeals—involvements of territory that serve to justify a project or win support for a position—in personal interviews, newspaper articles, educational materials, and online academic forums. The approach not only reveals the contingency of every step toward filmmaking successes and de-naturalizes the resulting representations, but it also highlights the increasing importance of territories and boundaries for filmmaking.

FIDELITY AND THE LOST HONOR OF THE NATIONAL

According to Rosenstrasse dramaturgical advisor Martin Wiebel, “the ‘original German virtue’ of fidelity” was the women’s motivation for their protest. He explains, love and fidelity “make these women what they had not imagined—heroines who were afraid and desperate, yet drew courage out of this desperation so that that they were capable of action that, in other circumstances, they might not have dared” (Wiebel 2003, 12). Yet the tragic affair with National Socialism illustrated how fickle a “virtue” fidelity can be: it is an instrument—a means for creating stability within groups or projects. In fact, a large part of Hitler’s success was based on the devotion of German women. But
Rosenstrasse director Von Trotta contrasts Nazi women with the “unfaltering women in Rosenstrasse,” who fought against him [Hitler] and for their Jewish husbands. This contradiction: it was the original-German virtue of Treue [allegiance, fidelity]—only practiced over years on the wrong object. Fidelity was demanded, and these women were true....also for this reason the soldiers in Rosenstrasse could not simply shoot them; all they could do was try to intimidate them (von Trotta 2003).

To celebrate fidelity as a virtue, then, it must first be separated into good and bad versions: here, “good” means fidelity to “universal values” such as the fair and caring treatment of others, and “bad” means blind devotion to authority.

As fidelity is bifurcated to salvage its beneficent and utilitarian half; so is the national often conceived of in two ways: on the one hand, as a positive feature of most modern societies; on the other, as a reviled ethno-nationalism that undermines civil society. The conceptual division of nation—or of fidelity—implies the hope that through awareness of its dangers (and perhaps also its inevitability), we can preserve an affiliative identity that is both tolerant and constructive. Since reunification, this can be seen in Germany as an increase in the popular desire for so-called national “normalization,” the desire that a German national identity be regarded as no less legitimate than its democratic counterparts. Language used to talk about national identity today, such as Nationalbewusstsein or nationales Selbstbewusstsein (whether intended to invoke national consciousness, national self-awareness, or self-confidence), stresses the importance of awareness (Bewusstsein).

This public problematization of national identity in Germany began in the 1960s, and historians played an important role (see Alter and Monteath 1997) in shaping how national identities would be reconceived and renarrated. In the 1960s the “Fischer Controversy” over the role of nationalism in fueling World War I led to a reframing of German national aspirations from a goal to a problem (Jarausch 1997). In the 1970s, the Sonderweg thesis, which posited a “special path” of development for Germany compared to other modern industrial states, also took a critical attitude toward the national and emphasized the local instead. This orientation shifted in the late 1980s with the “historians’ dispute” (Historikerstreit) over interpretations of the Holocaust: Ernst Nolte questioned the Holocaust’s exceptionalism, suggesting that German fascism was a reaction against the “class murder” in Stalin’s gulags. Jürgen Habermas challenged this view, admonishing against what he called attempts to “cleanse” the past, emphasizing instead the importance of processing/reappraising (Aufarbeiten) it (1986).

The problem with a reflective awareness about national identity is that it throws a wet blanket on patriotic unity; it lacks utility for the state and fails to provide the individual with a modern pride of national identity. A commitment to continually...
work toward “self-understanding” and loyalty to a fixed identity seem mutually exclusive. Sociologists Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper put it like this: a “strong” understanding of “identity” (defined as “sameness over time or across persons”) reifies it, while “weak” conceptions of identity (understanding identities as multiple, unstable, and in flux) lack meaning (2000: 10). By replacing “identity” with something like “self-understanding,” they suggest that we can remove these reifying implications, comparisons of sameness or difference, and definitions by others (2000). It is strong, practiced “identities,” however, toward which people feel loyalty.

Cultivating and maintaining strong (firm), practiced identities requires control of outside engagement and fixture on a narrative. For maintaining groups’ belief in strong (firm) identities, remembering a shared past, or “the continuous telling and retelling of legends” is important (Bhabha 1990), and even more important than what may have actually happened (Rokkan and Urwin 1983, 67-9). Memories gain meaning within social frameworks and serve group interests (Halbwachs 1992; Habermas 1986; Olick and Robbins 1998; Jedlowski 2001); they are also mediated and influenced by their production processes (Huyssen 2000; Sturken 1997), which take place at—and often produce—sites (Till 2005, 2008). Stories are instrumental; they “guide action,” as sociologist Margaret Somers asserts, because they produce identities (Somers 1994: 613-14, 637). Although group stories are increasingly told in universal or personal contexts to facilitate their export, this does not make them somehow “global.” As Andreas Huyssen explains, “while memory discourses appear to be global in one register, in their core they remain tied to the histories of specific nations and states...[particular nations] are faced, as Germany has been and still is since World War II, with the unprecedented task of securing the legitimacy and future of their emergent polity by finding ways to commemorate and adjudicate past wrongs... “the political site of memory practices is still national, not postnational or global” (Huyssen 2000, 26).

Certainly, the rapid movement of media products and services across borders has challenged Karl Deutsch’s (1953) conception of a national communication sphere. Yet territories still wield strong influence in filmmaking—only these influences are more indirect and interdependent. Territorial authorities seek to align their economic and political interests: economically, they aim to band together to create a stronger market for European products in the face of the overwhelming market share of Hollywood imports. Politically, films face the challenge of representing a particular identity while appealing to a commonality with foreign consumers. As obligations or loyalties to the national state are transformed into a network of interdependencies with supra- or sub-state territories, identification with the nation is discursively replaced with something larger or smaller: the world, Europe, a region, a family.

The discourse surrounding the film Rosenstrasse seldom directly engages the theme of national identity. In its absence, however, the national is very much present, provoking debates over competing social visions: fidelity to an “accurate” representation
of the historical event versus the importance of remembering it in a way that inspires audiences to noble action. I trace, in Rosenstrasse’s emergence, a story of a-national appeals.

A-national Appeals in Rosenstrasse
To enhance its appeal for investors, audiences, and distributors, the film Rosenstrasse and its surrounding discourses make several a-national appeals: appeals to multiple territorial stakeholders, appeals to filmmakers’ authority and “cosmopolitan” credentials; and disassociations from national loyalty in favor of allegiance to universal values and personal fidelity. The silence about “the national” only affirms its haunting presence; the film’s dramatization of devotion and longing for group identity provoked heated debate over whether or not the film is “true” to Germany’s past.

Investment and International Appeal
The Nazi film minister is the villain in Rosenstrasse, a film made in a context of hyperconcern about the role of national influence in cultural production. After World War II, the Allies ensured the devolution of cultural and educational functions to the hands of Germany’s regional Länder (excising “bad” fidelity was key to Germany’s postwar rehabilitation). In the 1980s and 1990s, it was less the federal government than the German regional film boards that supported filmmaking. The regional boards provide funds with the expectation that filmmakers provide a return on investment to the region by creating jobs, spending in the region, or otherwise advancing territorial interests. Accordingly, the location of actors, editors, or other subcontractors—often those who have worked with the filmmaker on past projects—determine to which funding agencies a producer might promise a “regional effect” and thus make a successful funding application (Cooke 2007). Only since reunification is cultural policy is experiencing a “creeping centralization” (Burns and van der Will 2003, esp. 144). A 2006 proposal to create a 20% rebate for films shot in Germany further attests to this centralizing trend. Still, the powerful force of Hollywood, which occupies around three quarters of the German market share, inspires varied strategies to protect German and European audiovisual products: import quotas, favorable production agreements, and the European media program, which supports distribution in non-domestic European markets.

In the case of Rosenstrasse, international partnerships broadened the film’s export potential and also lent legitimacy to German filmmakers’ handling of the topic of the Holocaust. Taboos about the “national” resulting from awareness of National Socialist film propaganda have forced German filmmakers to approach historical topics with caution. As one producer puts it, “We Germans have held ourselves very small, in that in our filmmaking we operate only to a limited scale, and if historical, then only very constrained” (Arndt 2003). In the first two postwar decades, film remained a tool for
the construction of public narratives, particularly narratives of antifascist struggle in East German films (Silberman 1996: 301) and in West German films, war films and “Heimat films” (Kaes 1989: 150). National loyalty was problematized in the demanding New German Cinema of the 1970s, of which Rosenstrasse director Margarethe von Trotta was a leading artistic voice as an actor and director. She critiqued the previous generation and trumpeted the importance of human rights and democracy, as in The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum (Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum oder: Wie Gewalt entstehen und wohin sie führen kann, 1975, which von Trotta directed with then-husband Volker Schlöndorff). Her films won critical acclaim in intellectual circles abroad, but attracted little interest at home. Her earnest and demanding messages of critical self-reflection failed to resonate with mass audiences; they did not match the spirit of the times.

Early versions of Rosenstrasse were no exception. Immediately following reunification, instead of making historical films, German filmmakers produced what Eric Rentschler calls a “cinema of consensus” (2000). The Süddeutsche Zeitung dubbed this wave of domestically popular comedies the “New German Harmlessness,” asking, “What makes [German] people who once shunned German films like beef brains from Britain, head all at once en masse to see German comedies?” The answer: the elimination of all potential for conflict” (Buchka 1996). Difficult topics were regarded as bad investments: “it was the high time of the comedies. Producers and funding institutions alike only wanted to produce those. Rosenstrasse was shot down everywhere, because they thought no one would want to see this subject” (Zander 2003).

Then the tide changed. The “Schindler’s List effect” paved the way for new films that favored more nuanced portrayals of Germans or concentrated on other aspects of the period. Steven Spielberg’s 1993 portrayal of Oskar Schindler as a broken hero who rescued many Jewish Germans proved that feature films dealing with the National Socialist past could be commercially successful (Peitz 2002). This created new opportunities for Holocaust-related films, including Rosenstrasse.

After German reunification, talk of a united “nation” gave politicians “a proven means of justifying the costs of unity and playing down the economic and psychological difficulties of growing together” (Jarausch 1997: 31). “National normalization” implied a reassessment of national collective guilt, and the possibility of considering that some Germans were not only perpetrators—that some were victims, others, heroes. Since the late 1990s, German films have dealt more frequently with historical material, and national events have been portrayed in a manner that could be described as “more nuanced” or “less critical.” A federal film funding representative explained:

Movies like Das Wunder von Bern or Good Bye, Lenin! show a different aspect of how to treat post-war history, re-unification, and have a more positive view. How to say this? They convey a more positive identity and do not only depict a people of perpetrators, but without turning this inside out. They do not
pretend as if this [National Socialism, the Holocaust] never happened, but rather highlight other aspects (Interview 1).

The rise in feature films with historical topics that attempt to make a past narrative consumable or useful for contemporary audiences. According to Lutz Koepnick, such “heritage films” “actively reinterpret the past according to changing views of history, memory, gender, and ethnicity with the bounds of what we must understand as a self-confident mode of European filmmaking” (2002: 56). Other common narrative devices of heritage films include “naturalizing” visual detail (Higson 1993, 109) and “the demonisation of enemies, amazing feats of heroism, and collective purpose, and, most typically, suggest continuity between past and present” (Edensor 1997, 186).

Finally, Rosenstrasse benefited from a shifting zeitgeist following the new administration and the success of Schindler’s List. After its initial rejections, Rosenstrasse was finally able to use German Federal Film Board (Filmförderungsanstalt) funds, and won regional, federal, Dutch, and European subsidies as well. As with any film, its producer’s and director’s successful production histories equipped them with networks of potential production partners. In addition to support from the FFA and BKM, it also received support from three major regional boards: FilmFerhsehFonds Bayern (Bavaria), Filmförderung Hamburg, and Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, in addition to a distribution guarantee from Concorde, and funds from Tele München. To return “regional effects” to each region that has provided funds, one must be extraordinarily well organized and move the production from place to place:

It is an enormous logistical game… Logistically you have to shoot in Hamburg, start preparing in Berlin and build in Munich, so then we had a strategic team and coordinated the regional effects by getting the set designer from Berlin and the entire make-up team from Munich, for example (Interview 2).

Much of Rosenstrasse was filmed in the Berlin Brandenburg region (in a studio, not at the milieux de mémoire). At Studio Babelsberg, the team used an existing set from the Holocaust drama The Pianist. Shooting in Hamburg, particularly outside the studio, trimmed costs as well. The largest amount of funding, however, would come from Munich connections. A colleague of producer Richard Schoeps had a contract with distributor Tele München for three films, of which Rosenstrasse became one. Henrik Meyer, who Schoeps brought on as a producer, introduced him to Markus Zimmer of Concorde. In exchange for the exclusive television rights, Concorde agreed to contribute a substantial amount toward production, making it a coproduction between German production companies. Through Munich-based Concorde, the coproduction funds were secured through FFF Bayern because of the regional effect for Bavaria (Interview 2). This system of regional effects requires the producer to make direct territorial appeals to the German regional boards, and then binds them geographically during production.
The commercial arm of the federal system, by contrast, rewards commercial successes and prestigious prizes with additional support for the producers. Another recent Holocaust film, Rolf Schübel's film *Gloomy Sunday* (1999) was a Eurimages-funded Hungarian coproduction about Jewish deportations from Hungary in 1944. Its nomination for the German Film Prize won it FFA “reference funds,” funds that could then be used for a new film project. The monies were split between two films, *Blueprint* and *Rosenstrasse* (Interview 2). In 1999, Martin Wiebel, a dramaturg and editor at *wdr* (the Cologne-based public TV broadcaster) who had worked with Schoeps on *Gloomy Sunday* “thought that now the timing for *Rosenstrasse* was better than in the earlier German ‘comedy era.’ …He believed that after the government change in 1998 there was a noticeable change in the way NS-material was dealt with” (von Trotta 2003). Wiebel would later write the teacher’s guide to *Rosenstrasse* for the Federal Center for Political Education.

A representative of Filmförderung Hamburg explained that although the regional effect for Hamburg (for example through the local production company Studio Hamburg) was important in their decision to fund *Rosenstrasse*, so were more international concerns:

> of course the material is interesting as well, which shows that more political opposition would have been possible in Germany if people had been more active. This example was not very well known, but we liked the way in which Margarethe von Trotta told the story, with this framing plot of research starting in America. We thought this very modern, it is not just historical but provides a bridge and might be interesting internationally because of this (Interview 3).

“Engagement with the past,” writes Christina Tilmann of *Tagesspiegel*, “that’s what is expected from Germany abroad and what accordingly is rewarded” (2003). Compared to German audiences, foreign audiences are thought to be more interested in stories about “coming to terms with” the German past, and international connections would help to reach these potential foreign distributors and cinemagoers. For example, in searching for an international distributor for *Rosenstrasse*, “two international distributors from Germany were in the talks... but in the end the French Canal+ made the better offer. They also had a broader concept for the Canal customers abroad and had the better contacts in the United States” (Interview 2).

International connections provide not only diverse sources of funding, talent, and connections, but cultural capital and international marketing appeal. Acquiring international capital, however, proved more difficult. To gain additional funds from *Eurimages*, the Council of Europe initiative supporting co-productions that “reflect the multiple facets of a European society whose common roots are evidence of a single culture” and economic investment in the film industry while still respecting it as an
art (Eurimages 2006), the producers needed an international coproducer willing to contribute 10% of the budget (it was permissible for there to be two instead of three co-producers because the film’s budget was over €5.3 million). The team sought out foreign producers in Poland, France, and Latvia, but failed. Finally, Concorde introduced the Dutch company Get Reel Productions “and so we were able to secure funds from the Netherlands. Get Reel supplied some of the actors and the complete musical score…. They got Dutch funding and were part of [the Rosenstrasse budget] to ten percent… then we were able to contact Eurimages and we were able to shoot in March” (Interview 2). The Netherlands contributed 10% of the Rosenstrasse budget through the Nederlands Fonds voor de Film (financed by the Dutch Ministry of Culture) and CoBo funds. CoBo [Stichting Coproductiefonds Binnenlandse Omroep, the Dutch retransmission reimbursement coproduction fund] funds co-productions between public broadcasters, in this case the Dutch public broadcaster NCRV and German WDR. The money comes from reimbursements by Belgian and German cable exploiters who retransmit Dutch public programming (CoBo).

The total budget for Rosenstrasse was €6.3 million, about one fifth of that spent on Schindler’s List, considered a low-budget film by Hollywood standards. International co-production is not cheap, however, and has substantial extra costs: additional expenses were incurred, for example, when it came to language. Rosenstrasse was shot mostly in German, but required dubbing expenses for different versions, as the distributor wanted a solely German version for German-speaking audiences and dubbing over the Dutch actors’ Dutch inflected accents in German, and an international version with the New York scenes in English (Interview 2). International distribution posed high costs as well: the film’s theme had to be characterized differently for different audiences. The film booklet put out by the film’s domestic distributor plays up the theme of “political resistance.” It juxtaposes the Rosenstrasse protest with Rosa Parks’ 1955 protest, protests against apartheid in South Africa, protests against the 1976 Argentinian junta, and in Chechen separatist movement Internationally, however, the demonstration’s political motivations or effectiveness is deemphasized; the film is described not as political, but instead as being about “love,” “civil courage” and “fidelity.”

Just as a “low-fidelity” recording aims for a feeling of authenticity over a perfect copy of its source, the film’s dramatic license and telling of the story from the small “sample” of two women’s memories finds a “low fidelity” approach to history to be more compelling to diverse audiences, if not more “true.” A kind of “low-fidelity” framing made the film more accessible and thus more attractive to investors. Von Trotta devised a frame story set in New York and Berlin. In 1943 Berlin, Lena, a young woman whose Jewish husband had been incarcerated, meets Ruth, whose mother has been arrested, meet outside the building on Rosenstrasse. Lena rescues Ruth, hides her, and eventually sends her to America to live with her aunt and resentful cousin Rachel. Decades later, after Ruth’s husband’s death, childhood memories haunt her. Orthodox Judaism acquires
new importance for her and she forbids her daughter Hannah from marrying her Nicaraguan fiancée because he is “too different.” To learn the truth about her mother’s past, Hannah travels to Berlin to meet Lena. Now near 90, Lena vividly recalls meeting eight-year-old Ruth in front of the Rosenstrasse building in 1943.

The idea for the frame came after the original screenplay, “a reconstruction of purely historical events,” failed to find funding (Jänichen 2002). Von Trotta explained:

I had to find a completely new approach for the second version, and this came through the history of little Ruth, a figure who I had discovered in another documentary, Befreiung aus der Rosenstrasse by Michael Muschner. …now I tried to limit the events to fewer people. That’s also more satisfying to me: In my films I usually start with individuals and their personal fates. In private worlds, stories, histories, happen (von Trotta 2003).

The “low-fidelity” framing device also provides a built-in defense against factual errors or accusations of “inauthenticity.” Von Trotta emphasized it was important to her “that one doesn’t do things as if one was really there in that time period. [In Rosenstrasse] the events are told through Lena’s memories… memories are always questionable.” (von Trotta in interview with Buck 2003).

Finally, the frame story makes the theme of remembering the Holocaust more accessible to younger viewers by linking past and present, Berlin and New York. It also made it potentially more attractive to international audiences, and this, according to one funding representative, helped it win funding:

In general, people here are fed up with the topic of fascism and nobody wants to watch movies about that anymore, and for this reason viewer numbers and attention here, although substantial, were not as high or as successful as abroad (Interview 3)…

She summed up the value of the frame—because of its reliance on two personal voices as opposed to an attempt to be “factual” as making the story actually truer to reality:

If the movie had only told the story of the historical event, then the component of what is happening in the here and now would have been lost. I found the division of the script not just more intelligent because it is more international but truer as well because we are living and watching in the here and now. Thus it is not just a trick, but a better way to convey the topic (Interview 3).

Domestically, a teacher’s guide and press release encouraged teachers and the press to compare the implications of the two different perspectives. The Federal Center for Political Education (Bundeszentrale fuer politische Bildung) commissioned and published a “film volume” (Filmheft) as part of a series of teacher’s guide to interpret and teach films to high school students. The guide asks students to reflect on the use of memory in the
film: “Many books and films about the ‘Third Reich’ dedicated themselves to ‘victim-memory’...Which form of memory does this film try to strengthen?” (Wiebel 2003, 15). Von Trotta said that in the film

I can show that there are two completely different kinds of memory: with Ruth, the kind that attacks in a moment of vulnerability, that she doesn't wish for at all, that her whole life she had successfully repressed...On the other hand, there is Lena. She tells [her memories] willingly, “as if I experienced everything yesterday.” Her memory is one of a victory (even if it is only a “small ray of light in a dark time”), that's why she doesn't have to repress the experience; her memory is light, the shadows come only from that time, they do not come from within her (von Trotta 2003).

Repressing—even forgetting—the past is associated with victimhood; to find peace, the film suggests one must come to terms with the past. Rosenstrasse suggests parallels between German and American repression of painful memories. For her research, von Trotta

read literature about how the subject of the Holocaust was dealt with in the USA...and learned that there, as a survivor, one was initially not supposed to talk about it at all. Everyone was supposed to become American, forget the past as hastily as possible and look to a “bright American future.” So the Americans encouraged almost similar efforts to forget as we did, only with the Americans it surely resulted from the “positive thinking” mindset...The Jews who had come from Europe—like in my case, little Ruth after the war—were afterwards encouraged to forget, but for such pain there is no forgetting, only repression. Ruth had to repress, and then only with a new pain, the loss of her husband, does the repressed memory return to her consciousness, almost in a shocking way. With this shock of memory, the film begins [2003 (press kit), and quoted in Wiebel 2003 (teacher’s guide), 9].

This suggests that survival requires working through the past and moving on. But in an uncomfortably didactic way, the film suggests that coming to terms with the past is not enough; to overcome the pain, one must forgive. Ruth disowns her cousin Rachel because of her hurtful behavior in their childhood. When Ruth’s husband dies and Rachel arrives at her home to mourn, Ruth asks her to leave. “I need some peace,” she says. Rachel responds, “Only when you are ready to forgive us, will you find peace.” The desire for peace and knowledge of to whom one belongs is strangely externalized; in the film it is not German characters who are working through the past in search of group identity, but Hannah, a Jewish American. Because exportability is a high priority for the film team and their financers, they strove to distance the film from national associations and orient instead toward international audiences—but with minimal success. As a representative of the Export Union of German Films (now German Films Service + Marketing) put it,
when such a film [Rosenstrasse] runs in America, for example in New York or in Toronto where they have a Jewish community, they see the film with completely different eyes...Unfortunately it was difficult in Germany...historians complained "it wasn't that way"...that this film will be stained in Germany and strongly abroad—that's of course a danger (Interview 4).

The international, contemporary frame is expected to appeal to international audiences because of its universal and personal characteristics. At the same time, these qualities are expected to appeal to domestic audiences' desire for reframing the German past in a way that can yield a sense of belonging that is distanced from the National Socialist past. Rosenstrasse thus produces a new kind of German heritage that reframes the national as personal and international. The production of affirmative heritage from the Nazi era also allows the viewer to identify with the protagonist and take the moral high ground—even more so by suggesting that others could have resisted, but did not.

**“Cosmopolitan” Credentials**

Another way the filmmakers aim to ensure that the film will be perceived as international and politically correct is by appealing to credentials. These credentials aim to certify their authority to decide what is an “authentic” or “fair” representation. Even with fictional films, a filmmaker’s public identity can powerfully influence perceptions of a film’s legitimacy (Grimes 1994; Billings 2000). With Rosenstrasse’s sensitive material, managing the filmmakers’ image meant extraterritorialization from a positive German national identity by enlisting “Jewish experts” and a Jewish American co-author, as well as characterizing von Trotta as “cosmopolitan.” Von Trotta claims her complete lack of beholdenness: “I’ve never been faithful (treu) in my life. I’ve tried it, but it went wrong” (Peitz and Stelzer 2003). With her reputation as an auteur director of politically critical and demanding art cinema, von Trotta is regarded as intellectual, cosmopolitan, feminist, and politically engaged—critically respected if not commercially successful.

But von Trotta’s contributions to German cinema were of less interest to the press than her personal and professional experiences, and how they relate to the film’s theme of fidelity. Von Trotta’s mother’s family left Moscow after the revolution. When asked where her Heimat is, von Trotta responds, “Hard to say. I could live anywhere. I grew up in Berlin, first in war and then in ruins. Through this one does not develop Heimat-feeling.” Whereas others described von Trotta as “at home in the world,” von Trotta herself emphasizes homelessness and a search for belonging. When asked where she belongs, she responds:

Perhaps it’s because as a child I always had to answer “stateless” when someone asked me where I belonged [wo gehörst du hin]. Stateless is homeless. And although I was born in Berlin, and German is my native language—even though my mother spoke more Russian—I grew up with German culture and literature. When I studied in Paris later, I constantly had to answer to my
classmates about German history. They didn’t realize that I was stateless (von Trotta in Buck 2003).

In spite of her often political work dealing with German history and women’s lives, her most relevant credential for telling this story becomes her identity vis-à-vis Germany, whether as a lack of German identity or as a reaction to it. When colleagues and journalists speak of von Trotta, they describe her as “cosmopolitan”:

Margarethe von Trotta has achieved much, she has had a lot of experience, she has lived in Italy, she lives now in Paris, she is really a cosmopolitan. That means, I believe she has a view from above; she sees things internationally; she had international marketing in mind, not just [seeing things] through the eyes of a German director (Interview 4).

Yet at a screening of the film at historically Jewish Brandeis University, von Trotta was asked why she made the movie. She responded, “Because I am German, I have to make these movies” (von Trotta in Weinrich 2004).

With Rosenstrasse’s sensitive material, managing the filmmaker’s image meant not only internationalizing the production but also enlisting consultants who could command the authority to represent Jewish culture. Among the external experts von Trotta consulted, she identifies co-author Pamela Katz as an American expert, not as a Jewish one: “her suggestions go throughout the purely American part” (von Trotta 2003). Katz, however, viewed her role as consulting on Jewish matters. She reflected,

in the course of working with Margarethe, I discovered that German artists feel they have to be very careful about how they present Jews. Even a radical, left-wing, politically perfect woman like Margarethe von Trotta is going to feel nervous about how she presents a Jewish family… It was hard for her to accept the lack of precision with which we Jews are Jewish… But then I came on board, and I said: “I feel very Jewish and I come from a family that identifies itself as Jewish. But we don’t keep kosher, etc., etc.” That was hard for Margarethe to hear, and it took quite a bit of nerve on her part. A big part of our tension, the creative back and forth between us, came about because I kept saying: “You can do it any way you want to.”

Sensing the filmmakers’ need to identify a kind of fixed “Jewishness” they could aim to accurately represent, Katz felt the need to protect the story from authenticity-obsessed “Jewish experts”:

I would get calls from her. “The Jewish expert in Hamburg” or wherever a particular set was located… said “this and this isn’t correct.” And I would be in New York screaming: “Anything is correct!” She was the one reading the books and consulting the experts. I cannot tell you the endless Jewish experts who told her: “No Jewish person would blah, blah, blah.”
Katz finds emotional authenticity in the frame story, however: “when her husband dies, Ruth suddenly wants to know the ‘right’ rituals. I had that exact experience in my own family...I noticed that every time one of us got married, suddenly there were all kinds of rules and regulations” (Huttner 2004).

As cosmopolitan and unburdened as von Trotta may be, her need for accuracy here undermined her openness toward a Jewish identity that could be multiple and unfixed. These efforts to gain distance from national belonging contradicted the fact that the film’s protagonist—and its director—are searching the past to inform a contemporary decision to whom or to what they can belong. Hannah desires to understand her mother and to consider the role of her “Jewishness” and “mixed marriage” in her own future. Von Trotta stresses the importance of remembering as a key to identity: “As long as someone doesn’t know one’s parents’ history, one doesn’t know oneself. And in [Hannah’s] case, the history of her mother is also the history of the Jews in Germany” (von Trotta 2003). This use of memory to shape contemporary group identity opens the film up to accusations of being “untrue” to the past, or to a useful or constructive public narrative about the past.

Fidelity: No Fun at All?

In the film, Lena performs “Ich weiss es nicht, zu wem ich gehöre” for propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels; the lyrics dismiss fidelity as “no fun at all.” Whether the objective is to attract hearts or minds, plainly stated facts have a hard time competing with imaginative, emotional appeals. In their criticisms of Rosenstrasse, some historians faced exactly this problem.

The film Rosenstrasse has an attractive and compelling message: it suggests that if more people had behaved like these women, lives could have been saved. It attempts to mobilize viewers to take action against injustice. This echoes the message of Resistance of the Heart: Intermarriage and the Rosenstrasse Protest in Nazi Germany (1996), the book on which the film is based. Historian Nathan Stoltzfus, the book’s author, concludes that Goebbels was unnerved by the women’s protest and, to avoid causing further spectacle, exerted his influence to have the prisoners released. Von Trotta accepts this interpretation of Goebbels’ involvement, but dramatizes it much further. She drives the plot with an invented personal encounter between Lena and Goebbels. This scene in particular came under harsh attack by historians, who accused von Trotta of embellishing history.

In the scene in question, Lena and her brother Arthur arrange to attend an elite party hosted by an actress friend, Litzy. The party is the celebration of a film premiere, where Goebbels, as film minister, is in attendance. Lena hopes to meet Goebbels and do whatever it takes to persuade him to release her husband.

**Arthur:** The film we’re celebrating today, do you know what it’s called? *A Waltz for You,* And Litzy’s singing in it.
Lena: Is she still making such unreal [unwirkliche] films?
Arthur: The more soldiers fall, the more popular she becomes.
Lena: It’s been such a long time since I’ve been to the cinema.

Their conversation refers to the use of film, under Goebbels, as propaganda—including “apolitical” fluff intended to distract audience from political concerns. Realism, according to the real Goebbels, should show not what is, but what ought to be (Taylor 1979).

Lena accompanies Litzy as she sings “Ich weiss es nicht, zu wem ich gehöre.” Goebbels listens, commenting to Lena’s brother:

Goebbels: Your sister is talented and beautiful. Is someone at the front?
Arthur: She is not married.
Goebbels: No? Then she does not have that worry. It is a hard time for the women whose husbands are so far away.
Arthur: My sister has great sympathy for these women and admires their fidelity.
Goebbels: Fidelity is a German virtue.

In the next scene, Lena is weeping; Arthur is helping her change clothes. Did Lena seduce Goebbels and persuade him to release the Rosenstrasse prisoners? The film does not explain; even the filmmakers do not agree on what was intended. Co-author Katz, seemingly unaware of historians’ challenges, assumes Goebbels was directly responsible for the prisoners’ release:

we needed a way to get Goebbels himself into our film. Margarethe’s son has done scholarly work on Goebbels, so Margarethe knows a lot about him and about his character. He wasn’t just close to Hitler, he was very much in charge of what went on in Berlin. For a woman like Lena, a woman from an aristocratic family with connections, it wasn’t unthinkable that she would make an attempt to go to the top… Lena’s plan is to charm Goebbels…play her music, be beautiful, find a way to tell him that her husband is a prisoner in the Rosenstrasse building (Huttner 2004).

Is this scene really intended to hint at “sacrifice in the séparée”? (Benz 2003). “Concerning Goebbels,” von Trotta explains, “the attempt goes completely awry. She humiliates herself for nothing” (Buck 2003). Frank Noack adds, “it is a well-documented fact that Goebbels wasn’t attracted to blondes” (2004). Katz recalled, “as an American, I said: ‘We have to know exactly what happens next.’ But Margarethe said: ‘We are telling a story about people, and this is the point where their emotions are at their height. If somebody wants to know exactly what Goebbels said and did next, then he can go look that up.’ I admire her restraint!” (Huttner 2004).

Of course, finding the historical truth is not so easy as looking it up. Historians disagree not only about whether the real Goebbels could have influenced the prisoners’
release, but also over whether or not the historic protest was even effective. They also disagree on what we should focus. The film sparked a debate over how the Rosenstrasse protest should be remembered. The often personal and ugly tone of historians’ arguments prompted journalist Matthias Dell to dub the debate the “Rosenstrassenkampf” (Rosestreetfight) (Dell 2003). The debate centers on the work of two historians: Stoltzfus, a professor at the University of Florida, and Wolf Gruner, a researcher in the Berlin group of the University of Munich Institute for History, and can be found mainly in Central European History (2003 and 2005) and the H-Net forum “Rosenstrasse” (See Stoltzfus 1996, 2003, 2005; Gruner 2003, 2004, 2005; Benz 2003; Leugers 2004; Marcuse 2004; Meyer 2004; Noack 2004; Weiss, 2004; Wilcock 2004). In a slew of accusations, the historians are forced to defend not only their research but also their own characters, showing that it is not only filmmakers who must be memorable and emotionally compelling in order to convince.

Even in some primary sources, the author’s desire to be compelling trumps fact. In Goebbels’ 1943 diary, which was published in 1989, Goebbels claims responsibility for the prisoners’ release. But can we rely on the propaganda minister for the unvarnished truth? On the last day of the protest, 6 March 1943, Goebbels wrote:

There were unfortunately some unpleasant scenes in front of a Jewish retirement home where the population gathered in great numbers and some even took the side of the Jews. I am giving the SD [Security Service] the order not to continue the Jews’ evacuation at such a critical time. We would rather wait a few weeks; then we can continue even more thoroughly. One must intervene everywhere to avoid damage (Goebbels 1943m 479-88, esp. 487).

Historian Wolf Gruner attributes this to “the self-stylization of the propaganda minister in his diary that he kept for posterity” (Gruner 2003). Gruner details the background of the protest: on 27 February the Reichssicherheits-Hauptamt (rSHA, Reich security headquarters) raided factories to collect Berlin’s remaining “protected” Jewish men during what was called the “Fabrik-Aktion” (or “final roundup”). The rSHA intended to assess these “protected” prisoners’ abilities for the purpose of replacing Jewish Community Center workers who were slated for deportation. Because the prisoners went through a selection process and were gradually released over two weeks, Gruner suggests that neither Goebbels nor the women could have caused their release (2005, 463). Gruner’s unattractive conclusion is that the women “did not protest against the transportations in general, but they wanted to save their Jewish relatives, who were part of a ‘privileged’ group. It is somewhat problematic to conclude from this event that at that late point in time one could have influenced the deportation and destruction of the Jews...millions of people had already died” (Gruner 2003). Thus, he argues, the Rosenstrasse protest cannot be regarded as a “success,” nor can it be easily celebrated.

Wolfgang Benz, Director of the Institute for Antisemitism Research at the Technical University of Berlin (and Gruner’s former dissertation supervisor), accuses
von Trotta and her colleagues of deliberately ignoring (his student’s) scientific research and historical fact in order to advance a legend. In a provocative article for the Süddeutsche Zeitung, Benz aggressively attacked the film Rosenstrasse as being untrue to history; “to create the impression in the opening credits that what’s offered is authentic and really happened, turns history on its head and creates new myths; that’s dishonest and turns explanation into embellishment” (2003). He accuses Rosenstrasse of doing what Andrew Higson says all heritage films do: using costumes and visual spectacle to “naturalize” a particular version of history (Higson 1993, 109). Von Trotta’s film, Benz accuses, actually devalues the women’s heroism: “As Goebbels had nothing to do with Rosenstrasse and couldn’t have affected anything there, doesn’t such historical embellishment mock and devalue the resistance of the women in Rosenstrasse?” (2003). Benz claims he is defending the honor of both the Rosenstrasse women and history:

The legend wants it that only the women’s defiance moved the Nazis to change course. For the filmmakers the historical truth was too banal. As a moving piece, staged as melodrama...the film becomes [nothing more than] costumes [Klamotte]; the historical reality is sacrificed, come hell or high water, for the success of the legend (Benz 2003).

A year later, seeming to have softened his position that Goebbels had nothing to do with Rosenstrasse, Benz emphasizes the potentially inspiring aspect of the Rosenstrasse protest in a pamphlet on the topic of resistance for the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (2004): “as diary entries of the Reichsminister and Berliner NSDAP Gauleiter Goebbels prove, the women’s courage had made those in power irritated and nervous. Even if one can’t be sure what long term effect the protest had—much suggests that the people in Rosenstrasse building were not designated for deportation to Auschwitz—, the events in early 1943 are proof of what courageous form of open resistance was possible.” The pamphlet is full of portraits and descriptions of resistors from the period 1933-1945 (Benz’s examples of personal resistance include the Rosenstrasse protest and Georg Elsner’s 1939 attempt to assassinate Hitler). Stoltzfus, meanwhile, maintains the Nazis’ fear of popular unrest is the most plausible explanation for the prisoners’ release; this was, after all, the reason that Jews with strong ties to non-Jewish Germans had been “protected” for so long. At the very least, Stoltzfus asserts, the Rosenstrasse protest proved that resistance had been possible (Stoltzfus 2004; 2005, 458).

The film team and others asserted their right to be unfaithful to history, even in films about the Holocaust. By explaining that the story is a fictional account only based on a true story, the filmmakers reorient expectations. Von Trotta defends her work as a fictional film that tells of events that actually happened:

I don’t make a film that plays in history, just because of the history. No; I must always find and work out what interests and moves us today... Of course there is a transformation. I have, for example, fused multiple people
for one figure... put them together in new ways, developed new figures. That means the situation is authentic and everything that the people experienced somehow happened...and still they are fictional figures (von Trotta 2003).

As New York Times film critic Manohla Dargis argued that “the Holocaust need not be immune to fiction, which must have the absolute freedom to be faithless, even to history” (2004). For German filmmakers, this is easier said than done; fidelity to an “accurate” remembrance of history, or at least one that fits the dominant international metanarrative, is an imperative of political legitimacy.

At stake is not only whether the Holocaust must remain “immune to fiction,” but also the dilemma of how German resistance should be remembered in public narratives. On the one hand, historians want to guard against the sentimentalization of history and the construction of national myths; on the other, they often celebrate public courage and attempt to defend “civic” values. Gruner ultimately articulates the heart of the issue as a struggle to influence public memory:

the story of the “successful” protest in the Rosenstrasse has meanwhile been inscribed into the collective memory of the Germans as the symbol for individual resistance against the NS dictatorship. Shortly after the end of the war, the assurance that during the NS period there had been protests against the persecution of the Jews obviously served the self-understanding of the new German civic entity. In the sixties, this story was already so powerful that it not only influenced historiography but also acted on the construction of individual memory (Gruner 2003).

In their argument that history should not serve interests—even when they appear worthy—Gruner and Benz suffer from an image problem. They found themselves in an unpopular position by appearing to attack von Trotta, who not only has a strong history of critical engagement with the German national past, but is also celebrated as “cosmopolitan” and “politically perfect.” Gruner’s and Benz’s arguments open them up to accusations of hair-splitting, or worse—appearing unwilling to admit that effective resistance had been possible. By challenging the celebration of the protest and its heroines, their critique makes this “resistance” seem murkier, and above all, less compelling, less memorable. In their critique, women’s Treue does not “inspire us to noble deeds,” as the German national anthem suggests.

Rosenstrasse and its surrounding funding, marketing, and critical discourses make several a-national appeals: appeals to secure international financing, appeals to filmmakers’ “cosmopolitan” credentials, and the disdain of national loyalty in favor of personal fidelity and allegiance to universal values. These cosmopolitan aspirations, however, are undermined by Rosenstrasse’s use of memory to recover a lost group identity; the fact that national identities are celebrated throughout the world in everyday ways
does not make them less exclusive. Yet these disassociations from “the national” only affirm its haunting presence. They underscore the unbearable weight of the national in the emergence of this film. Its story, frame, production, and use reveal a powerful desire to belong.

Whether a reunited Germany must remain “true” to history or whether history can inspire an agenda—even a politically correct one—remains heatedly contested among well-meaning individuals. The film *Rosenstrasse* exists because there is desire for an inspiring story. Its surrounding discourse attests to the sensitivity in post-reunification Germany concerning the legitimacy of national narratives, and the fact that appeals are most convincing when they are made personal and emotional.

By paying close attention to the interdependent and indirect appeals inherent in processes of film funding, production, and distribution, critical media geographers can better understand the territorial interests at stake, and how filmmakers move their products and services across borders by negotiating competing appeals. As demonstrated here with the case of *Rosenstrasse*, one way to do this is through “low-fidelity” appeals to personal and universal values. In fact, the divisiveness among *Rosenstrasse’s* filmmakers and critics over what the film *should* do underscores a common goal: to reappraise to what one can, or should, commit.

Acknowledgements
I would like to thank the Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst (DAAD) and the University of Wisconsin-Madison Center for German and European Studies and European Union Center for their support. Warm thanks to my interviewees for their generous and insightful explanations. Thanks to Nadine Zimmerli for her assistance with the transcription and translation of some interview recordings. Unless otherwise noted, translations of texts are my own. Finally, I wish to thank Robert J. Kaiser, Alexandra Lottje, Julia Maintz, Marc Silberman, and the anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on earlier versions of the manuscript.

Endnotes
1. These individuals, mostly men, were some of Berlin’s last remaining Jewish residents. Until then, they had been “protected” because the Nazis had feared their non-Jewish relatives would loudly resist their deportation. See Stoltzfus, *Resistance of the Heart* (1996).
2. It is important to note that in Germany, *Nationalismus* is directly associated with National Socialism. The Anglo-American geographical and sociological literatures following Benedict Anderson (1983), understand nations as culturally constructed “imagined communities” based on a belief in a common origin and common destiny. “Nationalism,” then, refers to the sentiment or movement growing from this nation-state “ideal” that a nation should assert control over “its territory” or that territorial subjects should identify as a nation (Gellner 1983); Michael Billig (1995) stresses that nationalism is not only “hot” or violent, but also “banal,” everyday processes in which we all participate.
3. For example, *Aimee and Jaguar* is a Holocaust-themed film that focuses on a love affair two German women, one of whom is Jewish. This thematic trend seemed to peak in 2004 and

4 Even when a German producer pushes the limits of possible funding from these sources, he or she will have a budget that is a fraction of its Hollywood counterparts. *Schindler’s List* was made with a small budget for a Hollywood production ($25 million for a 1993 film). In 2002, this would have been about € 30.8 million.

5 In the film it is Ruth, the Jewish American, who spurns her future son-in-law because he is “different.” The fiancé’s ethnicity is used to suggest a parallel line of conflict in Hannah’s world (contemporary New York), yet avoids more provocative matches based on historic tensions by making Hannah’s fiancé Nicaraguan instead of, for example, Arab-American. The fiancé is played by Fedja van Huët, a Dutch actor whose employment counts toward the satisfaction of the German-Dutch co-production agreement.

6 *Ein Walzer für dich* starred Camilla Horn and was released in 1936. In the film—as in *Rosenstrasse*—aristocratic musicians fall in love and, in order to make music together, renounce familial allegiances.

**Interviews Cited**

All interviews were conducted by the author, in German.
4. Export Union (now German Films Service + Marketing), Munich, June 2004.

**References**


CoBo [Stichting Coproductiefonds Binnenlandse Omroep, the Dutch retransmission reimbursement coproduction fund]. (accessed 21 June 2006).


—


Silberman, M. 1996. “What is German in the German cinema?” *Film History* 8: 297-315.


Bodies th/at Work:
Aestheticizing the National Exception

JACQUE MICIELI-VOUTSINAS
Syracuse University

ABSTRACT
This essay retraces arguments made by Giorgio Agamben in his text, *Homo Sacer* (1995), regarding his theorization of “bare life” within Nazi constructions of “camp”. In exploring the conditions that marked certain identities for exclusion, this essay aims to understand Nazi constructions of the “Volk”—the German nation-state—in relationship to spaces of confinement and intersecting tropes of corporeal value and/or worth. Consequently, this essay fleshes out the heteronormative and ableist underpinnings of the Third Reich’s production of national and non-national bodies in order to trace their ontological relationships within current manifestations of exception(alism) operating throughout the war on terror.

INTRODUCTION
Post-Emancipation, Black and African-American men and women continued to endure processes of political and social racialization in the U.S., which legally controlled their bodies and productivity, both sexual and economic. As white nationalists deployed projects of racial policing, they procured a national schematic of social inclusion and exclusion throughout the U.S. nation-state; specifically, the production of bodies (Black and African-American) based on paradigms of racialized sexuality and sexualized race. This in turn manifested through the reproductive organization and deployment of miscegenation fears to enable practices of racial terrorization based on ideologies of perverse and dangerous black sexuality. Furthermore, the maintenance of race laws enforced labor protections for white citizens after the Civil War and into the 20th Century via Jim Crow and segregation. As a result, white nationals prohibited Black
and African-American economic sustainability based on the aestheticization of the U.S. economy along racial lines.

The above example outlines roughly 100 years of legal racial segregation in the U.S., and expresses the long historical relationship between white-nationalist citizenship and its securitization of power through racialized and sexualized tropes of corporality. Over the past several years, there has been much discussion regarding the relationship between sexuality, race, gender and nationalism, both locally and globally, in terms of imperialist projects such as war and the prison industrial complex (See Nagel 2003; Mayer 2000; Sudbury 2005; and McClintock 1995). Accordingly, this essay attempts to retrace the historical basis for national displacement from Western and U.S. citizenship claims through modalities of corporeal disqualification, namely the hermeneutic assessment of bodies (and their corresponding identities) based on race-supremacist nationalism and masculinist paradigms of gender and sexuality. Specifically, I will outline several of the arguments made by Giorgio Agamben (1995) in his text, *Homo Sacer*, regarding his theorization of “bare life” within Nazi constructions of camp. For example, in exploring the conditions that marked certain identities for exclusion through their exceptionalism, how can we understand Nazi constructions of the Volk—the German nation-state—in relationship to spaces of confinement and intersecting tropes of corporeal value and/or worth? How were these bodies produced through a disqualification schema of racialized sexuality and sexualized race to create the camp populations presented throughout examples of Nazi imprisonment? Furthermore, can we apply similar formulations of “disqualifiable life” operating today to reproduce “exceptional bodies” throughout the so-called ‘War on Terror’?

In the past, much has been written about patriarchal and heteronormative interests in upholding capitalist labor systems (See Nagar, Lawson, McDowell, and Hanson 2003; Freeman 2001; Lynch 2002; and Enloe 2007). Consequently, my interests are namely to flesh out the heteronormative and ableist underpinnings of the Third Reich’s production of national and non-national bodies in order to trace their ontological relationships within current manifestations of exception operating through the war on terror. Thus, this paper will begin by historicizing the production of displacement in Agamben’s usage of camp by focusing on the construction of expendable bodies through Nazi imprisonment categories and social euthanasia programs. Furthermore, this rearticulation of Agamben will require particular attention to tropes of health and re/productivity and their relationship to nationalism and constructions of proper citizen bodies, i.e., bodies that work “properly.” Concurrently, the war on terror has also mediated much scholarship on race, gender and sexuality, particularly in lieu of the Abu Ghraib prison scandal (See Murdock 2005; Eisenstein 2004; Puar 2004; and Nusair 2008). However, throughout much of the scholarship, little attention has been paid to the interconstitutional modes of exclusion, particularly in terms of heteronormativity and its relationship to tropes of (social and political) “disability.” Therefore, this essay
will attempt to re-center disability’s relational power to nationally accepted forms of corporeality as it has come to render narratives of nationalism and citizenship in the post-9/11 landscape. Consequently, the need to re-theorize these metaphorical practices as technologies of corporeal marketability—bodies deemed worthy of specific geopolitical labor systems (See Ong 1999 and 2006)—must be addressed within a larger matrix of heteronormative and ableist regimes.

Dysfunctional Bodies & Nazi Constructions of Camp

According to Agamben (1995) in his text *Homo Sacer*, *homo sacer* is “the sense of a life that may be killed but not sacrificed. His killing therefore constitutes...neither capital punishment nor a sacrifice, but simply the actualization of a mere ‘capacity to be killed’” (114). Throughout his text, Agamben goes on to historicize the above modern apparatus of biopolitical life, otherwise known as “bare life”, through moments in which its materialization is made visible and therefore tangible. Fittingly, the author locates his analysis in Nazi Germany and constructions of “life unworthy of being lived” through the camp, or rather in “the pure space of exception” (Agamben 1995, 138 and 134). As Agamben articulates, when law is suspended through the declaration of a “state of exception”—for example, the suspension of civil rights in moments of national crisis to ensure the protection of the nation-state, it produces a new judiciary order in its affect through which the state of exception becomes the rule (1995, 166-169). Through this logic, the camp solidifies a “zone of indistinction,” or rather the spaces through which the exception and the rule become so blurred that they are rendered indistinguishable from a prior “normative” social order (Agamben 1995, 36-39). It is through this performance of the state of exception in the concentration camp that Nazi racial ideologies, and socio-organizational paradigms, produced entire populations of people deemed “unworthy” of German political life and state protection.

Figure 1 from the archives at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum serves as an ontological blueprint of national “outsiders” according to Nazis constructions of citizenship. For example, the image displays several symbolic schematics used by the Third Reich to categorize Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, the “work shy,” regional immigrants, criminals, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Communists, prostitutes and other variations of sexual/racial “criminality.” A key to understanding this hermeneutic of national displacement lies within the poster’s ability to convey relational codes of “proper” corporeality against Nazi constructions of German nationals. For instance, with the exception of political prisoners, the remaining categories presented in the above image, represent communities of people constructed as outsiders through intersecting modes of sexuality, gender and corporeality. The German Volk constructed itself according to Aryan (white) racial codes of proper biology, gender and sexuality, which it mobilized through nationalist rhetoric and the homogenization of its desired constituents. Accordingly, these racialized codes of proper biology, gender, and sexuality were mobilized to correlate
onto constructions of German bodies, and thus German citizens, through ideologies of corporeal (racial) perfection. Thus, German nationalism sought out racially (and thus ethnically) “acceptable” men and women whom performed certain codes of masculinity and femininity. In turn, these Aryan codes of corporeality were mainstreamed through bodily performances, national family structures, and intersecting ideologies of labor and production – a point I will return to shortly.

Returning to Agamben’s (1995) discussion of Nazi camp populations, the author offers several examples throughout his text in which the physical camp enables the localization, torture, and eventual extermination of “undesirable” national bodies. For example, The Euthanasia Program for the Incurably Ill mandated the elimination of undesirable phenotypes through “mercy killings,” or in less “threatening” circumstances forced sterilization or castration, in order to protect future generations of German citizens from being exposed to these “degenerate” genotypes (See Agamben 1995, 140-141). Accordingly, the criteria for inclusion (through exclusion) in the T4 program resulted in the classification of bodies possessing a slew of corporeal defects. These “defects” ranged anywhere from mental-health disorders: schizophrenia, manic depression, feeble-mindedness, frigidity, etc.; physical “handicaps”: dwarfism, blindness, old-age; and even the prognosis of a genetic (read: non-visual) “handicap,” which could include congenital heart disease, alcoholism, lung disease, etc. (See Pine 1997, 13). As author Lisa Pine (1997) deduces,
“The common aims of the eugenics movement were to promote and increase the nation’s ‘fit’ elements, and to ‘eliminate’ the ‘unfit’. This reflected the middle-class prejudices. Essentially, ‘performance’ and ‘success in social life’ were the yardsticks by which the ‘worth of individuals and families’ was measured [Emphasis added]” (12-13).

Hence as the above quote concurs, biopolitical archetypes of the Third Reich manifested themselves through intersecting modes of ableist and heteronormative tropes of bourgeois corporeality. More specifically, the production of “functional bodies” based on racially-constructed displays of gender and sexuality, procured the desire for Aryan phenotypes and class positions as they were conflated with “proper” exhibits of masculinity and femininity—including ones ability to work—and patterns of sexual coupling, especially those that resulted in the procreation of a national race and work force. Additionally, to historicize these national motivations to procure citizenship claims along intersection lines of “functional corporeality,” one needs to turn their gaze to relational issues of political economy.

Feeling the effects of the 1929 global stock market crash and its post-World War I economy, Germany, under the rule of the Weimar Republic, became increasingly ill-equipped to deal with the massive influx of unemployment that ensued from these convergent events. Accordingly, these economic factors enabled the social conditions that gave rise to the Nazi Party, otherwise known as the National Socialist German Workers’ Party, and the leadership of Adolf Hitler. As Evans (2001) offers,

“Steady work and a fixed abode, already prioritized by the Enlightened administrations of the eighteen century, gained a more exclusive significance as criteria of social belonging in the nineteenth [century]. In the context of… employment and a growing elaboration of state and voluntary provision for the unemployed, vagrancy, begging and tramping the countryside [directed at seasonal laborers coming from Eastern Europe] were seen not as responses to unemployment but as matters of personal choice by the ‘work-shy’ and the deviant” (26-27).

As the above quote by Evans expresses, the years that led up to Germany’s eventual economic instability and takeover by Hitler marked a shift in social attitudes towards “outsiders” as convergent with Nazi propaganda aims to secure Germany’s limited employment sector for desirable (re/productive) citizens. In a similar way, prostitution, mental health, and homosexuality, also became demonized in terms Nazi ideology. For example, instead of viewing prostitution as a form of employment for young women otherwise out of work, it became stigmatized “as [an] expression of personal social and sexual deviance on the part of its practitioners” (Evans 2001, 28). Therefore, with its expedited concern for national sustainability as a result of global uncertainty, Germany mobilized discourses of belonging (identity) to foster a cartography of exclusion through
intersecting modalities of production (gender + class) and reproduction (sexuality + ethnicity). As Evans bluntly summarize regarding the Nazi justification for eugenics, “They [those deemed socially unfit] were imposing a financial burden on society at a time when economic crisis was making life difficult for those who did contribute to national production” (2001, 33).

**Corporeal Exceptionalism and Nazi Experiments**

“In every detail, the concentration camp resembled an enacted pornographic fantasy. Even the hardware of SM was present. Men and women were chained and shackled; and the SS officer, who wore high leather boots, carried a whip.” (Susan Griffin qtd. In Reti 1986, 18).

Throughout the previous section, the relationship between nationalism, governmentality, and political economy, warranted polices and practices for handling (literally and figuratively) unwanted bodies and their displacement from the Volk. Though not explicitly historicized throughout the previous examples, I would like to take a moment to return to constructions of Jewish corporeality in the exceptional spaces of the camp.

Prior to the onset of the Final Solution, Jewish nationals, many of whom secured a relatively stable financial existence, found themselves directly targeted by rising Aryan nationalist sentiments (See Bajohr 2001, 49). As Reti (1986) similarly argues regarding Nazi propaganda against the Jews,

“The most disturbing cartoon I came across in *Der Stürmer* [a German propaganda magazine] showed an Aryan woman lying on her back, helplessly bound and gagged, being tortured by a Jewish male. Pornography like this was a key instrument in enforcing laws that prohibited Jewish business from employing non-Jewish women. It also strengthened the idea that Jews were not human: Jews were beasts with beastly sexuality” (19).

According then to Reti’s analysis, the convergences of Aryan economic control and eventual political gain, dovetailed with Aryan nationalist sexual politics. Consequently, the discursive yoking between sexuality, economics, and political motivations enabled the large-scale fabrication of Jewish corporealities as “other.” Thus, direct links between the torture of concentration camp prisoners and tropes of racialized sexuality and sexualized race are forged. Similarly, the inclusion of Griffin’s quote at the beginning of this section should not be misunderstood as an attempt to engage in the ethical debates of certain sexual practices (SM), nor was it mobilized in this way in Reti’s own work. Rather, its incorporation asserts that an analysis of sexuality is critical to understanding German nationalism, militarization, and detainment under the Reich.

Throughout their detainment, for instance, Jewish prisoners, otherwise known as VPs, “Versuchspersonen, human guinea pigs,” were routinely utilized by the Reich
as an endless source of bodies to procure experiments for the German war machine (See Agamben 1995, 154). Consequently, Nazis regularly utilized Jewish detainees to carry out the military’s medical experiments. As Agamben (1995) acknowledges, these experiments consisted of pressure and cold-water tests in which VPs were subjected to extreme visceral conditions to determine what acts healthy bodies could survive—biological breaking points, if you will (154).

In turn, these “scientific experiments” provided Nazi military and governmental officials with direct medical knowledge to apply towards future rescue missions for its military personnel (Agamben 1995, 154). In one such example, Agamben describes Nazi documentation depicting “two naked women who had also been taken from the Jews detained in the camps” who were ordered to “revitalize” another VP subjected to the cold-water experiment through “so-called animal heat reanimation” (1995, 155). This sexualization of concentration camp prisoners through modalities of sexualized race and racialized sexuality marks the production of German empire and its biopolitical convergences. It was through these biopolitical technologies of displacement and detainment that German economic sustainment and national security were mediated, however short-lived.

Throughout Agamben’s work, the body is central to the apparatus of the camp and the suspension of law through which both are born. As legal scholar, Audrey Macklin, similarly comments, “law is the management of bodies and space,” and, as I would add, bodies in space (Lecture, Syracuse University, 24 April 2008). Life, individual and national, according to Agamben, “coincides with the fight against the enemy” (1995, 147). Therefore, how then can we understand biopolitical technologies of corporeality in relationship to contemporary assertions of nationalism and citizenship in the Unites States? How are states of exception and their materializations being fostered through the war on terror? This next section will consequently turn its attention to the production of national identity and citizen bodies through a matrix of biopolitical militarization operating in the post-9/11 imaginary.

**Disabled Landscapes & Disabled Nationalism**

Almost immediately after the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York City, images began to circulate the internet in attempts to capture the wounded Manhattan skyline as a result of the loss of its symbolic skyscrapers. In conducting research on the Library of Congress’ website, I came across Peter Kuper’s image (see Figure 2) in an online collection entitled, “Witness and Response: September 11 Acquisitions at the Library of Congress, 2002.” The title of Kuper’s piece, “Missing”, immediately struck me in that it evoked the events of September 11 through the corporeal metaphor of missing limbs. For example, the lower Manhattan subway map and skyline is reimagined here as a digit-less hand that, according to Kuper’s title, still remembers (feels?) the places where its fingers (buildings) once existed; a point further suggested by the lightly-colored etching of the World Trade Center buildings the serve to haunt the piece’s visual (visceral) memory.
The (geo)politics of targeting the World Trade Towers as a key site for terrorist attack should not be discounted in Kuper’s depiction of what is now “missing.” The symbolic nature of the Towers in relationship to the New York City skyline, for instance, is an iconic trans/national marker in U.S. imagination. Additionally, Kuper’s image evokes the economic symbolism underscoring the meaning of this particular architectural site. Thus, as the image re-imagines this particular U.S. body-scape as physically deformed, it not only represents a rupture from the (able-bodied) imaginary corpus of the nation-state, but is also depicts the severing of U.S. capitalism at its veins (see the subway maps lines in figure 2). Furthermore, the ghostly evocation of the buildings throughout the image enables the missing buildings/limbs to recast their shadows to consumptive onlookers whose gaze is central to re/producing the piece’s meaning. As anthropologist Diane Nelson (2001) similarly posits, "The experience that an amputee has of a ‘phantom limb’ is caused by body image. Psychically, the body does not give up the limb, although often, over time, it changes shape. …Doctors treating amputees have found that some control of the phantom limb is possible and people can learn to extend it into the prosthesis to facilitate maneuverability" [Emphasis added] (319).

Therefore, not only does Kuper’s image suggest an embodied New York City through this corporeal cityscape, his image also functions to recast the national landscape (and thus its corresponding community) as a wounded corporeality gone-global; a disabled appendage (read: nation) reverberating endlessly across the picture’s otherwise empty canvas. Reminiscent of the global sympathy directed at America/ns immediately
following the attacks, the image’s ominous presence foreshadows this emotional global response, although in the end, it is unable to account for its eventual demise, which correspondingly reflects the image’s inability to encompass geographies beyond its own horizon.

The above image appeared posted on a website maintained by “Friends of the Unicorn,” a religious blog and self-made design company, and like Kuper’s piece (see Figure 2), it similarly evokes New York’s skyline through the maimed hand, though this time a symbolically white hand. According to the website’s administrator “This memorial flag was created and designed to represent a day in history to all who felt the pain inflicted in the heart and souls of the civilized people of the world” [Emphasis Added]. The intentional utterance of the term “civilized” in relationship to the memorialization of 9/11, functions here to conflate current geo-politics into seemingly ahistorical East/West binaries insinuated in a registry of acceptable communities, i.e., people deemed ‘worthy’ of this flag and its meaning. For example, as Orientalist threads are expedited through the war on terror and re-operationalized throughout these images, their metaphorical currencies seek to materialize a national community that remembers (embodies) this disabled, singular (homogenous) corpse. Consequently, the piece relies on an embodied sense of memory to communicate and constitute its imaged audience, i.e., to have the “civilized” world to remember the pain they felt as a result of this loss. Thus, as the above images simultaneously purport to vigilize a national community and its “healing process,” a diasporic aesthetic of American belonging and displacement is asserted through underpinning narratives of neocolonialism and assimilation, enacted here through re-presentations of corporeal landscape.

In the fall of 2005, I relocated to Central New York to begin a Master’s degree program in Museum Studies. While moving through the geographical spaces of my then department, I can remember running into a similar image while reading-over the visual art that decorated my professor’s office door. However, this time the image was
not one commemorating loss, but rather expressed a healing-over, a covering-up, of New York’s visual identity—its recognizable skyline—with a ‘newly improved,’ quasi-World Trace Center design.

As a result of New York City’s broken identity via the deformation of its landscape, a hand replaces the vacated plots morphing into a “big New-York-style fuck you to whoever dared to attack this great country.” The image in figure 4, which I have come to call “NYC Fuck You,” rematerializes what Nelson (2001) has termed a “stumped national identity,” and as she continues to postulate, “prosthetics mak[e] up for something missing, it covers over and opening. Like a wounded body relying on a prosthetic, these relations have a history and depend on technologies” (314 and 327). Hence, the presence of prosthetic fingers within this made-for-consumption image, mandates an acknowledgment of the cultural, political, economic and corporeal technologies embedded within the image’s desire for New York, an appendage of the U.S.’s national (and international) body-politic, to function “normally” again. In this reconstructed (reimagined) landscape, the Arab/Muslim/South Asian terrorist “other” is not only the intended receptor of this symbolic gesture, but his body (his orifices) also operates as the material receptor of its implied physical and sexual violence. Accordingly, when the U.S. retaliates, as the image’s physical action and verbal connotation suggest, the mutual response to the U.S.’s (temporarily) disabled landscape (read: disabled hetero-masculinity) enables the relational construction of the terrorist corporeality (and its subjectivity) vis-à-vis tropes of dysfunctional (hetero)sexuality – such as we have already seen in the displays of racialized sexuality and sexualized race presented in the Abu Ghraib photographs.

**Disabled (Hetero)Sexuality as Pathologized Race**

“The person designated as ‘terrorist’...is believed to be even more of a threat to the health of the nation. The transnational figure of the ‘terrorist’ suggest that such a figure is beyond redemption and thus is of such high risk to the nation and the state as to be incarcerated and immediately or to be destroyed” [Emphasis added] (Grewal 2003, 539).
As we can see from the images in the previous section, a discourse of disabled (hetero) sexuality and (hetero)corporeality are central in framing the war on terror. Likewise, these corresponding tropes of corporeal health and healthy nationalism have secured the popular discourses of modernity underpinning the justification of U.S. invasion/occupation, i.e., claims that we are civilizing a ‘sexually repressive and culturally backwards part of the world,’ and fixing “unhealthy governments,” disguised as western ideals of “democracy” and “freedom.”

Similarly, the above image posted on bibleprobe.com is visually quite straightforward to decipher in that it depicts the faces, and torsos, of leading terrorist suspects geometrically arranged in tic-tac-toe grid in which the central square’s phrase produces the image’s meaning. Here, “The Crazy Bunch” represents the pathological discourses that frame the construction and maintenance of a healthy American subjectivity and politic against an oppositional, “unhealthy other,” i.e., an “off-its-rocker” Arab/Muslim/South-Asian terrorist subjectivity and politic. However, what I find most interesting about the image’s promotion of American mental and political health and stability is its discursive reliance on *The Brady Bunch*—a popular U.S. sitcom that aired on ABC from the late 1960s through early 70s—to produce this culturally-specific inside joke.

*The Brady Bunch*, whose catchy theme song one can almost hear playing in the distance while consuming this image, tells the story “of a lovely lady,” a white, presumably middle-class divorcee, played by Florence Henderson, whose fate changes for the better when she meets, falls in love with, and marries “a man named Brady,” a successful architect and divorcee played by actor Robert Reed. Throughout the show, the pair reconstitutes a successful post-divorce narrative in which both partners (and their offspring) are folded back into proper American family values, and pave the way for Americans everywhere to overcome the challenges of raising blended families. Although heteronormative paradigms are less central, or rather, less apparent in this image’s rendering of “crazy” terrorist subjects/subjectivities; notions of normative upbringings/family-life and, as a result, sexuality, gender, whiteness and class, haunt these relational presentations of post-9/11 nationalism, identity and citizenship. As author Jaspir Puar...
(2007) similarly maintains, “At this historical juncture, the invocation of the terrorist as a queer, nonnational, perversely racialized other have become part of the normative script of the U.S. war on terror” (37).

**Conclusion: Disabled Masculinities, Pathological Nationalisms?**

Interestingly, twists to tropes of health (physical and emotional) are prevalent throughout the media, particularly in regards to U.S. Iraq War Veterans. For example, according to a recent study, “Nearly 20 percent of military service members who have returned from Iraq and Afghanistan—300,000 in all—report symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder or major depression, yet only slightly more than half have sought treatment” (News Release, Rand Corporation, 2008). Some of the reasoning behind these disconnects between diagnosis and treatment has included both institutional mishaps, as well as fears of personal health-status being publicly leaked. For example, according to a recent documentary on the subject, *The Ground Truth*, one method in which the military administers PTSD tests to newly returning military men and women is through self-administered questionnaires collected via palm pilots (Foulkrod, 2006). However, when a soldier does report having thoughts of suicide or depression, their diagnosis mandates more time away from their loved ones and potentially their inability to go home to live with their families during their treatment (Foulkrod, 2006). Reasons being cited for enlistees not truthfully answering PTSD questionnaires similarly reflect the casual, electronic format of the test. For instance, fears that health-statuses could be leaked to army/governmental superiors, thus leading to career insecurity, hinder many enlistees from seeking treatment. Furthermore, fears surrounding the disclosure of such personal information contribute to enlistee anxiety in that public awareness of
a diagnosis could result in the loss of trust or confidence from one’s supervisors and/or peers due to social stigmatization of mental illness. As other news reports also confirm, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have marked an unprecedented number of veterans surviving combat situations despite having suffered near-fatal injuries, and thus creating a larger need for long-term post-duty health services (See Welch 2005; Rand Corporation 2008; and Lyke 2004).

As the above image stationed outside the VA office (see figure 6) located in downtown Syracuse boldly states, “the price of freedom can be seen here”—here meaning on the bodies of returning veterans themselves. Accordingly, I cannot help but wonder how much the inability of the U.S. government and military to address the health concerns of service men and women stems from a desire to maintain the relational aesthetics at work in figures 2-6, namely their reliance on constructions of the U.S. as patriotic, properly functioning, extensions of militarized-nationalism against “other” dysfunctional (disabled?) terrorist corporealities and masculinities. Thus, this negligence of enlistee health issues serves to uphold the boundaries separating American patriot-citizen-soldiers from pathologically raced (read: perverse religion, sexuality and gender) terrorists others. Additionally, these modalities of disabled Arab nationalism are also fueled by imperialist motivations. For example, with several governmental branches dedicated solely to U.S. development in Iraq post-Saddam Hussein, one only needs to do a Google search to pull up the hundreds of websites dedicated to such causes, such as the United States of America Department of Commerce’s, “Iraq Investment and Reconstruction Task Force,” to the more crudely advertised “Baghdad Bazaar” (Also see Bushman, 2007). Therefore, in the presence of such consolidating nationalist agendas (neocolonial, imperial, neoliberal), how can we continue to theorize and organize around issues of displacement and the cartographies of biopolitical corporeality they mandate?

In conclusion, the final image I would like to engage mediates a discussion of masculinities available—for a price, of course—in the war on terror. As the image’s text articulates,

“The war on terror, if it is going to succeed, will have to mobilize and train some of the less attractive varieties (of masculinity). True manhood allows for feeling and sympathy, but in the dark war against terror, nothing that resembles sentimentality is permitted…Counter-terror and even torture are sometimes required to extract vital information before the next bomb goes off. In effect, the counter-terrorist will only gain his enemy’s respect if he shows a savagery that is equal to the enemy’s. We can be thankful that such qualities are not prized among us, but some Americans will have to acquire them” [Emphasis added] (David Gutman qtd. in Adbusters 2004).

Recently, cohorts of mine in a seminar class described the male figure in Figure 7 as an “Abercrombie and Fitch model,” “a metrosexual,” and even “a Chelsea Boy.” Their descriptors
demonstrate the circulation and recognition of flexible modes of masculine gender and sexuality operating post-9/11 in relationship to militarized forms of citizenship and cosmopolitan consumerism. Therefore, the discursive importance of mobilizing “less attractive” masculinities – those historically, and presently, pushed outside the realms of “proper” hetero-reproductive citizenship, marks a shift in the colonial, race-supremacist ontology of the U.S. citizen-solider. Now all bodies must be made available, regardless of their (sexual) flaws—hypersexual, homosexual, and asexual—in order for the war on terror to succeed in combating the sexually dysfunctional (read: sex-segregated, homosocial, homo and hypersexual) terrorist “other.”

As the above visual and textual juxtaposition speculate, U.S. nationalist consumption of its “less attractive” masculinities is now mandated as a result of the global war on terror. Correspondingly, in order to win this “dark war” one needs to summon all available masculinities to consume and perform the other side's technologies, which, according to the image, includes both “counter-terror and even torture”. Here, white nationalist, hetero-masculinity is made flexible, expanding to include a variety of its otherwise undesirable variations, from hypersexuality (a mode of sexualized race), homosexuality (a mode of racialized sexuality), metrosexuality (acceptable modes of effeminate masculinity), and even homosociality (the toleration for sex-segregated relationships within heteronormative social institutions).
To summarize, this essay is not attempting to argue the direct reproduction of Nazi aesthetics in the war on terror, and therefore promoting decontextualized and depoliticized accounts of human suffering, past and present. Rather, this essay invested in understanding how Western states aestheticize national and non-national space as a way to produce and control modes of citizenship vis-à-vis corporeality. According then to this (neoliberal) model of post-9/11 citizenship, scholarly and activist energies must redirect themselves to the discursive processes and patterns of national corporeality as these quick-to-adapt aesthetics morph to procure new forms of nationalisms, new types of bodies—wanted and unwanted—and newer, freer financial transactions.

ENDNOTES

1 I am using the term heteronormative as inclusive of hetero-reproductive and heterogendered forms citizenship to mark the constructions of sexual reproduction and gender within a Eurocentric paradigm of properly performing classed, raced and abled bodies and their equating physical, moral and national manifestations.

2 I am specifically noting here the differences between political prisoners – whose threat to the reproduction and maintenance of the German nation state is much more apparent from an ideological standpoint—with that of other “dangerous” populations, to mediate the fine-line between German mobilizations of the biopolitical (a national body politic) from the ideological (political beliefs). However, this distinction also renders, at times, an inseparable matrix of theory and application. For example, according to Gellately and Stoltzfus (2001), Nazi propaganda recognized “Communists in the concentrations camps…by their deformed head shapes and the twisted features of their face” (5). Therefore, as the above example expresses, these separations are not always so clearly delineated in German practices of exclusion, even with regards to its political prisoners, and thus worked in tandem to reinforce both its bio and political formations of national identity.

3 It is also important to note that German citizens were forced to undergo medical tests—“certificate of fitness to marry”—in order to qualifying for a marriage license, at which time the state could deny a license request if either partner possessed a genetic condition deemed harmful to the future reproduction of the nation-state, i.e., offspring (see Pine 1997, p. 13-17).

4 T4 was the acronym of the official Nazi Eugenics program, otherwise known as Tiergartenstrasse 4. The program ran from 1939-1945 with some estimates that it claimed approximately 200,000 lives (for more information please see here and here).

5 I am utilizing the term governmentality to incorporate a multitude of state military and technological processes that become instituted to intervene and control bodies in very particular ways. As Butler (2004) articulates, governmentality is “the making possible the continual definition and redefinition of what is within the competence of the state and what is not” (See Butler on Foucault and Arendt, 96).

6 It is important to note that other prisoner populations were also subjected to Nazi torture. Incarcerated homosexuals, for example, were subjected to medical experiments and sexual torture, which included being forced to rape female detainees, performing sexual acts on SS offers, and, at times, subjecting oneself to castration in exchange for freedom. For more information see here.

7 I would like to thank Giorgio Curti for his insights into this point at the 2009 AAG meeting in Las Vegas.

8 After inquiring with my professor as to how he acquired this image, he re-directed to another student who had emailed him the image. According to this student, she also received the image
via email. I relocated the image by conducting a Google Image search and found it posted on an anti-Muslim blog. For more information, see here.

9 Jasbir Puar (2007) also makes reference to a similar image that circulated shortly after 9/11 depicting Osama bin Laden is being sodomized by a New York City skyscraper that visually takes on the shape of an erect phallus (see p. 38). Interestingly enough, both images can be found on the same website.


11 For full news release, see here.

12 Please see Rand Corporation for full news release.


References


Macklin, A. (24 April 2008). Outlaw Bodies and Lawless Spaces: Citizenship, Geography and Jurisdiction in Guantánamo Bay. In Gender and Globalization Speaker Series. Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY.


Magical realism infuses realism with fantastic, mythic, and magical imagery. Human geographers, for example, might choose to stretch their existing conceptualization of critical realism by exploring the conceptual frontiers of magical realism’s “imagical” landscapes.

The move from text-bound critical realism to an image-rich magical realism is an extreme departure from rational human geography that discovers hidden knowledge by discarding the academic straightjackets of increasingly turgid and moribund Enlightenment political and philosophical narratives, including those of various post-structuralisms. “Imagical” escapes include presenting extreme geographical encounters with unpresentable radical postmodern (relativist) landscapes. These defy agreed-upon rational observations and explanations, as well as the straight-jackets of academic decorum.

For example, almost every “sane” passenger on the poststructural Enlightenment bandwagon agrees today that Gypsies are the beggars of Europe and historic victims of unrelenting non-Gypsy persecutions – and that something must be done about it. What are critical thinkers then to make of fugitive images of splendiferous Gypsy mansions designed and displayed by European Gypsies that now float about in cyberspace, where they appear occasionally on Internet blogs run by tourists and travelers as randomly encountered and remarkable abnormalities in the landscape?

These fantastical and often garish Gypsy “palace” images are dismissed by skeptical viewers as “impossible!” But if they were indeed authentic representations of Gypsy family homes their widespread existence across the European landscape would seriously subvert the lugubrious dominant discourse and analysis of the majority of
academics across the social science disciplines who agree on the “poor” and “victimized” condition of Gypsies in the world today. Political activists and Gypsy studies scholars as well as both liberal and conservative political officials seem obligated by the dominant discourse to assert, for example, when confronted with these fugitive images that “These palace-dwelling Gypsies seem strictly out of place! Therefore they must not exist!” Thus the dominant discourse about Gypsies in the world has consistently avoided the topic of their everyday lives as successful entrepreneurs and, and especially as articulated by themselves with attention to their own perspectives on needs and wants including, for example, housing issues.

As it happens, several compilations of these “impossible” images accompanied by crude maps locating their “real” locations have been published as coffee table books. Yet, denial of Gypsy palaces, mansions and villas persists among skeptical non-Gypsies since authoritative evidence, validity, and explanations have not been forthcoming.

The photos and anecdotes are related in odd juxtaposition by the authors of this photo essay. They have deliberately chosen to communicate as a collaboration their separate imaginal encounters with Gypsies in the real world, though these experiences occurred in disparate locations and time frames. In fact, Nemeth and Gianferro have never met apart from their several Gypsy-related creative collaborations in cyberspace. The outcome of this collaboration in an integrative, mashed-up, shotgun marriage of an Italian photographer’s digital images to an American ethno-geographer’s anecdotal essay. Perhaps the hybridized aesthetic of their collaboration at this point in time can
only be understood and appreciated by multitasking cyber-scholars in search of mining the content of emerging online journal mediums?

In sum, the message here about Gypsies in the world today is unconventional and admittedly politically-incorrect as its authors’ attitude transgresses the entrenched rules and boundaries of a rational, linear, academic conversation in order to explore the frontiers of an emerging magical realism in human geography, meanwhile advantaging an innovative online communications medium.

Tomá le Georgeskó (a.k.a. Tom Nicholas, Nick Thomas, Victor Thomas and other monikers) was king of his household, but his palace in southern California’s Los Angeles suburbs that particular year was an inexpensive rental facing El Monte Boulevard at a safe and secure distance. A noisy mutt chained to a doghouse near the front door kept the nosey non-Gypsy world at bay. Up the driveway, facing the street was a used station wagon for sale. A message scrawled on white cardboard propped up between the steering wheel and the cracked front windshield read in big numbers “$600”, followed by “Runs Good” and a telephone number.

He called this one his “lucky house” because two of his beautiful daughters were either verging on entering the bride market, or already there. The older one was 14. These girls were beginning to attract a lot of serious attention among Romany families with marriageable sons nationwide. They were good dancers judged by strict Romani standards, and thus destined to bear many healthy, vigorous offspring to whatever family won Tomá’s favor at the seemingly endless auction. It could go on for years... but then again?

In-town and out-of-town visitors were becoming ever-frequent. The telephone rang constantly off the hook. Afternoon parties grew larger toward midnight, with some guests remaining till daylight. The women poured gin and Squirt into a large faux crystal bowl – followed with two cups of sugar and a bag of ice! They mixed it for ten minutes. It was half empty in another ten. The men meanwhile drank Pabst Blue Ribbon beer in cold sixteen ounce cans, which was well-known to be Tomá’s favorite beverage. Many of these men would have preferred to drink whisky, but they were on a mission, and made sacrifices. Many had great patience, for Tomá could be a rude drunk.

Everybody’s aunt was a matchmaker. Bride-price for a good dancer from the Nicholas clan back then was fixed at “fifty-two fifty” – five thousand two hundred and fifty dollars. A little horse-trading beyond the set price could set a new standard for the West Coast families, and make Tomá a trend-setter for a while, if not a rich man. Tomá’s clan would rise up through the ranks of the North American Gypsy hierarchy. Everything seemed possible in those days. Everyone who was anyone among the respectable allied clans of the Russian-Greek Gypsies came through Tomá’s door, it seemed. It was 1971.
It got to the point one day that Toma had to get away from it all for a while, to tin and repair some pots and pans, and to think everything through. We hit the road. I was at that time still learning his trade. Toma and I were a wortacha, a team – partners. He was a master of his inherited craft and I was his outsider-apprentice. Of course, behind my back Toma had finessed a story to explain my place in his life, and why he would have anything to do with me at all. He had convinced his friends and family some time back that I was going to be his “slave.” He had a bad ankle and needed help on the road where he plied his tinplating trade. As popular as he seemed on account of his marriageable daughters, truth be told no other Romanies genuinely liked Toma enough to “go partners” with him.

Toma had a history of being a loose cannon. Romanies never go anywhere alone, however, and I solved that problem for Toma, and a potentially sticky ethical problem for the rest of them. So, everyone in time came to understand the nature and necessity of our relationship. That was the way it had to be. Toma was a Romani and I, being not, was by consensus justified by the other Romanies as a necessary evil.

So we drove off once again in search of work and the solitude of the road, as we had many times before, leaving the Nicholas home base in South El Monte, California, in our dust. We veered past the unsold station wagon at the street end of his driveway, with the chained-up mutt barking and leaping, and his wife, Lodi, his three daughters, and two of his four sons jumping and waving in the rear-view mirror. We turned right on the boulevard and headed south toward the San Bernardino Freeway. Along that stretch of road we passed by the familiar sight of the American Nazi Party Headquarters. They were still there! Hitler stinks (as Toma’s wife Lodi was often apt to shout out the window when no one was outside).

Up ahead, if past was precedent, we would head due east and deep into the southwester deserts before heading north up to Idaho. Toma had a magnetic attraction
to Utah, due to fond childhood memories. His extended family used to travel and work summers in and around the state of Utah for the K. F. Ketchum carnival circuit, variously known throughout the public memory of Mormon communities north of Las Vegas into Idaho as “K. F. Ketchum and his Bandits” and “K.F. Ketchum and his Forty Thieves.” Ketchum, unlike other carnival operators in his era, got along well in the company of his roughneck roadies as well as his true Gypsies.

One day in St. George, north of Las Vegas, we conjured up some work from a cafeteria kitchen and I got sick on the job. When I say “conjured up” I am not kidding: Toma had a ritual on the establishment where we would pull up to the “Welcome to X” town and I would park our vehicle (likewise a station wagon) with the motor left running at highway apron. There he would simultaneously lean back his head and close his eyes and proceed to scratch his palm while rambling off some pat phrases in Romani that in English translated into “Much, much, much money.” It was his religious ritual, I swear. Then we would pull into town, assured to find work.

That morning work amounted to several square aluminum baking pans, burnt black with tortured fat and their handles weak and wobbly. As was our pattern, we would pull behind the establishment and park near the water spigot. I would go to the back of the station wagon and raise the rear window unit, then lower the gangplank. This gave us open access to our essential tools and secret syrups and powders, and a bench to sit on when the heat got to us. Everything behind the second seat was covered with an old red fireproof blanket, so the state troopers when driving down the highway couldn’t pull alongside and check out our gear, profile us as “transient offenders,” and pull us over for a warning or a fine. “We don’t want your kind around here.” We heard that a lot.

Fire blanket tossed aside, Toma’s personalized torch with its coiled pressure hose came out first, followed by an old oblong propane tank, disturbingly rusty. While Toma hooked these up, I would unload the lye and the bleach and the flour, along with our specialized hammers, dollies, files, pliers, cutters and such, all stashed in a rugged old carpenter’s box. The tinning equipment remained stowed inside the wagon that morning, since we were doing only aluminum.

Toma claims his immediate family members in his presence invented the aluminum kitchen equipment repair process, and that his blood-relatives—the Davidos, Johns, Millers, and so on—eventually stole the secrets from them until all Romanies who coppersmithed along the North American highways and byways had the knowledge—but not necessarily the guts—to try it out.

I turned on the torch and lit it up. A slow flame drooled upwards from out of the nipple hole of a grease fitting that Toma had long ago welded to the working end of the fuel pipe to serve as a nozzle. The nozzle was pointed through the center of a foot-long perforated tube that Toma called the “tunnel” of the torch. Theoretically, propane shot out the nipple in a systematic way according to how much gas was being released
by turning the valve at the “safe end” of the torch. I was the torch-man when our work commenced, since Toma was unsteady on his feet.

His ankle injury resulted from a near-fatal accident half-way between Cleveland and Detroit. I forget how many bones make up an ankle, but after the car crash he had ten times the usual, and he nearly had to have his foot amputated. He told me he didn’t sleep for 100 hours after the crash. Why? He didn’t trust doctors, who were always trading this blood for that blood – as if there was no difference. Toma always refused anesthesia with his surgeries, and he had been hospitalized many times before I met him, and then subsequently up to his untimely death in 1986. He was so terribly afraid that the doctors would give him a transfusion if he were not constantly awake and alert to protest it. “I’d rather be dead than have gaje blood flowing through my veins!” he once told me. He was proud to be 100% Gypsy and horrified to contemplate being otherwise.

After Toma attended to the loose handles with his hammers and dollies, I proceeded to lean them one by one against an old five gallon paint can full of water to heat them all up, each in its turn. I twisted the valve open to full bore and the propane burst out through the torch handle and roared out the nipple and through the tunnel as hot as a blast furnace. No grease pocket could withstand this intense heat for very long, and so the crust all melted away within minutes to rain sizzling goo down upon the asphalt, there behind the cafeteria, where we preferred to work unseen. That was the intention; to set up our workplace out of sight of prying eyes. “Stand back!” and “Poison gas!” we would yell at anyone who approached us while at work.

After dousing the equipment with hot water we brought out the lye: bad stuff, the lye. It can scar you and wreck your lungs and melt out your eyeballs – and kill you if you are not very careful. We swabbed the pans with lye while our faces were wrapped in bandanas. The trick was to be confident and quick, but not careless. I once saw Toma with his shirt off. Scar city. Carefully then, we washed the lye off, and it drained yellow and foaming slowly across the pavement in a caustic stream, pooling up here and there. Pity the poor dog that happens by to lap up that stuff on a hot day in Utah.

So I took a little too long with the lye and got sick that day and sat on the gangplank with cold can of coke while I watched Toma finish the job. He picked up the jar of photo bleach we carried along for our aluminum work and unscrewed its lid. Then he carefully swabbed each pan, handle-tip to handle-tip, with the bleach. Then he doused the pans with water, picked up the torch, and reheated each one; when they were good and hot he rubbed the surfaces of each one with flour. Photo bleach and flour: these were the big secrets that made the Nicholas family rich and famous for long decade until they were secrets no more.

They managed a successful power play by leveraging their secret formula into a coppersmith fortune. They gave up the carnival work and headed east to establish themselves in a territorial fortress in a great Midwestern city. They bribed the police, the city council, and the welfare workers to protect their interests. They paid dues for
memberships to fraternal organizations, which gave them more leverage to be able to win bids for huge bakery and kitchen repair jobs. They found an old bank and a lumber mill and some other large non-residential structures and bought them with cash and moved in and turned their insides into fairytale fortresses. Like geoids, these eccentric houses were unremarkable on the outside; but to crack one open was to reveal an awesome cavity of myriad rooms filled with marvelous interiors that would put to shame the storied caverns of Ali Baba himself.

I was throwing-up sick, so Toma finished up fast, collected our pay, stole the cafeteria’s fifty-foot hose, and threw our own worn out twenty-five footer in the trash bin. He directed me to drive us to a motel on the outskirts of town where there was a pond. “Stop here!” he said when we passed the liquor store, and we picked up two six-packs of Pabst Blue Ribbon. We normally didn’t drink while migrating for work, so he must have really thought I needed a bit of his favorite cure for “everything-that-ails-ya.”

Thus we took the rest of that day off. We sat at the picnic table next to the pond and Toma told me the story of how not fifty miles from where we sat, the Ketchum carnival camped one July on a Friday in the middle of nowhere, and how late one night while enjoying the merriment of a cooking fire next to the family’s photo booth equipment, some photo bleach and some flour and an aluminum pan miraculously converged—Voila! Prosperity!—It was there for them all; for a while anyway.

Rural Mormon country for the carnival was reliable income. Ketchum would set up in a vacant field far from civilization, pitch the tents, lay out the midway (such as it was), string out the electric wires, and light up the night. Next day polygamous families would appear on wagons out of nowhere and cheerfully part with their money. But you couldn’t earn a dime there on a Sunday.

Toma wasn’t sure when the Nazis moved their operation into El Monte. His cousin, who happened to live next door to their compound, claimed they were there when he arrived. The cousin wanted the rental house he moved into badly even though there were neo-Nazi next door. The Nazi headquarters was barely visible behind approximately ten cords of wood stacked high in the front yard. Barbed wire encircled the entire lot. Three or four Doberman pinschers patrolled inside. A small sign on the front fence read “Firewood 4 Sale.” Toma’s cousin said he felt “safe” with Nazis for neighbors. On his part, the Nazi leader knew about “those Gypsies next door” and volunteered during my indirect questioning one day, when I paid him a visit out of curiosity, that they were “good people.”

The interior of the Nazi headquarters had been gutted and rebuilt into a labyrinth of halls flanked with closed doors, most leading nowhere, but some few entering into rooms. You would have to break them all down to search the joint, just to find the rooms that hid whatever it was that these Nazis were hiding. It was anyone’s guess. Deep into the labyrinth was a room with no door where the Nazi leader had his office, set amidst all the expected flags and photographs. I spoke to him there. He gave me a few
pamphlets, some mimeographs, glad-handed me and invited me back for an initiation ceremony. It was an open invitation I have yet to respond to.

I mention the labyrinthine interior of the El Monte neo-Nazi Party Headquarters in El Monte because it occurs to me that the typical Romani Interior anywhere encountered, however modest, is hands-down more clever, convoluted and impenetrable by enigmatic design and construction than any iron-clad and heavily-guarded Nazi bunker, as history has well demonstrated: Der Fuhrerism is dust, and the Gypsies continue to proliferate and prosper.

The “French Gypsies,” or Lowara, living in and around El Monte had no aversion to living in apartments. This, Toma and his clan of coppersmith Gypsies would never themselves do. Toma shunned apartment living no matter how desperate he was for housing, as he had been before he found his “lucky house.” He claimed that apartment living is “dirty” because it leads to the shameless tramping of women over the heads of orthodox Romani men, which is impure, impermissible, and plainly unlucky. Toma said the apartment-dwelling “Frenchies” in those days were hard-working Gypsies but unworthy of trust or respect.

Toma, his cousin next door to the Nazis, and all the rest of the Russian-Greek coppersmiths spread around in El Monte took care to verify the purity and safety of any house they planned to occupy for whatever length of time. No house with previous occupants, even if the occupants were Gypsies, was considered clean. Some houses had been generally considered cleaner than others. New houses or structures that had never been houses but could be converted into residences were the safest bets, all other things being equal. These were hard to come by except for the luckiest of Gypsies or by the wealthy clan patriarchs and their immediate families.

Negotiating for a clean rental house was time-consuming unless the house was previously occupied by close kin. Toma acquired his “lucky house” in a customary way.
He began by interrogating the landlord about the habits and circumstances of prior tenants. Toma was especially anxious to know whether or not anyone had ever died in a house he planned to rent.

This matter of wraiths always had priority over structural integrity during Tomas’ house inspections. Fear of ghosts in fact was endemic to the members of Toma’s clan. Toma’s son-in-law once rented a house facing a public park. When the family heard that the playground across the street had once been a cemetery, they moved immediately. Shortly after a death in one El Monte Romani family, a close relative claimed to see the ghost of the deceased in the dining room of the newly rented house, whereupon he dived out the window – which was unopen at the time! The house was abandoned the next day.

In general, a death at home in any Romani family precipitated an immediate change of residence. On moving into a new house, Thomas and his wife would perform a lengthy purification rite for each room.

The Pabst Blue Ribbon worked its cure on me and we woke up early the next morning with a plan to drive up into Idaho. Toma knew of a bakery in Pocatello… Fourteen hours later we pulled into the outskirts of Pocatello and parked next to a long blooming flowerbed that had tall tombstone-like stones all in a row—seven of them—that spelled out the word w-e-l-c-o-m-e. “That’s new,” Toma growled. “I don’t like that a bit.” I talked him out of turning around and backtracking toward California.

Toma had that far-away look. He was already missing his family. He scratched his palm; “Buet, buet, buet lowe,” he whispered aloud, meanwhile closing his eyes and thinking of twenty dollar bills. This was his usual new town, new day, going-for-work ritual. His eyes opened slowly, then squinted, taking in the promising urban oasis before us and the yet untraveled great beyond where all the vastness of the American West painted its barren and beckoning panorama out the front windshield and along an imagined highway strewn with twenty-dollar bills.

He turned and looked at me with that big jovial grin upon his face. Said Toma: “May you and I have as many as the hairs upon our heads.”
Perhaps it was the emergence of global media geographies of Spätkapitalismus (Late Capitalism) which provoked Deleuze and Guattari in their collaborative text Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia (1983) to claim that ‘the schizophrenic voyage is the only kind there is.’ However with the proliferation of digital technology, it is now possible to explore the schizoid disassociation between modern and ‘hyper-global’ conceptions of time and space in artistic and inventive manners. This paper will discuss in the context of current critical and geographical thought the performance of a cybernetic assembly A Relay of Joy. Utilizing the faculties of aurality and tactility for playing sounds in response to marks placed on a sheet of paper. The user rendered as a Beckettian figure is hooded, so the sound relays the location of the mark, assisting coordination. The intention is to draw a face through a process of mental mapping that emerges in response to sound rather than sight. The implications of this device are strange, as initially it is difficult to work out what is happening. Using the machine, the user is locked into a cybernetic assembly, or an “abstract machine.” Drawing upon Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of the ‘abstract machine’ comprises further abstractions of the body as a fragmented form. The machine deals with the abstractions of sound, stripping out sight in an attempt to locate a face that’s going to emerge from touch. The sense impressions are perverted: it’s a deliberate ill effect that turns the machine, as the crisis of late capitalist modernity turns in the subject.
The plane is concerned only with movement and rests, with dynamic affective charges: the plane will be perceived with whatever it makes us perceive, and then only bit by bit. Our ways of living, thinking or writing change according to the plane upon which we find ourselves.¹

Giles Deleuze, Spinoza: Practical Philosophy

There is an extraordinarily fine topology that relies not on points or objects but rather on haeccties on sets of relations [...] it is a tactile space, or rather ‘haptic’, a sonorous much more than a visual space. The variability, the polyvocality of directions, is an essential feature...

Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus

all that inner space one never sees, the brain and heart and other caverns where thought and feeling dance their sabbath...

Samuel Beckett, Molloy

**Introduction (Charles Travis)**

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s enigmatic and controversial aphorism –‘the schizophrenic voyage is the only kind there is,’ from *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1983) now seems prescient as quotidian senses of place and everyday life of the early twenty-first century become increasingly disassociated in the spatial and temporal implosions and fragmentations fostered by ‘hyper-global’ mediascapes in this turbulent period of *Spätkapitalismus* (Late Capitalism). At recent conference on the Digital Humanities at Cambridge University in September 2008, I as a geographer, was struck by a thematic scope which intimated to a certain extent, the interdisciplinary synergy characterized by the broad practice of geography. However, the main items on the program involved ongoing collaborations between digital media, the humanities and arts. Aside from the largely utilitarian use of Geographical Information Systems in climatic, environmental and planning subfields, geography as a discipline, particularly the humanistic side, has been reluctant to engage in the almost ubiquitous presence of digital media, in fostering and furthering research in its more esoteric, artistic and conceptual dimensions.

Having recently completed a doctorate in Irish literary geography of the early twentieth century, I was particularly drawn to the Nobel laureate Samuel Beckett, and the perceptive shift from a Cartesian verisimilitude marking his early prose and poetry to the more phenomenological, physically embodied (being-in-the-world) settings of his later works, populated by figures on bicycles wearing bowler hats, light bulbs
hanging on wires in lonely rooms, and desolate landscapes; in particular the essential milieu of his seminal drama Waiting for Godot (1952) a work both contemporaneous with, and allusive of the mid twentieth century emergence of Spätkapitalismus, and its fractal, non linear geographies.

Consequently, as I wandered the conference exhibit hall, I was struck by a figure hooded by a black foam tube that approximated a brimless, exaggerated Edwardian top hat, almost Dr. Seussian in nature (Picture 1). Amidst the lined tables occupied by academic book publishers and sellers, with company logos and complimentary biros, the figure stood in the corner of two grey partitions, like a character from a Beckett play before an easel with a piece of charcoal in his hand blindly sketching lines on a sheet of paper. The outline of a face began to emerge, accompanied by a series of electronic pops and blips, industrial screeches, and orgasmic moans, which caught the startled and confused attention of the hall’s more staid exhibitors. On close examination, it was revealed that cables ran from the back of the easel to a MacBook Pro, which was emitting the sounds in concert with the emerging visage of a face. Sensors were embedded in the easel, and as the hooded figure traced his charcoal across one of the copper buttons lying under the artistic foolscap, a sound/noise ejaculated from the silver MacBook’s tiny perforated speakers.

The figure soon unhooded, and I introduced myself to the scholar and digital artist Tim Long, whose interests corresponded with Deleuze and Guattari and the ‘grotesque.’ As the inventor of the ‘drawing machine’ exhibited as A Relay of Joy, Long stated in the
conference program that his drawing machine comprised ‘further abstractions of the body as a fragmented form’ dealing with abstractions of sound, stripping out sight in an attempt to locate a face that’s going to emerge from touch.’ He kindly offered me an opportunity to try out the machine; soon I was hooded and blindly sketching a face, partly guided by the machine’s noises- partly guided by my own mental mappings of a generic human face, and the sooty feel of charcoal between my index finger and thumb. Phenomenologically, I entered a different space, a plane in which the conventional habits of visual artistic practice were confined to tactility and aurality- the visual sense nullified by the hooding. Though I was creating a visual representation, visual perception was not a component involved in producing a visage; instead the cybernetic assembly comprising USB cables and the sound card of a MacBook Pro, extended my non visual acuity. After reflecting upon my observation of, and participation with Long’s A Relay of Joy, I was struck immediately by the realization that the virtual elements of the digital media drawing machine conflued with its ‘actual’ embodied performance. In doing so from the perspective of critical geography, the piece intimated a ‘Deleuzean event,’ being a conception in practice that could provide a reconceptualization of space and time. As Marcus Doel and David Clarke note:

> The Deleuzean event is far removed from the commonsensical notion of something that is simply present at hand…One is reminded of the stuttering events in the plays of Samuel Beckett…In Deleuze’s version of empiricism the event is as much virtual as it is actual…Events are explosive: they unsettle what appears to be given, and breathe life into what appears to be spent.¹

Such an ‘event’ I felt, could aid in illuminating non-representational theory’s, foci on performance, the body/machine. Secondly I realized I had been suddenly placed in an interstitial space of fieldwork in which my interests in embodied geographies, critical theory, mass media and art collided in a very serendipitous manner. In a sense, as my path crossed the ‘event’ of Tim Long’s abstract machine performance, I experienced what Deleuze would call a ‘creative encounter’ – that would force thought and estrangement from the conventions of my daily habits and memories.

The paper is divided in two main sections. The first will discuss the aesthetic collapse of Euclidian and Cartesian perspective and as Deleuze and Guattari note, the ‘pathological’ rise of Spätkapitalismus in the twentieth century, to contextualize Long’s digital media work and situate its embodied performance with current Deleuzean and non-representational discourses in geographical thought. The second section, authored by Tim Long, will describe the technical and theoretical dimensions of his drawing machine. A conclusion will follow which will proffer more questions than answers, and a brief discussion, to situate A Relay of Joy in the ‘hyper-global’ terrae incognitae of the twenty-first century’s emerging mediascapes.
To ‘map’ the salience of Long’s *A Relay of Joy* in illustrating elements of Deleuze and Guattari’s critique of the pathologies of *Spätkapitalismus* in their collaborative text *Anti Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1983), and concepts associated with geography’s current engagement with ‘non-representational theory, it is necessary to contextualize his ‘abstract machine’ in the aesthetic and technological developments of the early to late twentieth century which gave birth to the ‘hyper-global’ mediascape in which it operates. In Western civilization, geography has traditionally favored the visual perspective in its depiction and representation of subject matter.

From the global scale to intimate somatographies, Euclidian and Cartesian perspectives have historically dominated the phenomenological from the eighteenth century onwards by providing ontological and epistemological framings which reinforce the conventional structures of power, commodification, class, ethnicity and gender espoused by Western society. For Edmund Husserl, the German Phenomenologist, speaking in 1935 ‘the roots of the crisis lay at the beginning of the Modern Era, in Galileo and Descartes, in the one-sided nature of the European sciences, which reduced the world to a mere object of technical and mathematical investigation and put the concrete world of life, *die Lebenswelt*, as he called it, beyond their horizon.’

Henri Lefebvre, noted that this crisis manifested in the early decades of the twentieth century following the *fin de siècle*, when ‘the main reference systems of social practice in Europe disintegrated and even collapsed. What had seemed established for good during the *belle époque* of the bourgeoisie came to an end: in particular, space and time, their representation and reality indissociably linked. In scientific knowledge, the old Euclidian and Newtonian space gave way to Einsteinian relativity. But at the same time, as is evident from the painting of the period—Cézanne first of all, then analytical Cubism—perceptible
space and perspective disintegrated. The line of horizon, optical meeting-point of parallel lines, disappeared from paintings.\textsuperscript{20}

However, an Enlightenment debate on the nature and composition of space between Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) and Isaac Newton (1642-1727), had anticipated the perceptual shift that was recognized by Woolf, Husserl and others and corresponded with the emergence of mass media forms of film and radio during the early twentieth century. In the debate, Leibniz proposed that space was relational and created solely between objects. This stood in opposition to Newton’s view of space (commensurate with Descartes’) as absolute, infinite, stable and consisting of ‘God’s boundless uniform sensorium.’\textsuperscript{11} In Marshall McLuhan’s theory of media, Newton’s perspective embraced a visual bias reflective of the early development of ‘print culture’ created by the technological innovation of the Gutenberg printing press. McLuhan noted that Leibniz’s conception of space incorporated an ‘acoustic’ sensibility which is finite, flexible and characteristic of oral or pre-print cultures, and manifests itself in the current digital age of \textit{Spätkapitalismus} through the visual aurality of global broadcast cable news and entertainment networks.

The advent of broadcast media in the early twentieth century in the form of radio, film and later television laid the foundation for the mass consumption of (post) modern mediascapes, the McLuhan-like global-electronic extension of the human nervous system and the perceptual compression of time and space, which seems more in tune with Leibniz, than Descartes. The emergence of \textit{Spätkapitalismus} mediascapes and Jean Baudrillard’s attendant conceptions of simulacra and hyperreality can be contextualized within an unprecedented historical confluence between nuclear science, electronic and digital technology and mass production and consumerism. \textit{Spätkapitalismus} heralded the decline of the economy established by the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century and witnessed the emergence of ‘Information and Knowledge Economies’ of the early twenty first century.
However, despite the technological advances afforded by Spätkapitalismus, the events of 11 September 2001 witnessed occidental and oriental meta-narratives colliding in grotesque and absurd tableaux, and broadcast to the ‘corners’ of the earth with the stylistic conventions utilized to market Hollywood blockbusters.

Collapsing alongside the Twin Towers was the last premise of rationality undergirding Cartesian and Occidental supremacy, revealing a vulnerability to, as Deleuze and Guattari would describe, the ‘pathology’ of late capitalism, leaving many of occidental geographic epistemologies impotent in the face of Spätkapitalismus mediascapes which collapsed all previous Western framings of the experience of space and time. The ubiquity of the laptop and the worldwide web has fostered countless extensions of the human nervous system into this ‘pathology’, with interfaces as pedestrian as online commerce, pornographic saturation and the video tabloid of cable news networks. The spaces of flow enable and empower the spidery, black economies of international drug cartels, arms dealers and organized crime, and provide a ‘cyber swamp’ in which ‘terrorist’ organizations, pontificate, prosper and proliferate.

Individual states become vacuum tubes of consciousness chloroformed within their own media bubbles suggesting the artificiality of sovereignty observed in the works of Spinoza and Deleuze. In one sense, as Felix Stalder notes, echoing Deleuze and Guattari’s notions of ‘Deterroritarialization’ this ‘is a result of a hyper-connected global society that structurally disconnects and devalues entire regions and populations, not just economically, but, perhaps more importantly, culturally.’ Despite the profound structural changes that have witnessed all that is solid melting into air, mainstream Western consciousness, to a large extent operates with the scaffolding erected during the Enlightenment.

As Lefebvre notes over the course of the twentieth century to present day: ‘“One” continued to live in Euclidean and Newtonian space, while knowledge moved in the space of relativity. Comparatively straightforward, Euclidian and Newtonian space still seemed absolute and intelligible because it was homogeneous and had nothing to do with time. As for time, it remained clock-time, and was itself homogeneous. People went on singing tonal melodies, with clear rhythms and harmonic accompaniment. They persisted with habitual perceptions and traditional representations, which were erected into eternal verities when in fact they derived from history, and had already been superseded in scientific knowledge.’ It is this schizo-affective disassociation between the quotidian rhythm of everyday life in an Euclidean frame and the spatial-temporal compression engendered under Spätkapitalismus, which Deleuze and Guattari diagnose in Anti-Oedipus.

The positivistic premises of the former underlay the efforts of geography’s ‘Quantitative Revolution’ of the 1950s and 1960s, which coincided with the emergence of Spätkapitalismus. Spatial science further emphasized the dualism of Descartes’ perspective and projected upon the plane of Euclidian and Newtonian space - ironically,
Einsteinian insights played a little if nonexistent role, resulting in an epistemological cul-de-sac for the discipline. As a consequence of the Quantitative Revolution’s rational emphasis, a re-examination of subjectivity by humanistic geographers, critiqued the illusory objectivity promulgated by the practitioners of spatial science and reinvigorated the saliency of the human component in furthering the theoretical boundaries of geography as it closed the twentieth century.

As Trevor Barnes noted “intellectual production is always materialized through human bodies, and nonhuman objects. Neither is present in the rationalist account. Humans in the rationalist account…are presented as isolated “brains in vats”, disembodied, disconnected, disembedded. In the sociology of scientific knowledge view, however, knowledge never arrives from pure brainpower, from only sparking synapses. It is the outcome of embodied practice.” And it is such an emphasis under the umbrella of ‘non’ representational theory’s foci on performance and the ‘body/machine’ that has emerged as the cutting edge of theoretical practice on the cusp of the twenty-first century. Influenced in part by Deleuze’s ‘ex-centric empiricism, non-dialectical conception and immanent materialism,’ the ‘event’ and ‘embodied performance’ of Long’s ‘drawing machine’ can offer one reconceptualization of the relations of space and time as performed and experienced within the ‘thousand plateaus’ of Spätkapitalismus’s global mediascapes.
I have created a drawing machine for my own artistic experiments called a *Relay of Joy* that has been exhibited on four occasions, when members of the public were invited to use it. Firstly I will describe what it is, and how it works technically. Secondly, I will discuss its intent and discoveries about its properties that have emerged from its use, and finally I will speculate on the creative and philosophical contexts of the machine.

My concern with philosophy is practical, *crash philosophy* is the term I propose for my mode of investigation – a collision of being, thinking and making. This inquiry is part of my research into the grotesque image and imagination, which seeks to interrogate problematic embodiments and subjects, whose attributes can be aligned with Antonin Artaud’s ‘subjectile’, which is neither subject nor object.

The drawing machine sets out to challenge the stability of relationships between world and body, subject and object. If an ‘objectivist’ position could be proposed, then my research would be concerned with a difficult relationship between subject and object, body and world, although this would not necessitate an entirely irrational, or purely ‘subjectivist’ position. I will firstly describe the technical elements of the ‘abstract machine’ that I have constructed, before discussing its wider implications. The physical computing device I have constructed plays sounds in response to marks placed on a sheet of paper. The user is hooded, so the sound relays the location of the mark, assisting coordination. The intention is to draw a face, which emerges in response to sound rather than sight. Using the machine, the user is locked into a cybernetic assembly, or an ‘abstract machine.’ The abstract machine intends to align the user’s body with the machine, even though the user is stripped of normal sensory faculties. The machine deals with the abstractions
of sound, stripping out sight in an attempt to locate a face that’s going to emerge from touch. Sense impressions are perverted: the intention is for a deliberate ill effect to turn the machine, questioning the status of a cybernetic assembly, and the role the human subject plays in the sense-mechanism. The machine uses a physical computer interface. Eight piezo transducers, or triggers, (Picture 3) mounted onto a board respond to percussive and transmissive contact from the paper mounted onto them. These signals are received by a computer via a MIDI drum module and MIDI interface. The audio software application Ableton Live then plays out samples to the speakers attached to the computer.

The sound samples can be modulated for reverb, delay and looping, offering the capacity to extend the sounds triggered from the drawing. I used an Apple Mac Powerbook, although a Windows PC could also be used with the same, or similar software installed.\textsuperscript{17} The fixed location of the piezo resistors permit me and other users to 'learn', where the sounds are. A more complex, sensitive pad, capable of sensing right across the entire drawing board would permit different compositions in sound and mark making to emerge. Users can hear the sounds generated from the contact of compressed charcoal, graphite, or oil paint applied with a palette knife. Rapid gestural marks will create a crescendo of sounds. By establishing roughly where the sensors are, users can orientate the development of the drawing, enabling a rough type of face, or face mapping to emerge. The 'Joy' of the title refers to the orgasmic moans and shouts sampled from porn movies downloaded from the Internet relayed by the machine. it is an ironic reference to a philosophical jouissance; and intellectual pleasure blending with a series of ejaculatory screams.
When first presented publicly, the intended violence of the machine, and my desire for it to disturb emerged diluted. The screams were not long enough – adjustments were required in the software to add delay and reverberation to the sounds played by the pencil or stylus on paper. I discovered that after working on the machine and taking off the hood, I was disoriented – taken aback, emerging from an outlandish and private experience. Users and observers were both intrigued and distressed. A greater investment of horror, more noises of sexual passion, played louder, and total blindness may have conveyed the sense of disorder to greater effect, or it may have repulsed all or any engagement, whereas I wished the machine to waver on an edge between modes of pleasure and distress, as a transformative condition, re-minding, or re-arranging the senses.

This may be where a distinction between my readings of horror and the grotesque exist; horror repulses, or turns the body away from involvement, but it seems to me that the grotesque lives in a nether-land between desire and repulsion. User response to what the machine was doing differed from my intention, prompting me to adapt its use. The machine’s purpose baffles me almost as much as anyone else, so I was pleased to be informed by users about its properties. It seemed to disturb people using it. It did not work well if a reasonable and logical approach was taken to making a drawing. The social action of watching someone drawing, when they cannot see who is watching them intrigued the viewer and gave them a privilege and power over the user, who wore a tall light rubber hood. Intended originally to make me look like a prick (dick-head), the significance of the hood was not apparent. A literal understanding of my intentions, disregarding metaphor or allegory, point to the ‘thing’—the event—as the meaning. It is concerned with production, rather than product – so experimentation, and the
engagement of sense stimulation are the outcome. Some observers brought their own allegories and metaphors to the event – the hood made the user look like they were in a Dada costume, or made them look like a torture victim. Meanings from the worlds of other people, other bodies, invested the device with meaning, from the world of art, and the world of other disturbing and violent interactions of bodies. The drawn results from the machine showed a remarkable variety; even though the individual was blind to their action of drawing, a latent imagination seemed to determine difference. Strategies, or 'cheats', included feeling for the edges of the paper before drawing, or slowly setting out an oval outline, which, despite efforts to make a 'correct' drawing, resulted in the features of the face being added in the wrong place.

By replacing sight with sound as the sensory perception of physical action the agency of sensation is brought into question, diminishing habitual sense, and tending towards non-sense, because the person cannot control the machine, or their drawing, but they can modulate the sounds by making marks they cannot see, but the sound gestures they make are not sensible (in alignment with common sense), offering a vulnerable tendency which could be outlandish or strange. For some users the fear of not controlling the process seemed evident through a careful overture of touching, finding the edges of the paper, tapping the sensors, prior to making any marks. In contrast other users began with broad gestural marks, indicating acceptance of the unreasonable requirements, and the impossibility of commanding the process, or the outcome. Physical and material speeds and affects might be privileged over cognitive decisions—a force and rhythm in the encounter as production might emerge—this is also the ambition to attain 'joy', to lose a sense, to be a thing, out of the world, but to re-encounter the connections of material bodies.

Two types of user reaction to the sensory deprivation can be hypothesized, one responding to 'external cause', the learnt approach demonstrated by the desire to delineate the face's boundaries, and to create a 'correct' looking face, and secondly, a sensation privileging approach, learning from 'internal cause' evidenced by the body responding to feeling and sound feedback, resulting in a disordered drawing. Does a disordered experience emerge? There are no measurable units in the sensational experience that is intended to disorientate, so subjectivity is also, I hope, rendered outlandish and out of control as the body becomes redistributed within the emergent structure of the relay. Can the drawing machine relay this encounter, and heighten it? It will need to be improved, providing the body with headphones and more sensitive sensors. The environment will need to permit the user to engage with the reorientation of sensation with greater intensity, through the use of louder speakers, and possibly other physical stimulus, a vibrating floor, or a shaking device. Several spectators compared the hooded users to people subjected to sensory deprivation; the astonishing willingness shown by many users to put on the hood may evidence curiosity, possibly, but also a desire to experience something strange by disordering the senses. The drawing machine operates
with a type of sensory exchange, which is a method employed in the technology of torture – a normative reality is deliberately reoriented to undermine and disorder the body, and therefore, the mind's capacity to assimilate sensory experience.

As starting point, the practical experiment is intended to extend speculation – it is an inventive machine. It intends to provoke an alternative to the body's habitual senses, perverting common sense, and shifting relations to physical surroundings and the difficulty of subject/object relations. One important discovery is that it is a social machine that encourages people to participate with it and talk about its significance. The drawing machine's central tenet of aesthetic interest resides in the obligation of the body to employ sensation in a disordered and abnormal frame. The word 'aesthetic' derives etymologically to *aisthētikos*, 'perception'. Diogenes Laertius presents Stoic 'sense-perception,' as 'The activity [of sensing that] is also called aisthēsis.' This 'sense-perception' is a cognitive process, 'but it is by reason that we get cognition of conclusions reached through demonstration'.

The aesthetic as a notion of idealised beauty, assembled from external influence should not have relevance to the operations of the machine. But the observed desire in users to access received, rather than perceived, material informing the process, indicates a desire to conform to what might be a fictional aesthetic, instead of succumbing to the sense-perception of reordered cognitive stimulus. My interest concerns how sense-perception is apprehended prior to habitual application of reason. The machine reorders the senses to reveal what emerges from sense-perception when reason is absent during the production of a drawing. Is a pre-reasoned sense-perception possible? Could this be called an animal sense-perception, a base-level of stimulation? A raw perceptual process that does not permit reason to enter into aesthetic encounter of production? This would present the user with a challenge, where their mental faculties are called to respond to stimulus outside of the normal sensory order. My intention was originally to use the device for my own experiments in sensory disturbance, pursuing my inquiry into the grotesque, and to draw a face to which I was blind; this face would be made from sound feedback and touch.

The capacity of the machine's social function emerged from its first public exhibition at 'Notations' conference at the Slade School of Art, University College London in January 2008. People were surprisingly willing to put on the 'hat' and try to draw a face. When exhibited in Canterbury during the summer of 2008, a number of visiting families from abroad tried out the machine. A Spanish family happily looked on as 'Dad' put on the hat and made a drawing. The spectacle of the machine as circus sideshow emerged. The sideshow, as 'cheap thrill', providing a short, but thrilling encounter of a world made strange, and then returning to normal, often involves the knowledge that onlookers are watching a performance. The performer/participant is watched, they need to perform, but cannot control what they cannot see while drawing, so a dilemma occurs. Any strategy to maintain control, like feeling for the edges of
the paper, seemed preferable to employing the machine’s real potential, to privilege loss of control and to enter into a delirious and unfamiliar touching, listening and shrieking event. There may be a joy involved in shifting away from a normative mode of consciousness and moving to another level of bodily integration conditioning the ‘sensorium’ - which, when extended from the mental map to a corporeal map, involves the engagement of the body’s contained and uncontained attributes.

Speculation upon the possibility of a body becoming disoriented by the substitution of one sense impression with another indicates a grotesque motivation - a deranged, other-worldly subject, neither all flesh and bone, nor soldered micro-circuits and wires, but both, might emerge: this is the prospect of a body, trapped outside its habitual coordinates becoming a machine which wishes to reterritorialise itself as a living, organic being. The distinction between mind and body may be challenged when the body needs to execute an action the mind cannot. My research seeks to examine the physical interconnections of bodies and their objects, and related multiplying experiences of perception, requiring the more fixed relations of a Cartesian thesis promoting logic and a primacy of logical thought to be jettisoned. Proposing that the body becomes deranged through an act of dissolution is discovered in the construction of one reading of Spinoza’s conception of body, – a mutant infant to the godless metaphysics of the late twentieth century which clings onto bodies, objects and things. The unified, bounded body of the individual subject appears to be discredited, and other modes and intensities of bodies have come forward. Charles Stivale points to a model of this disturbing, distributed body in his examination of a Spinozist influence evident in Deleuze and Guattari’s *A Thousand Plateaus*. By ‘plotting “distributions of intensity,” of “affects” as “latitude” in relation to longitudinal “relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness,”’ Deleuze and Guattari develop Spinoza’s thinking in proposing,

…a mode of individuation very different from that of a person, subject, thing or substance. We reserve the name *haecceity* for it. A season, a winter, a summer, an hour, a date have a perfect individuality lacking nothing, even though this individuality is different from that of a thing or a subject. They are *haecceities* in the sense that they consist entirely of relations of movement and rest between molecules or particles, capacities to affect and be affected. (*ATP* 261)

The word ‘outlandish’, for Deleuze, is an equivalent to ‘the deterritorialised’; and this is the perception I wish the drawing machine to engender. Remember it is made of human and machine parts, neither of which are required to fulfill their normative functions. It is perverse, a bad event, intending to initiate an awful turn in the user and the spectator. In its contemplation, the machine should permit perception of threat, difficulty, and a turning point between control and unreason. In its use, the machine should permit the body to experience disorientation, obliging thought to strain against the reordering of sensational coordinates. It is an ambitious machine, it would like to create an outlandish
thing; a body of unreason. The individual, as an affective body (affect, not of the drives and complexes of Freudianism, but affects of becoming—a temporally modulated affect of intense movement) carries a map of their immediate environment with them. Sound, air, temperature, movement of the body and other bodies, desire, language, apprehension; these are bundles of affects as an extended and extensive body. Relations between external and internal coordinates of a thinking, affective subject question properties of bodies. When or how does the body think? When does thought feel?

Many instances present themselves: Sex—the movement of bodies—the friction of coitus, drug intoxication, even a sweet cup of coffee—shifts the body into a variety of encounters, realms, affects and speeds. The encounter of bodies in imagination as bodies of desire in Freudianism—the bodies of drives, sublimations, complexes and projections—are discovered as sexual bodies of difficulty, which in the cartography of the psychoanalytic system, relates to other drives, acting as metaphors determined by the ‘symbolic order’, the properties of which the Spinozist model challenges. A risk is taken in rendering these psychoanalytical bodies to Spinozist becomings. The proposal orphans affect from the drives and subsumes it in sense-perception. The concern with speeds and movements of bodies in the machine—touching, drawing and listening, conflating thought and movement into sense-perception discover a Spinozan body as modifications of *conatus* and *affectus*. ‘Spinoza’s identification of ‘the actual essence’ of a thing with its *conatus* – the ‘striving by which each thing strives to preserve in its being’ (eiiip7).’ The complexity which results from this account of bodies has as its correlate under the attributes of thought—a multiplicity that both enriches the possibilities of human knowing and creates an unavoidable confusion at its very core.’

Spinoza notes:

> By emotion (*affectus*) I understand the modifications of the body by which the power of action of the body is increased or diminished, aided or restrained, and at the same time the idea of these modifications.’ (Ethics. iii def.3)

Minute relations of bodies, imagined in Spinoza’s description of a worm swimming through a body’s blood, navigating minute relations of bodies, discovering the cells and atoms of which the human body is composed, attributes of which link all bodies—connected by a capacity to survive, and a capacity to experience joy, respectively defined by the *conatus*, and *affectus*. The modifications of these attributes are actions of bodies, and the idea of those modifications are bodies too. Spinoza presents this framed within a ‘rationalist’ thesis, but Spinozism presents it as something away from the rational, as multiplicities, and a crazy and unavoidable confusion. More movement, greater speeds, less certainty, and greater capacities to become transformed describe bodies aligned to the grotesque, which are paradoxically bound into other bodies: ‘From this it follows that every body, insofar as it exists modified in a certain way, must be considered as a part of the whole universe.’
He questions how the body can relay physical sensation to thought, and how thought may relate affect to the body, challenging the Cartesian division between mind and body. I may ask, ‘how can a cause not be assigned to an action? In response, reason will propose an answer, here is the cause, and here is the action from which it arises. But in suppressing habitual, reasoned sense, the drawing machine generates a sense from outside of habit. The drawing itself, as production of a re-ordering, becomes a body-map of a temporary negotiation of sense made from a body of disorder. The broader context of a spatial mapping of the body, the extension and intensities of physical affects and psychic material are relevant to my project, but the scope of this paper precludes detailed discussion of the social implications of the drawing machine.

Speculation on the connections between the individual body and the social body can be discovered in Antonin Artaud’s paranoid and terrifying vision, which is arguably a sustained and merciless assault upon the conatus. Artaud’s ability to locate the shredded bodies and articulate his disturbance lucidly, in writing and drawing, assisted Deleuze and Guattari to delineate their schizoanalytical theory. The Greek skhizein ‘to split’ points to the drawing machine’s interrogative function, and its capacity to encourage a cleaving of the senses: sound, as a sexual glossolalia (bodies mingling), replaces sight, so touch is only felt, not observed. The inscribed index of the marks are made unobserved, cutting the hand/eye coordination, and the body’s action away from sight.

The body, as social body, is split from the body as sensorium. I am hinting at the possibility of a social body also possessing a conatus, prone to disorder, and the drawing machine may investigate in a minute way how this disorder might operate. It

---

*Picture 5*

Tim Long, one of the first drawings from the machine.
may be wrong to propose that where bodies go wrong, a society goes wrong, but Deleuze and Guattari do establish this alarming link in their schizoanalytical theory: 'Corpus:Socius, politics and experimentation.' If a body is capable of being split and shredded, of losing direction, what related capacities does a social body possess? What imagination discovers a body to be and what a social body discovers itself to be – these are linked components, and linked intensities.

Personally, in this age of media saturated Spätkapitalismus, the social body terrifies me. It presents itself sometimes as sensible creation, but a delirium, which bodies know, runs like a rash across its surface. I feel myself to be more of a spec than a participant in the spectacle.

So I will pull on the hood and make drawings from the screams.

iii: Conclusion
The event and performance of A Relay of Joy calls to mind one of Marshall McLuhan’s media aphorisms: ‘a light bulb creates an environment by its mere presence.’ By the same token Long’s cybernetic assembly creates its own effective
electronic milieu, a fragmented metaphorical space for the human experience of ‘Spätkapitalismus, and an analogy for the ‘schizophrenic journey’ suggested by Deleuze and Guattari through its ‘hyper-global’ mediascapes.

Though often invoked as an ‘information superhighway’ which alludes to an outdated Fordism, the world-wide web is closely analogous and contiguous with the human nervous system. The synapses of digital media, constituted by silicon chips, extend, as Marshall McLuhan has previously argued about the telegraph in the nineteenth century, our human faculties of perception and sense through the neural cyber threads which carries both pathogens and anti-viruses from the inner worlds of our psyches, to the ends of the earth and back again.

The collapse of Euclidian and Cartesian space and time and the movement of information at light speed through the cerebellum of this cyberspace has induced a sense of cultural ‘vertigo,’ which Jock Young notes is ‘the malaise of late modernity: a sense of insecurity of insubstantiality, and of uncertainty, a whiff of chaos and a fear of falling.’ Such movement implies as, Deleuze notes ‘a plurality of centers, a superimposition of perspectives, a tangle of points of view, a coexistence of movements which essentially distort representation.’

Manuel Castells notes that as a result of the global ‘neural network,’ emerging from the development of ‘Spätkapitalismus’ the geography of the new history will not be made, after all, of the separation between places and flows, but out of the interface between places and flows,” the shift constituting a world-wide electro-shock treatment to our habituated faculties of perception. Long’s assembly is about being lost or disoriented in such a new geography, and is an attempt to find bearings with a simple device that highlights how contingent the orientation of body to world is – relating to broader issues of ‘social cohesion’ in a world where the sense of space has been fragmented by 24/7 mediascapes where crisis and urgency seem to dominate.

The artistic performance of an individual in cybernetic assembly intimates a twenty-first century echo

---

“‘non-representational’ theory, is concerned with the performance of the human body as tool-being operating within a ‘new kind of electronic background’ of the time-spaces making their way and shaping the world.”

“as a result of the intervention of software and new forms of address, the background of time-spaces are changing [...] character, producing novel kinds of behavior”

—Nigel Thrift
Representational Theory: Space/politics/affect
of Marshall McLuhan’s observation regarding the emergence of print media: ‘If a new technology extends one or more of our senses outside us into the social world, then new ratios among all our sense will occur in that particular culture. It is comparable to what happens when a new note is added to a melody. And when the sense ratios alter in any culture than what had appeared lucid may suddenly appear opaque and what had been vague or opaque will become translucent.’ By subtly altering the sense ratio in favor of the aural and tactile, and away from the visual, the individual is placed in Deleuze’s reading of Spinoza’s ontology, upon a new ‘plane’ of perception. This also serves to approximate Deleuze and Guattari’s conceptions of ‘an abstract machine’ which plays a ‘piloting role’ and does not ‘function to represent’ something real, but rather constructs a real which is yet to come. By eliding visual perspective, so fundamental to the practice of Western geography and media, Long’s ‘abstract machine’, by imposing a ‘limitation’ to perception as Deleuze notes ‘presupposes’ and allows a swarm of differences, a pluralism of free, wild untamed differences, a properly differential and original space and time to emerge in the perception and experience of the performer. In this sense Long’s drawing machine, ‘deterritorializes’ an individual from the visual world, enabling a plane of aural and tactile perception to emerge.

Drawing upon the work of Deleuze and Guattari, one dimension of Nigel Thrift’s elaboration of ‘non-representational’ theory is concerned with the performance of the human body as a tool-being operating within ‘a new kind of electronic background’ of the time-spaces making their way and shaping the world. He asserts: “I do not count the body as separate from the thing world. Indeed, I think it could be argued that the human body is what it is because of its unparalleled ability to co-evolve with things,” and contends: “as a result of the intervention of software and new forms of address, the background of time-spaces are changing . . . character, producing novel kinds of behavior that would not have been possible before and new types of object which presage more active environments.”

Bio-techno interfaces, such as Long’s cybernetic assembly form, according to Thrift, not so much a technological unconscious as a technological anteconscious providing ‘a warp and weft of inhuman traffic with its own indifferent geographies.’ A Relay of Joy provides perhaps an illustration of this technological disposition and hybridity. Its performance effects a fragmented, yet embodied piece of human geography, which by intimating Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘schizophrenic journey’ maps a ‘distinctive space to navigate the vertigo promulgated by Spätkapitalismus’ pervasive ‘hyper-global’ mediascapes.
Endnotes

1 Tim Long is Senior Lecturer in Digital Culture, Arts and Media at Canterbury Christ Church University, and a practising artist who has conceived and performed A Relay of Joy. Long’s research into the grotesque image and imagination concentrates on issues of transformation, dissolution, deterritorialisation, and anomaly, drawing upon discussions by Deleuze and Guattarri, Mary Douglas, Julia Kristeva and Mikhail Bakhtin. Concepts debating the monstrous and abject are applied to examining grotesque morphologies and the dissolution of the subject, identified in case studies drawn from literature and the history of art: Antonin Artaud, Francis Bacon, and outsider artist, Adolf Wolfli.

2 Dr. Charles Travis is a Research Associate with the Trinity Long Room Hub and a Lecturer in Geography at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. Possessing an MA in Mass Communication, Travis is interested in the intersection between art, media and critical geographical thought.


4 Definition from Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*: ‘We have done with all globalizing concepts. Even concepts are haecceities (essence of a thing), events.’


6 Ernest Mandel’s framing of ‘Spätkapitalismus’ (Late Capitalism) in 1972, described the unprecedented confluence between nuclear science, electronic and digital technology and mass production and consumerism.

7 ’Events’ in Deleuze’s though are localised conceptions, which in turn can also be viewed as territories and haecceities

8 Marcus Doel and David Clarke explain: ’The Deleuzean event is far removed from the commonsensical notion of something that is simply present at hand…One is reminded of the ’stuttering’ events in the plays of Samuel Beckett…In Deleuze’s version of empiricism the event is as much virtual as it is actual…Events are explosive: they unsettle what appears to be given, and breathe life into what appears to be spent.’ Gilles Deleuze’ in in (eds.) Phil Hubbard, Rob Kitchin and Gill Valentine, *Key Thinkers on Space and Place* (London: Sage, 2006) p. 104.


12 Stalder, *Manuel Castells*, 98

13 Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, 47


15 Marcus Doel and David Clarke Gilles Deleuze’ in in (eds.) Phil Hubbard, Rob Kitchin and Gill Valentine, *Key Thinkers on Space and Place* (London: Sage, 2006) p. 106

16 syn-es-the-sia also syn-aes-the-sia (sin’is-the’zha) n. 1) A condition in which one type of stimulation evokes the sensation of another, as when the hearing of a sound produces the visualization of a color. 2) A sensation felt in one part of the body as a result of stimulus applied to another, as in referred pain. 3) The description of one kind of sense impression by using words that normally describe another. synes-thet’ic (-thet’ik) adj.


17 Umberto Eco, thinks different perhaps of the interchangeability between Mac and PC, ‘The Holy War Mac vs. dos’ *Umberto Eco, Porta Ludovica*, 30 Sept. 1994: ‘The fact is that the world
is divided between users of the Macintosh computer and users of MS-DOS compatible computers. I am firmly of the opinion that the Macintosh is Catholic and that DOS is Protestant. Indeed, the Macintosh is counter-reformist and has been influenced by the ratio studiorum of the Jesuits. It is cheerful, friendly, conciliatory; it tells the faithful how they must proceed step by step to reach—if not the kingdom of Heaven—the moment in which their document is printed. It is catechistic: The essence of revelation is dealt with via simple formulae and sumptuous icons. Everyone has a right to salvation.

DOS is Protestant, or even Calvinistic. It allows free interpretation of scripture, demands difficult personal decisions, imposes a subtle hermeneutics upon the user, and takes for granted the idea that not all can achieve salvation. To make the system work you need to interpret the program yourself: Far away from the baroque community of revelers, the user is closed within the loneliness of his own inner torment. You may object that, with the passage to Windows, the DOS universe has come to resemble more closely the counter-reformist tolerance of the Macintosh. [Accessed 28 Jan. 2009].

18 Deleuze and Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, 260.
20 Gilles Deleuze, Claire Parnet, Charles Stivale, ‘Labécédaire De Gilles Deleuze’, A as in animal.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
35 Ibid., 89.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid., 10
REFERENCES


Abstract

Literature in geography, geopolitics, and representation has created a solid foundation for interrogating representations of place in news. This article uses notions of news as supporting ideological perspectives about place as a starting point for textual and discourse analyses of American foreign correspondence that consider journalistic texts alongside the sites from which they are produced. This study focuses on journalistic narratives written from Russia during the 1990s, a time during which an unprecedented, ideological struggle between communism and nationalism on one hand and pluralistic democracy on the other emerged within Post-Soviet Russia. It shows how ideological conceptions of space and society were useful to journalistic texts about Russia during that time and discusses how some fieldwork supported the writing of stories that critiqued those mainstream conceptions. By linking discursive features of the profession of foreign correspondence, and their spatial aspects, with textual and geographic devices that were important to communicating information about Russia, this study proposes a new framework for understanding why certain conceptions of society and space are numerically more dominant than others. The model generates a new perspective on why ideological conceptions about space persist in foreign correspondence despite the publication of dissenting voices and raises questions about the ramifications of this persistence for geography.
Wide reaching significance has been attached to mass telecommunications in literature across academic disciplines. In geography, Timothy Luke (1989; 1991) pegs it as a basic influence on major, overarching aspects of post-industrial society, such as the contemporary system of nation-states in the world and transnational commerce. Geographers have written about the relationship between mass telecommunications and geography for a wide variety of media formats including film (Gold 1985; Aitken and Zonn 1994; Sharp 1998), novels (Myers 2000), and newspapers (Mitchell 1996; Dugas 1999; Veronis 1999; Martin 2000; West 2004). And media have been strongly incorporated into notions of geopolitics (Agnew 1998; Dalby 1998; Ó Tuathail 1998; Sharp 2000).

I contribute to our understanding of news as geopolitics by linking geographic aspects of the production of news with understandings about space and society in journalistic narratives. While geographers have been relatively quick to tackle the problem of how the spatiality of economic production physically affects the world and its regions (see for instance Massey 1979), they have been slower to examine how the spatiality of news production affects the content of news. While an abundance of literature in geography on media has focused on topics such as how mediated communication functions as a political-geographical phenomenon, how communication media have reworked experience of places, and how particular places and place-based communities are represented, relatively little still has been done to explain why mediated communication favors certain representations of place and society over others.

Material products have been described as abstract using Marxist analysis, because the myriad social and spatial relations that produced them and are integral to understanding them are hidden and unknowable upon superficial inspection (see for instance Harvey 1999). Lefebvre (1991) extended Marxist analysis to include space as well as representations of space. I use Lefebvre’s observations on representations of space as a starting point in order to analyze how the spatial aspects of news production engender and constrain certain conceptions of society and space in foreign correspondence printed in general circulation newspapers in the United States. I accomplish this by combining an understanding of journalism and of foreign correspondents obtained through literature and interviews; qualitative, textual analysis of journalistic narratives; and, theoretical contributions of geography regarding space, spatial networks, mediated communication, and geopolitics. The result is a theoretically grounded model for understanding the literary and textual construction of foreign places in print-journalism. The model is informed by key aspects of journalistic discourse and an interrogation of the kinds of sites from which foreign correspondence is written and should be of general interest to scholars of media or geopolitics and of particular interest to geographers and others interested in better understanding the mechanisms related to the ideological representations of space that Lefebvre (1991) so compellingly described. I answer two main questions: 1. How did the sites from which foreign correspondence is written
engender particular kinds of journalistic prose about Russia?; and 2. Why didn't journalistic fieldwork from the provinces, which often relied upon at least some analysis of historical and material relationships, destabilize dominant, ideological perspectives about Russia and about reform in general? I also explores how foreign correspondents imagined Russia in the 1990s insofar as that is necessary to answer the above two main questions.

Confronted with narratives from and about so many world-regions, I chose to study those written by foreign correspondents working out of Moscow during the 1990s. At that time, a large concentration of American foreign correspondents was stationed there in order to report on the geopolitically crucial transition of formerly Soviet Russia to a democratic, capitalistic society. The time period is interesting for this study not only because of the large quantity of foreign correspondence from Russia being printed in American newspapers but because of the great hopes and expectations that American policymakers and even the general public held for America’s supreme, Cold War-adversary becoming American-like through a reform process that positioned Russia as a seemingly needy recipient of American advice and financial assistance. The reforms that Americans desired for Russia constituted an imaginary erasure and redrawing of the boundaries that distinguished “us” Americans from “them” Russians. In seeking this change, Americans sought a major revision of geopolitics, insofar as scholars like Ó Tuathail and Dalby (1998) have conceptualized critical geopolitics as bound up with conceptual acts of boundary-drawing. This work should also then be of general interest to anyone interested in foreign correspondence about world regions for which Americans or American policymakers publicly brandish strong desires.

Because this work focuses on journalism directed at an American readership in general, I analyzed foreign correspondence published in three, major general circulation newspapers in the United States: The Los Angeles Times, The New York Times, and The Washington Post. For the time period of interest, these papers constituted three of the top five daily newspapers in the United States with respect to circulation numbers (see Editor and Publisher 2000). They also have a geographically widespread deployment of foreign bureaus as well as foreign bureaus in Moscow. Foreign bureaus are geographically and textually significant, because they are a nexus of news feeds, delivering information from domestic news vendors as well as radio and television. Journalists prefer to work from the foreign bureau, as Carey Goldberg (2003), then foreign correspondent for the Los Angeles Times, explains:

[Foreign correspondents avoid being] caught out of position when some big news happens. It would be very, very difficult to try to write the overarching, big story of what’s happening when you’re in a place with lousy communications and not getting all of the input that you usually would get. It’s a lot easier to cover big, happening stories from your base in Moscow.
Additionally, the foreign bureau is a physical space from which foreign correspondents have the best access to the most influential political and economic decision-makers and to the largest proportion of newsworthy events.

Inspection of the datelines from which foreign correspondence from Russia was published during the 1990s showed that a strong majority of stories were published with Moscow-datelines. The foreign bureau is the geographic lynchpin behind foreign correspondence and the primary site from which journalists collect and prioritize information that provides the basis for writing stories about foreign countries. Thompson (1995) uses the term extended mediazation to capture the critical function that foreign bureaus provide, which is the incorporation of news into additional news stories. This study approaches the dateline corresponding to the location of the foreign bureau as the most important site for the construction of narratives about Russia, because the resources present at the Moscow bureau readily facilitate the writing of aggrandizing stories about Russia that the vernacular audience is most likely to read.

Stories written with Moscow-datelines and with datelines away from Moscow are the two comparison groups of particular interest for understanding meaning-making in foreign correspondence about Russia. Because so many articles were published from Russia during the 1990s, I include in the results section my analysis of selected articles so that the reader can directly observe that the results are grounded both in observation and in theory. Before the results, however, the literature review describes the theoretical basis for this study. First, I establish that the geography of reading markets affects the use of language in mediated texts. Next, I examine theoretical reasons why territorial conceptions of society in journalistic texts should empower news-narratives. Finally, I review some of the work in geography and other fields that links representation in mediated texts and mediated communication in general to systems of economic production and to economic geography.

**Literature**

Benedict Anderson (1991) establishes perhaps the most important precedent to understanding news as a spatially constructed discourse. In providing a history of what he terms print-capitalism, he attributes a gradual but steady reduction in the linguistic diversity of Europe over centuries to a process of the expansion of markets for printed materials. He explains that as publishers continually sought larger markets, they were confounded by the diverse but geographically constrained oral vernaculars, which were too numerous and localized to be exploited for profit. Anderson (1991) explains that publishers responded by borrowing words from multiple, distinct languages in adjacent areas and deliberately using them together, thus creatively assembling new print-languages.

Anderson (1991, 45) regards “the fixing of print-languages [as a] largely unselfconscious process resulting from the explosive interaction between capitalism,
technology, and human linguistic diversity” that nonetheless tied the spatial expansion of markets for newspapers with a concomitant reduction in linguistic diversity. He argues, albeit controversially (see Thompson 1995), that ever-larger reading communities of people who read a common language gave birth to nationalism by virtue of imagining distant events together, simultaneously. Ultimately, however, print-capitalism transformed both spoken and written languages in awesome ways through processes of selection followed by linguistic convergence.

While Anderson’s work deals with developments that occurred in Europe before and after the printing of the Gutenberg bible in the fifteenth century, his analysis exemplifies how the spatial structure of a reading-market is intimately intertwined with the use of language in the mediated texts directed at it. The notion of the interrelationship between the geography of newspaper-markets and the linguistic construction of meaning in news-narratives is an essential foundation of the present work. The market, or readership, and where it lives, has strong consequences for what makes news-texts successful. Anderson (1991, 63) moreover continues that newspapers accomplish “the refraction of [global events] into a specific imagined world of vernacular readers.” This refraction converts events in foreign places into terms that the vernacular audience can understand. Other writers, dealing with contemporary journalism, come to similar conclusions. Smith (1973, 109) observes that sizeable audiences in particular, such as those required by large, general circulation newspapers, necessitate one shared “frame of reference” in terms of what kinds of events are even newsworthy. In other words, the dominant perspectives in the news are indeed dominant, because they address the concerns of vernacular readers in ways that those readers can understand. Standardized frames of reference mean that individual stories that journalists write will appeal to more people.

I found evidence in both interviews with foreign correspondents as well as in theoretical writings on the workings of texts that support the notion that shared frames of reference, to use Smith’s (1973) terminology, are necessary in order to establish and maintain the communicability of encoded messages. Terdiman (1985) codifies the relationship between the author and the reader more specifically, explaining that the author must understand the powered, uneven relationships that the discourse within which a vernacular reader is immersed produces. Through that understanding, the author is able to use codes in the text that match the situations and powered relationships in the vernacular society, thus producing a text that is interpretable by all members of that society. In this way, any mass-mediated text can establish and maintain communicability despite the fact that the narrative is designed to be consumed by readers whose individual needs and circumstances can never be understood or addressed by the author.

In much less theoretical language, Maura Reynolds (2000), then a foreign correspondent for the Los Angeles Times, told me “…for the most part, what I have to do is accept social conventions, because my job is not to challenge them but to communicate
with them.” In other words, social norms establish and maintain communicability. They are referenced in foreign correspondence, because without them, journalism would be unreadable. I do not think that the significance of these observations about communicability in mediated texts can be understated. The present work explores how social norms, expressed as ideological conceptions of territory and space, participate in maintaining communicability in stories about places in which the vast majority of readers can be assumed to have had no prior first hand experience. Unwin (1998, 285) indeed observed that the rhetorics of reform were constituted at least as much by “the wishful thinking of their advocates” as any observable or measurable political-economic behaviors (see also Callinicos (1991), Miliband (1991), and Burawoy (1992)).

The strong reliance upon statespersons by American journalists in foreign correspondence about Russia during the 1990s requires analytical sensitivity toward national conceptions of space that emphasize a territorial definition of society. According to Sack (1980, 179), territorial definitions of society mean that “social relationships are determined by location in a territory primarily and not by prior social connections.” He argues that uncertainty characterizes power and authority because of the intricacies of society; linking society to place thus works to clarify complexity and substantiate power and authority. Territorial definitions of society that disregard processes of glocalization are rhetorically useful to statespersons in propagating the power of the state. Both Sack (1980) and Lefebvre (1991) argue that territorial representations of society and space are ideological, implicating them in the reproduction of power for power’s sake. Territorial definitions of society should theoretically allow foreign correspondents to adopt the dominant perspectives on powered relationships for the purpose of establishing and maintaining the communicability of their messages. Additionally, territorial conceptions of society should allow journalists to sidestep complex social and spatial relationships, at least partially absolving the writer of responsibility to explain heterogeneity or complexity. The reward for the journalistic usage of territorial definitions of society is concise narratives. And as Hough (1975) indicates, journalism emphasizes brevity.

Brevity is important, because journalistic discourse requires the production of credible narratives on a daily basis. Journalists are duty-bound to submit at least one story per day (Roshco 1975). Tuchman (1978) explains that daily news cycles necessitate that newsmakers cope with unverifiable facts in light of unforgiving deadlines. The profession of journalism thus strongly presupposes the entitlement of elected representatives to be in the news: “…the assumption is that the holder of a legitimated status speaks for the government. All others must demonstrate their relationship to a more amorphous entity – the public” (Tuchman 1978, 92). Tuchman (1978, 92) in fact considers the verification of facts not only as a professional but a political achievement, which resonates with the thinking of other theorists, such as Thompson (1995), who understands communication to be a form of power. Russia’s transition during the 1990s, during which the advise of Western and particularly American policymakers was much
sought after in order to facilitate political and economic reform and to evaluate progress and setbacks toward reform-goals, provided a veritable mother lode of reportable events for foreign correspondents.

Recent geographic literature, however, contains arguments for why social definitions of territory are indispensable for understanding both geographic and social processes. For example, Castells (1989; 1996), Appadurai (1996), and Shapiro and Alker (1996) incorporate flows, networks, and webs in describing the forces that constitute space today. The emergence of networked societies, and the reconstruction of social relations around them, has had such profound consequences for both the material and symbolic aspects of life that Castells (1996, 469) was compelled to write “the power of flows takes precedence over the flows of power.” In terms of productive economic activity, the conception of corporations as national entities and even of national economies is becoming superannuated as value chains assume web-like structures and extend across the globe (Reich 1991). Glocalization, which encapsulates the global coming together of localities that are socially related but spatially disparate (see Agnew and Corbridge 1995; Robertson 1995), challenges the notion of territorial conceptions of reform-space such as the Russian economy. On one hand, the literature suggests that territorial conceptions of society should be especially useful for foreign correspondents based on the discursive constraints of their profession. Yet theorization about space that takes into account the technologies that have led to massive shifts in into the role that space plays in organizing social and economic life suggests that territorial conceptions of society are alone inadequate models for understanding modern geographies. Could it be that the discourses of foreign correspondence, which ironically are supposed to be sensitive to contemporary events, are not always well suited to narrate the ways that society and space function from a materialist perspective?

Nonetheless, in regards to discourses of foreign correspondence, news networks make the foreign bureau the predominant site for the production of news. News networks are directly responsible for enabling extended mediazation, allowing foreign correspondents to sift through large quantities of information collected over a geographically enormous catchment in order to produce stories to be relayed to the vernacular reading audience. Tuchman (1978) uses the graphic term “news net” in order to illustrate the collection of data across large areas as a kind of technological dredging of space for information. Lefebvre (1991, 33) has been especially important in recognizing that representations of space support the production of spatial and social difference linked to economic systems, because representations of space “are tied to the relations of production and to the ‘order’ which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes.” I am using Lefebvre’s language in a dual sense, to elude both to the productive systems that enable the collection and dissemination of news itself as well as to the productive systems, and changes in them, that the news and news-writers aspire to describe.
Lefebvre, in formulating connections between space and the way it is represented, opened the door for geographers to incorporate the study the relationships between spatial practices and the signs and codes used to imagine them. I used a type of discourse analysis called ironic reading, explained by Chambers (1991), to analyze foreign correspondence. Ironic reading emphasizes sensitivity toward the ability of codes (words, phrases, sentences) to perform concurrently multiple functions of language, elucidated by Jakobson (1958). The ability of a code to refer to things outside of the text does not preclude for example that code also expressing an attitude of the speaker toward the message or toward the audience. Ironic reading was an appropriate method for this study, because I am simultaneously interested in the referential language of foreign correspondence, what it constructs Russia as, in addition to the phatic function of language, how it establishes and sustains an open channel of communication with the implied audience, in particular by using territorial conceptions of society. Otherwise, ironic reading exhibits the characteristics of critical discourse analysis, such as sensitivity toward the ordering of information; toward techniques that enhance the readability of the text; toward the relationships between words and larger structures such as sentences and paragraphs; and, toward how the text either questions or maintains the knowledge that the reader may be understood to have before reading the text (see Callahan (1997), Dugas (1999), Myers (2000), and Klodawsky (2002)).

I retrieved newspaper articles for the period 1 January 1992 through 1 January 2001 for both Moscow-datelines and datelines in the provinces using Lexis Nexus. In order to limit the number of newspaper articles with Moscow-datelines, I analyzed articles that were related to important events in the history of reform during that time period, including elections, privatization, changes in value of the Ruble, key relations with the International Monetary Fund and international lending, monetary policy, the conversion of military facilities to civilian usage, core-periphery relationships with regions hostile or opposed to federal policies, and other significant political events. I also identified and read 438 articles with provincial datelines, corresponding to all of the articles with provincial datelines for that time period for 80 of Russia’s 87 regions. This method of data collection allowed me to compare and contrast writing from the foreign bureaus of the three newspapers I studied with writing away from them.

Results
The following passage includes the first six paragraphs of a 775-word article published from Moscow in the Los Angeles Times at the end of August in 1992. By this juncture, about 8 months after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, post-breakup economic and political trends for Russian citizens generally had time to develop. The passage exhibits features of journalism heretofore discussed, including quotations by credible authorities (President Yeltsin and the Deputy Director of the International Monetary Fund) and categories, codes, and ideological references that resonate with a mainstream
American audience, such as “ordinary Russians,” “Communists,” “socialist,” “privatization,” and “free-market principles.”

Russia’s wrenchingly painful economic reforms got a nod of approval Wednesday from the International Monetary Fund, but thousands of ordinary Russians, angry and confused, denounced the “sellout” of their country to the West by a government of “state criminals.”

A leader of the Communists in the Russian legislature announced that his parliamentary faction would soon try to ram through its own socialist-style program of privatization—handing the keys of state-owned factories to their employees.

Meanwhile, President Boris N. Yeltsin took a rare stroll outside the Kremlin, across Red Square to the shopping thoroughfare of Tverskaya Street, to press the flesh and plug his economic goals, including a pending fire sale of state property.

“There will be bread,” a finger-jabbing Yeltsin reassured one Muscovite in a brief videotaped segment shown on the evening television news. The TV showed little else, perhaps because some of the exchanges with frazzled shoppers were very heated.

IMF Deputy Director Richard Erb, who held top-level meetings with the government and Central Bank amid reports of divisive tensions inside Russia’s leadership, emerged praising the officials’ “self-confidence” and evident commitment to free-market principles.

“I think it is clear to the Central Bank and to the government that there is no return, that this is a process that is under way, and that it must continue,” Erb told a news conference.

(Dahlburg 1992, A4)

The lead paragraph constructs economic reforms as “Russia’s,” seemingly implying a uniform ownership or affect. However, that paragraph is rapidly contradicted by evidence of a politically significant party (the Communists) devising its own program for reform and of “divisive tensions inside Russia’s leadership.” Thus, a closer reading of the text reveals a flip flop in which an earlier certainty about to whom reform should be attributed is questioned using subsequent certainties. The location of the code in the lead paragraph, where opening a channel of communication with the audience is paramount, is strong evidence that the code “Russia’s” is also a textual device used to engage a potential reader. The territorial code “Russia’s” exemplifies how language can be used to fulfill multiple purposes simultaneously (see Jakobson 1958). Its use is split between opening a channel of communication with the implied audience and working as a descriptor of the world outside of the text.

Moreover, the article is noteworthy from the standpoint of critical geopolitics because of the many stakeholders it references and the ways in which it imagines their
relationships to one another. Of particular interest is the fashion in which ordinary Russians are posited as against the West through their opposition to reforms that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) endorses. Communists are positioned as populists whose cause is nonetheless superannuated, because “there is no return.” And President Yeltsin, mingling with the people on the street, promises them basic protections from hunger in the face of “wrenchingly painful economic reforms.” So much is happening in so few words that the narrated scene borders on carnivalesque, exemplifying Burgess’ statement (1990, 141) that media texts are “saturated with geographical meanings and messages.” Yet the manner in which President Yeltsin is coded, as advocating a “fire sale of state property” and jabbing his finger, arguably constructs Yeltsin as a caricature of a reformer whose reforms the IMF is nonetheless endorsing. Could Yeltsin’s near giveaway of state property really be much better than the Communists plan to give “the keys of state-owned factories to their employees”? And the article, which in the quoted passage describes the Deputy Director of the IMF publicly praising top Russian officials for their “commitment to free-market principles,” both before and afterwards explains increasing derisiveness in Russia with respect to economic reforms. The implied narrator’s sarcasm is arguably palpable, seemingly questioning the judgment of the two most important agents upon whom the story relies for credibility. And looking back at the lead paragraph, contradictions are apparent even before the first sentence is complete; the IMF is approving of Russia’s economic reforms (good), yet they are “wrenchingly painful” (bad). How does the juxtaposition of seemingly incongruous circumstances in the narrative serve foreign correspondence?

I think that the answer to the above question lies in communicability and is reached through recognizing the defining characteristics of foreign correspondence as a genre. Foreign correspondence narratives are one-way communications designed to explain something about a foreign place to a domestic (vernacular) reading community made up of unknowable individuals, who are non-experts, as part of a daily news cycle. The above article is a whirlwind of good news presented in the face of bad news and vice versa. I found this oscillation to be common in the foreign correspondence I studied and generally understand it as a repetitive staging of alarm followed by reassurance in which territorial conceptions of society ordinarily participate. It is clear that the narration of obvious contradictions is not problematic for foreign correspondence. As the Moscow Bureau Chief of the Washington Post told me, journalism is not sociological inquiry (Finn 2008). Tuchman (1978, 90) explains the dynamic I have observed in different but interesting language: “…newworkers explicitly recognize the mutual embeddedness of fact and source. For rather than recognize a nonverifiable statement as fact, they intermesh fact and source. In the course of accomplishing this copresentation, newworkers create and control controversies as news.” The foreign correspondent constructs a text that manufactures controversy, and that controversy promotes reading, because it places various agents in differing positions vis-à-vis ideological codes to
which the reader can directly relate. As the narrative oscillates between alarming and reassuring messages, it reworks prior controversies that it has established into newer or more nuanced ones, maintaining interest in the story. Remarkably, the cycling between alarm and reassurance renders it unimportant whether any particular reader supports or rejects the appropriateness of the particular reforms in Russia. What is alarming to one reader would simply be reassuring to another, but the overall integrity of the developing controversy is preserved.

It is important to mention that foreign correspondence employed the quoted, paraphrased, and explained intentions of policymakers and statespersons as indicators of future geographic change. Those intentions generally held that social behavior can be engineered in space though thoughtful analysis and careful practice in mental, economic spaces. American foreign correspondents as a community thus encoded in the bulk of their stories during the transition-period an attitude toward space that was ideologically predisposed toward the belief that social behavior occurs in space and that space is not a product of social behavior but a mere canvas upon which social actions occur. Space, rather than being treated as a material product as Lefebvre (1991) argues, is thus abstracted from society by statespersons, who are imagined as privileged architects of geography. I found that mental and territorial conceptions of society facilitated the repetitive staging of alarm followed by reassurance by detaching narrated geographies from their material foundations and allowing them to vary, often greatly, based on the citation of credible sources. Those sources, coded in the text through quotations and paraphrasing, relied on territorial or mental conceptions of space for their own rationales.

Mediated discourses on reform concentrated on political processes, such as policies and actions of various Russian politicians and the filling of political vacancies, as well as on economic processes, including emerging consumer and producer markets in Russia and the development of Russian labor markets. Some topics, such as international lending to Russia and its stipulations and the transformation of Soviet-era factories and farms to organizations operating according to Western precepts, were strongly both political and economic in their content. The following passage from the New York Times is an example:

As Russia began to hand out privatization vouchers to each of its 150 million citizens today, giving them a small share of the national wealth, the ruble lost 21.6 percent of its value against the dollar.

It was a small picture of the contradictions of economic change as Russia tries to build a functioning capitalist economy and a convertible currency out of the wreckage of 70 years of Communism.

Converting the mass of inefficient state-owned enterprises into private shareholding companies is one of the Government’s main goals, and the adventurous and confusing voucher plan is the chosen method. Vouchers for
some 1.4 trillion rubles—worth about $4.5 billion at today’s exchange rate—are being distributed to every Russian, in denominations of 10,000 rubles [$40].

The idea is to give Russians a stake in a capitalist future, and to make them feel better about the Government that made it possible. More particularly, the plan is intended to turn enterprise managers, who have the right to buy more shares than ordinary people, into capitalists...

The heavy issuance of credits this summer by the Russian Central Bank, to keep losing state enterprises afloat, has led to a sharp increase in inflation in August and September. Government economists warn of inflation of 50 percent a month in late October or November. That fear is driving the plunge in value of the ruble...

The critics have also blasted the privatization plan as a way for “criminals” who have profited from shortages in the market to buy up the treasures of the state. The former Soviet President, Mikhail S. Gorbachev, has called the plan a “fraud against the people.” But Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly B. Chubais, who is in charge of the program, calls it “the starting point of the capitalist education of the Russian people.”

(Erlanger 1992, A5)

This story exhibits many of the features already discussed, such as a territorialization of the handing out of vouchers to “Russia,” the subsequent contradiction of the constructed uniformity or absoluteness of codes such as “Russia” and “the Government,” the use of multiple ideological codes, and the cyclical presentation of evidence that argues first for progress in Russia and next against it. Back and forth swings in the interpretation of the message by the implied audience are also facilitated by the abstractions that are buttressed by territorial conceptions of society. Additionally, however, this article exemplifies territorial conceptions of society supporting a kind of poetic license that allows the narrator to deal with complexity indirectly if not at all. We read that Communism itself (here treated simultaneously as both social theory and social practice) uniformly destroyed Russia’s economy. According to the narrator, all businesses across Russian space are regarded similarly as an undifferentiated “mass” of “losing state enterprises.” And one cannot ascertain how these losers would have even made it to the historical beginning of their “capitalist education” without the actions of the malfeasant Russian Central Bank, which is blamed for the loss in value of the Ruble but not credited for supporting those “inefficient” enterprises until such time that the first widespread public issuance of securities could occur.

Virtually all of the articles that rely on territorial conceptions of society lack analytical precision and contain numerous contradictions that can be exposed through discourse analysis. The point I am making, however, is that territorial conceptions of society allow the foreign correspondent to forgo explanations of complexity while
simultaneously constructing a text in which the implied narrator explains something meaningful about Russia. Territorial conceptions of society are indispensable to foreign correspondents, because they facilitate brevity. Rob Shields (1997, 187) labeled contemporary narratives about space as a “new genre of contradiction,” stressing that while equivocality distinguishes them, they advance the concerns of dominant ideologies and practices. Clearly, through bringing concerns about inflation and privatization to the forefront, the above article advances dominant ideologies and even advocates them somewhat. However, it is important to question how foreign correspondence serves dominant ideologies, because ideological categories are sometimes interrogated in journalistic narratives, particularly vis-à-vis credible sources.

Tuchman (1978, 95) argues:

Ultimately, the use of graded sources who may be quoted as offering truth-claims is converted into a technical device designed to distance the reporter from phenomena identified as facts. Quotations of other people’s opinions are presented to create a web of mutually self-validating facts.

As an example, Hockstader (1996) published a story in the Washington Post, for which she conducted fieldwork in Krasnoyarsk, Siberia (the dateline), which interrogated the ideological category, communism.

Spanning seven time zones and containing large deposits of natural resources, Siberia is at once the most integral and the most alienated part of Russia. While no one can quite imagine Russia without Siberia, Siberians often speak of Moscow as a foreign power – and not necessarily a friendly one. Moscow, in the view of many Siberians, is a far-off capital that sucks up profits from the region’s gold, mineral and oil wealth and sends back precious little in return...

One major problem for Yeltsin is that 2 in 5 workers in the Krasnoyarsk region are on the federal payroll, which has been hit hard by paltry tax receipts. They include doctors, teachers and tens of thousands of employees at still-secret nuclear weapons facilities near Krasnoyarsk, the region’s capital. There is barely anyone here who doesn’t have a relative or friend who has been forced to cope with not being paid in the last year.

“I’ll be frank,” said Vladeslav Yurchik, a Communist member of parliament who is running the Zyuganov campaign here. “It’s the economic situation that has created Zyuganov. This [support for Zyuganov] is not an expression of love. It’s an expression of economic desperation.”

Hockstader (1996, A13)

Importantly, the narrator in this story adopts a perspective on space that places it in a two-way relationship with social processes. This article explains that support for communists is a material consequence of geographic, social, and political relations,
involving natural resource endowments, labor markets, and industry in a core-periphery relationship that is disadvantageous to Krasnoyarsk. The article, in its portrayal of a materially-based geography and political economy, contrasts sharply with the “no return” to communism opinion expressed by the deputy director of the IMF earlier based on an intangible “commitment to free-market principles.”

Fred Hiatt in September 1993, however, published an article from Moscow three days after President Yeltsin dissolved a parliament composed of many nationalists and communists hostile to his reform-agenda. In his *Washington Post* article, Hiatt (1993) boldly opens with three paragraphs devoid of quotations or attributions to any sources:

President Boris Yeltsin, having ruled out compromise with his reactionary opponents in Moscow, may manage to break the political stalemate that has largely paralyzed his government over the past two years.

But even in the best circumstances, and despite the fond hopes of Western policy makers, no tactical political victory can ensure that Russia will follow a consistently pro-Western, pro-reform path in the coming years. Russia’s economic problems are too deep-seated, its regional tensions too systemic and its spiritual and ideological compass too disoriented to produce anything but turbulence for some time to come.

While Yeltsin may run this parliament out of town, it is wrong to assume today’s legislators oppose his reforms and accommodations with the West only because they are ex-communists or because reform will hurt their personal interests. Under any government, reform will provoke grave opposition, because it is going to be extremely painful for millions of blameless Russians.

(Hiatt 1993, A26)

The article adds a new perspective to prior observations. Not until the fifth paragraph does Hiatt use a quotation, which is remarkable for two additional reasons. First, the quoted language is from a historian, not a policymaker. Second, the quotation considered President Yeltsin’s dissolution of parliament as a superficial response to deeply seated structural problems and employed a social conception of territory as the basis for critiquing an important political event. Moreover, the alternation in these opening paragraphs between alarming and reassuring messages is less pronounced. Differences with respect to the patterns I have noted thus far stem from the sheer gravity of President Yeltsin’s unprecedented and unpredictable action, which arguably allowed this foreign correspondent to write an unusually interpretive article. Additionally, the seriousness of Yeltsin’s actions probably promoted readers’ interests, minimizing the need for textual devices to encourage the act of reading. Foreign correspondents may adopt a materialist-perspective when writing from the center when conditions permit it.

Importantly, Hiatt questions the attacking of anti-reform politics purely on ideological grounds by way of his own construction of a historical, materialist geography.
(for instance the development of cities around single, large factories and the distribution of natural resources) and a subtle leaning toward analysis based in Russia's regions. He renders ordinary Russians with greater agency than territorial conceptions of society permit, which ultimately may result according to his narration in greater regional differences, the reelection of a parliament opposed to reforms, and a political backlash against reform from the innocent who will be hurt by the new economy. Ultimately, he posits free market, economic reforms and democratic, political reforms as destabilizing to one another and highlights a vexing contradiction for Russia in the 1990s: no matter how good of an idea widespread reform seems, it is counter-productive to itself. He thus critiques the political drama of Yeltsin's dissolution of parliament as relatively insignificant in the long term because of its inability to change systematic and geographic problems. Hiatt's article, which at 1,221 words was a story of normal length, produced a vividly geographical imagination that suggested the factual emphasis on changes in political personnel in the federal government in most Moscow-based reporting was at least partially superficial without being qualified by a materialist, geographic perspective. But because the constraints on journalistic texts do not favor a materialist-geographic perspective, Hiatt's critique had no measurable, lasting purchase on the journalistic construction of Russia during the 1990s. Yet his story, and others similar to it, should help us to frame a larger discussion around the geographical limitations and possibilities of foreign correspondence.

Social conceptions of territory were common in stories written as a result of embodied fieldwork conducted by foreign correspondents in the provinces. For example, President Yeltsin's disbanding of the federal parliament and regional legislative bodies, the basis for Hiatt's (1993) arguments above, precipitated a flurry of travel by American foreign correspondents to various regions in which the journalists wrote stories about Yeltsin's heavy-handed actions. Embodied fieldwork from the provinces gave foreign correspondents access to local and regional political figures, as well as “ordinary citizens,” whose speech was integrated into stories in various ways. In doing so, foreign correspondents narrated local political and economic relationships as well as those between core and periphery.

Yuri E. Lodkin, elected governor of this western Russian region by 53 percent of the vote last April, was on his way back from Moscow on Saturday when he heard on the radio that he had been dismissed by President Boris N. Yeltsin. By the time he reached the local government building, his copy of Presidential Decree No. 1453, sent by fax, was so fresh it was still warm.

Mr. Lodkin, a former journalist and a die-hard Communist, earned Mr. Yeltsin's wrath by opposing decree No. 1400, the Sept. 21 edict that summarily disbanded the Russian Parliament. Such treachery from a governor, even an elected one, was enough to force Mr. Lodkin not only out of his job, but out of his office. In a pre-dawn raid Sunday, local police, acting on orders
from Moscow, occupied the government building. Bryansk’s new Governor, Vladimir A. Karpov, followed with a decree barring Mr. Lodkin from even entering the building.

“There you have your democracy, your civilization,” said Mr. Lodkin, speaking from a make-shift office in the Bryansk City Hall, where he has taken temporary refuge.

The drama in Bryansk, which had been brewing for months, is a reflection in miniature of the battle of wills now being waged in Moscow, where a recalcitrant Parliament has refused to bend to Mr. Yeltsin’s orders. Both here and in the capital, the standoff is a murky blend of personalities and legalisms. But in its essence, the issue is not just over who will run Russia, but how...

Mr. Lodkin is a small, wiry 55-year-old man who made his political career by crusading on behalf of 112,000 people in the Bryansk region who live in zones contaminated by radiation by the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear accident. He thinks his dismissal was meant as a message for other governors who may be considering opposing what he called Mr. Yeltsin’s budding “dictatorship…”

“Because the people of Bryansk voted for him, and what we see are unconstitutional methods,” said Valentina R. Podobedova, a 36-year-old kindergarten teacher, explaining her anger. “If we allow the Constitution to be violated, then it will lead to lawlessness all around, to violence and anarchy…”

But the deputies found themselves ensnared by the paradoxes produced by Russia’s latest political crisis. “Why,” asked one deputy, “should we react to a decree of a President whom we have already declared unconstitutional? Why do we pay any attention to it at all?”

(Bohlen 1993, A12)

Earlier cited articles reassuringly imagined Russia in the abstract as uniformly reforming. In contrast, this article, which adopts a materialist perspective and a social conception of territory, allows for social heterogeneity and explains that the anti-democratic actions of Russia’s top reformer threaten to “lead to lawlessness all around.” The narrator of this story critiques the code “democracy,” through the voice of an undemocratically deposed governor, as tantamount to its opposite, dictatorship.

Embodied fieldwork in the provinces, away from the newsfeeds of the foreign bureaus, allowed foreign correspondents to incorporate the statements of a heterogeneous mixture of local voices and perspectives, including but not limited to those people holding government offices. Foreign correspondence from the provinces imagined, as David Harvey (1995, 79) put it, “the ways in which personal and particular choices made under given conditions are the very essence of historical-geographical change.” It is presumably also important, because a variety of feminist geographers, including McDowell (1989), Harding (1990), Haraway (1991), and Nairn (1991), have critiqued the objective realities propagated by the disembodied production of knowledge as objective and masculine. They argue for the politicization of the body,
and their work forms yet another basis for understanding the foreign correspondent’s
decision to report either from Moscow, relying predominantly on extended mediadization,
or from elsewhere in the field, as a geopolitical decision. Stories written exclusively from
the foreign bureaus in Moscow exemplify disembodied reporting. Because editors and
the reading public expect the preponderance of stories to be about broad political and
economic trends, stories written primarily from Moscow constitute the “clear majority”
of foreign correspondence from Moscow (Finn 2008).

hooks (1984) specifically argues that juxtaposing insiders’ representations of space
against outsiders’ representations of space at various scales is a technique for oppressed
people to speak “from the margins to the center, and understand both.” I found
convincing evidence that foreign correspondence can accomplish this, particularly with
provincial datelines, because doing so also enables the periphery to redress the concerns
voiced from the core. In the case of Hiatt’s (1993) text above, with a Moscow dateline,
the foreign correspondent took rare responsibility for questioning President Yeltin’s
political maneuverings. Yet in the following two paragraphs from an article in the
New York Times, which closed an article written from Togliatti, Russia stressing the
importance of exports for the health of Vaz, a potentially viable Russian manufacturer,
the implied narrator criticizes Western policies through the voice of Mr. Glushkov, the
deputy general director in charge of all of Vaz’s finances:

The whole issue of credit angers Mr. Glushkov. He said Vaz must have access
to loans, here and abroad, if the company is to survive the transition period.
The Western industrial nations and the International Monetary Fund
disagree. They are urging the Government to strengthen the ruble by limiting
loans that increase the number of rubles in circulation.

Such thinking is short-sighted, Mr. Glushkov said, if it results in the
bankruptcy of a company like Vaz. “The I.M.F. is not interested in Russian
car production,” he said. “Why keep car production going here, when car
companies in the United States and Japan can’t sell all the cars they make.”

(Uchitelle 1992, A1)

What is important here is that major categories around which the discourses on reform
and aid were constructed—credit, loans, transition, bankruptcy, production, and the
International Monetary Fund—are entering the mediated discourse from the periphery
rather than the center. The implied narrator uses Mr. Glushkov’s words, which include
ideologically loaded categories, to disarm the predominant, mental conceptions of space,
which maintain wholesale that Russian industry is moribund and justify the need for
austere economic policies to eliminate it altogether through bankruptcy. The narrative
critiques the underlying expectations of the IMF of Russian enterprises as flawed and
self-interested using quoted speech obtained through embodied fieldwork. Although
stories written predominantly through embodied fieldwork in the provinces are less
numerous than those written using extended mediazation from Moscow, embodied fieldwork is especially important for scrutinizing policy and ideological categories.

Critique of the dominant perspectives on reform did occur from the center, as this powerful example from Bohlen's (1993, A1) article in the New York Times indicates: “The Americans are talking about expanding aid to Russia,” said Sergei Y. Glazyev, Russia’s Foreign Trade Minister. “What we demand is a free access of Russian goods to the markets of developed countries, including that of the United States, and an end to discrimination against Russia in foreign markets.” Bohlen's article, like Hiatt's (1993) story that problematized reform, was written with a Moscow-dateline. The implied narrator in her story finds fault with American aid insofar as Russia is locked out of important markets. However, rather than relying on an historian as a credible source, she uses speech from the Foreign Trade Minister of Russia, easily accessible from Moscow. Mr. Glazyev's words provided a platform for her to write, “...credits were not so much aid as business arrangements that helped the lending nations find markets for their goods more than it helped Russia pay for them... [And furthermore] [m]ost of these credits are a prepackaging of old programs, circulated by the lending countries for their own domestic purposes...It is very difficult to qualify them as aid” (Bohlen 1993, A1). Bohlen's (1993) article posits aid as its own caricature, fiercely undercutting the notion of aid as assistance for Russia. Yet it highlights the ephemerality of such critique in foreign correspondence, because the code “aid” easily outlasted what seems to be a withering attack against it in 1993. As long as credible sources continue to use the code, foreign correspondents are compelled to use them for the purposes of storytelling. Smith (1973, 108-109) actually argues that the notion of a “plurality of viewpoints” is not even germane to news, because since news is organized as a “national professional discipline,” credibility at the national-level is the essential defining characteristic of news as a genre. The production of credibility results, according to this argument, in a disproportionate weight being assigned to very few voices.

In addition to foreign correspondence from the provinces playing a role in making the mediated discourse on reform more reflective and self-critical, it introduced the banal but important notion that Russian culture and places support more than just political and economic life. Because the large majority of foreign correspondence about Russia during the 1990s was bound up with economic and political reform and with American and Western desires for that reform, most foreign correspondence about Russia located Russian territory as a place of work. Little room was left for the construction of Russian population and culture outside of political and economic transformation. However, foreign correspondence from the provinces constructed Russia as a socio-cultural place, a historical place, and as a space with varied natural environments and human-environment interactions. Table 1 exhibits the frequency distribution of main themes for each article with a provincial dateline for the regions included in the analysis. Forty-three percent of the provincial datelines were primarily concerned with land use and
social, cultural, and demographic problems, compared to forty-six percent concerned with political and economic events and elections.

Land use-related stories favored the Russian Far East, Siberia, and the Northern economic regions, as opposed to those in Western Russia. Articles primarily about land use covered a wide variety of topics, including life in extreme northern latitudes and other remote regions, threats to species, agriculture, pollution, activities of Russians in nature, aspects of urban land use, and the apparent contradiction of people in extreme poverty living in regions rich in natural resources. Similarly, topics addressed by articles mainly concerned with socio-cultural and demographic issues were diverse, including public health, crime and the legal system, sub-groups of Russians such as indigenous groups and the Cossacks, and folk culture and religion. The unifying theme of these articles is that life in Russia extends beyond those narrow dimensions with which Western statespersons and policymakers were predominantly concerned. They present opportunities for American readers to enjoy Russia’s cultural diversity or to relate to ordinary Russians not as objects of reform but instead in more humanistic terms. These articles correspond, albeit roughly, to the conception of soft news (see Mott 1952; Tuchman 1978), which does not become outdated as quickly as hard news and is primarily concerned with the richness of human experience and human idiosyncrasies. Nonetheless, the altogether 438 articles written from the provinces pale numerically to the 1,876 references to places outside of the Moscow-region I found in articles written

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Number of References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political-economic events</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land use</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural and demographic issues</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elections</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chechnya</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensational</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Themes of Provincial Datelines
with Moscow-datelines and several thousand more articles written from Moscow that made no mention whatsoever of Russian places outside of the capital city.

Conclusions
I rethink the journalistic construction of foreign places as contingent upon the foreign correspondent’s use of and navigation through foreign spaces. By building off of previous observations that the media are rife with “geographical meanings and messages” (see Burgess 1990) and that journalistic representations of space are ideological, I cover new terrain through a concern for what geographic and discursive conditions give rise to both ideological and historical-materialist perspectives on society and change in foreign correspondence. Starting from a variety of work in the literature that established and elaborated upon relationships between representations of space and material practices, I explored some of the roles that conceptions of space play in constructing understanding and readability in foreign correspondence. I have sought consistencies in American foreign correspondence about Russia during a time of great change, during which American statespersons and policymakers vocalized grand hopes and expectations for political-economic transformation abroad. I found a complex but persistent dynamic in journalistic texts that works to communicate referential information about Russia while simultaneously promoting and sustaining the communicability of that information to a large, national, American audience.

Perhaps most importantly, this study found that foreign correspondents reap numerous benefits from employing territorial conceptions of society in their stories. One of the most widespread and basic understandings of space, as divided into nation-states, itself provides a significant basis for communication about foreign places. Foreign correspondents use historically rich, ideological categories, attached either explicitly or implicitly to codes that refer to political and administrative units, in order to construct efficiently an implied audience that is interested in a controversy framed around the repeated juxtaposition of seemingly incongruous facts. Territorial conceptions of society have the added advantage of assisting foreign correspondents to skirt complexity, thus promoting brevity and allowing them to probe problems selectively.

This study refines Shields’ (1997, 187) understanding of news as a “genre of contradiction” as shiftiness, particularly within individual stories but to some extent between stories written from the foreign bureau and those written from the provinces. The swings between “good news” and “bad news” within a single story to promote readability are evidence that individual news stories may haphazardly make sense of events. While foreign correspondence about Russia was rife with ideological perspectives about Russia, I did not find it, as a genre, to be as totalizing as the individual quotes or references to the speech of sources contained within them. Radical or extreme quotes are valuable to create the swings that engender readability; moreover, that ideological codes and conceptions are highly useful to the construction of successful news stories
has little bearing on the question of whether a story might argue for their validity or lack thereof.

Given the numerous benefits that foreign correspondents reap from incorporating ideological codes and territorial conceptions of society in their writing, it is likely that the promulgation of such categories is to some degree an unintended consequence of mediated communication. This finding is profound, because it implies that the spatial networks and audiences that support the various activities of foreign correspondents impose constraints, which are independent of the topic addressed in the narrative itself, upon the geographic language in journalistic texts that describes places. Textual considerations inherited from the geography of mediated communication and unrelated to the purely connotative function of language to refer supposedly to the world outside of the text are important to the social reproduction of ideology. Journalists’ regular use of territorial conceptions of society to promote rapidly the communicability of their texts to large reading audiences ensures that these conceptions will be part of the diet of the news-reading public on a daily basis. The spatial and discursive constraints on foreign correspondents, who are particularly challenged to overcome barriers of distance and culture to explain events to a vernacular audience, exemplify Castells (1996, 469) statement, “the power of flows takes precedence over the flows of power.”

The reliance on the part of newspapers on territorial conceptions of society that this work discovered indicates that the communication medium itself presupposes an underlying macrogeography in which place can be treated flexibly by the foreign correspondents as homogenous, as having its own agency, or both. The dominant perspectives on space in foreign correspondence are of course ontologically different from those argued for in critical or historical-materialist geography. Numerous, compelling questions arise. How can geographers, who are arguably interested in the analytical and social-theoretical advantages of historically and materially grounded conceptions of society and space, compete with such a powerful and ubiquitous didactic force? What similarities and differences does foreign correspondence in other countries, where vernacular frames of references emphasize aspects of powered relationships differently, exhibit in comparison to American foreign correspondence in terms of its reliance upon ideological and territorial conceptions of space? What didactic role does journalism play in socializing people, especially young people, to think of places in abstract ways? How can these findings inform the teaching of sociospatial theories to students of geography, whose formative ideas about space and place have been shaped in no small part by mass communication?

This research also found that ideological categories, while useful to facilitate communicability, are also interrogated by foreign correspondence in a minority of articles using a materialist perspective. Stories written with provincial datelines and stories written with Moscow-datelines but using embodied fieldwork often either offered alternative perspectives than what were possible in stories relying
predominantly on extended mediazation or critiqued perspectives emanating from the center. Because newsfeeds, extended mediazation, and fieldwork are all integral to writing foreign correspondence, the concepts of embodied and disembodied fieldwork are relevant to this study. Foreign correspondence from the provinces of Russia was more likely to emphasize the embodiedness of the journalist than those stories written from Moscow. This study is part of the corpus of geographic research that “[reco...” (Parr 2001, 158). It participates in the geographic enterprise of “rethink[ing] places as they are contested in embodied social practice” (Dorn and Laws 1994, 108). In particular, this research opens the door to discovering new ways to differentiate between the various textual techniques of constructing Russian identities in American journalism as journalists use their bodies as research tools in order to exploit various sources of data, interpersonally or across a network, that support journalistic enterprise.

In conclusion, journalistic narratives are perhaps best understood as performances, as synthetic conversations, and as simulacra that are assembled and choreographed according to particular standards of interpretability using data collected through both disembodied and embodied fieldwork. Foreign correspondents as a whole were remarkably creative and entrepreneurial in brokering their narratives through the opportunistic use of codes. The articles themselves, and particularly the opening paragraphs, sometimes conveyed a dizzying sequence of contradictory information that upon scrutiny only made sense through recognizing that textual aspects other than the purely descriptive ability of language were being used to establish and maintain the communicability of one-way messages about Russia to unknown readers. Ultimately, however, the apparent instability of messages even within individual articles and the ephemerality of news itself belies, I believe, the power of news to perpetuate the use of particular codes and concepts across space and time.

Endnotes

1 The Moscow-dateline itself does not automatically imply that an entire story was written within the confines of the Moscow bureau and includes stories written using other sites, both indoors and out-of-doors, in the city of Moscow. Overall, however, the foreign bureau is most instrumental in stories with Moscow-datelines. Datelines away from Moscow include stories written in the Moscow region but outside of the capital city as well as those written in the many provinces of Russia.

2 See Foucault (1972) for a formative discussion on how discourse structures knowledge. Various geographers, such as Agnew and Corbridge (1995), Ó Tuathail (1996), and Agnew (1998) have contended that world politics is made spatial vis-à-vis mediated discourses.

3 He specifically refers to capitalism in his writing.

4 Seven regions were unwieldy to search on for various reasons, including Saint Petersburg (too many results), Vladimir (a common man's name resulting in too many results), and the regions in the North Caucasus that were very frequently visited mostly for the purpose of reporting on war in Chechnya.
The method of using a territorialized or scaled up category as a referent is long-standing. Gieber and Johnson (1961) observed over fifty years ago the coding of particular factions at city hall as “the city.”

This does not at all mean that competing viewpoints were not present. It means, however, that competing viewpoints in response to the claims of empowered officials did not find a voice unless they were placed in opposition to the dominant perspective on space. Maura Reynolds (2000), then a Moscow-based foreign correspondent for the Los Angeles Times, indicated that the dominant perspective had to be mentioned first.

In The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, and New York Times, several hundred articles were published during the reform period with datelines outside of Moscow. However, these stories are a small proportion of stories written in Russia, most of which were published from Moscow from a bureau headquarters.

The foreign correspondent did not respond to requests for an interview.

Later, Anatoly Chubais, former Deputy Prime Minister to President Yeltsin, would state “In order to have a democracy in society, there must be a dictatorship in power” (see Hoffman 1996).


not counting elections.

References


Editor and Publisher. 2000. International Year Book. New York: Editor and Publisher.


Finn, Peter. 2008. Interview by Eric West. Tape Recording. 6 August. Moscow, Russia.


Perhaps the most surprising thing about this book is that it was published as part of Wiley-Blackwell’s “Critical Introductions to Geography” series. This is the series that began with Don Mitchell’s Cultural Geography and Paul Robbins’ Political Ecology and has now grown to five titles (with another five forthcoming). As the book’s front matter notes, “Critical Introductions to Geography is a series of textbooks for undergraduate courses covering the key geographical subdisciplines and providing broad and introductory treatment with a critical edge. They are designed for the North American and international market and take a lively and engaging approach with a distinct geographical voice that distinguishes them from more traditional and out-date texts” (p. ii). Is communication geography really a “key subdiscipline?” Apparently Paul Adams thinks so, and evidently either he or series editor John Paul Jones were able to convince Wiley-Blackwell as much too. And yet I wonder how many universities in “the North American and international market” have undergraduate classes in communication geography, or even dedicated communication units within broader human geography courses. The AAG’s Communication Geography Specialty Group was chartered only in 2003 and there is no equivalent research group in the IBG. You are reading the only journal devoted to the topic. As Adams himself notes, geographers are woefully ignorant of some of the central debates that permeate the field of communication studies.

Perhaps in response to this daunting academic landscape, Adams makes space for communications geography by defining communications and media in the broadest
possible sense. Alongside sections on predictable topics such as communications technology, internet governance, semiotics, virtuality, media theories, and linguistics, readers of Geographies of Media and Communication will find sections on topics such as time-geography, structuration theory, actor-network theory, landscape analysis, boundary-crossing, and the phenomenology of place. It almost seems as though Adams is including the whole of cultural geography within his “geographies of media and communication.” Indeed, Adams acknowledges this in his concluding chapter: “What is generally referred to as the ‘cultural turn’ in human geography...[should] be renamed the *communicational turn* – because of the vague and frequently biased nature of the term ‘culture’ and also because communication is at the heart of every major aspect of the cultural turn” (p.214). With this sentence, which is is accompanied by citations to Mitchell’s “There’s no such thing as culture” article (Mitchell 1995) and, his Critical Introductions book (Mitchell 2000), Adams suggests not only that communications geography is a “key subdiscipline” but also that it encompasses everything previously called “cultural geography.” I’m not sure if Adams is implying that Mitchell’s book in the same series is unnecessary, or merely that it is naïve, but, either way, I am left trying to imagine the Wiley-Blackwell editor reading this passage and wondering if it is healthy to foster such contests among one’s authors.

Adams’ rhetorical move, besides possibly cannibalizing sales from another volume in the same series, raises the question of whether calling everything “communication” is an improvement over calling everything “culture.” For Mitchell, the problem with “culture” is that it assigns superorganic presence and permanence to something that in fact is always in process and that is continually being contested. Could calling everything “communication” do the same thing? Adams would say no: “Communication” is an improvement over “culture” because “communication” is always a process, as it involves the construction of connections among individuals and societies. Furthermore, it is always geographical. Specifically, Adams defines four angles (or sets of relations) that constitute the geography of communications: “Media in space,” under which one studies the geographic layout of communication networks; “spaces in media,” under which one analyzes the social spaces that are created through media connections; “places in media,” which revolves around the various ways that places receive their meanings through media and communicative interactions; and “media in place,” which covers the ways in which media are used to define what is in and out of place.

Following the construction of this typology, Adams avoids the predictable tack of devoting a section of his book to each angle. Adams acknowledges that the division (or, as he calls it, the “quadrant diagram”) is simply a heuristic device and that many issues in the geography of communication fail to fit into any single perspective. Thus, while he associates five of the chapters that follow with specific perspectives, he identifies another three as lying on the border between two perspectives and a further five chapters as encompassing elements of all four perspectives. In the process, the neat typology spelled
out in the introductory chapter gets lost. This may frustrate some readers, particularly students who are looking to make sense of this emergent subdiscipline by dividing it into four legibly bounded sub-subdisciplines. On the other hand, Adams’ willingness to break away from simplistic typologies, even when they are of his own doing, is refreshing for the reader who has put down his or her highlighting marker and who has chosen to join Adams in thinking through the implications of seeing geography through the lens of communication.

This tension between defining the sub-subdisciplines of communication geography and then blurring the lines between them points to another tension in the book and, indeed, one that is endemic to the Critical Introductions series. As was noted at the beginning of this review, these books are designed both to introduce a subfield to undergraduates and to have a “critical edge” that advances particular arguments. One book can achieve both goals, but the balance is difficult to achieve, and I am not sure that Adams fully succeeds here. Significant sections of the book read like “who’s who’s” of human geography, quickly referring to the work of previous scholars on, say, landscape interpretation and then making the argument that, although these scholars would never have described themselves this way, they were in fact examining processes of communication. The technique serves Adams well as he reaches out to established geographers among his readership, convincing them of the subdiscipline’s breadth (the seasoned geographer who is curious about this new thing called “communication geography” might read this book and remark: “Gee; I never thought of Denis Cosgrove as a communication geographer, but I guess that is what he was writing about, even if he would not have classified himself as such; hey, then maybe I’m a communication geographer too”). But the rapid survey through the pantheon of human geographers may leave in the dust the undergraduate who is seeking an introduction to geographies of media and communication rather than illustrations of the role of communication in so many aspects (and subdisciplines) of geography.

Notwithstanding the question of whether the world is ready for an undergraduate textbook on media and communications geography, Adams demonstrates that numerous geographers from within and outside the subdiscipline are engaging questions that, for Adams at least, fundamentally concern communications. The book is tremendously valuable for making this argument. Even if Adams perhaps overstates his case in proclaiming the centrality of communications in geography, he does put communications geography “on the map.” As Adams writes, when discussing the social implications of the printing press, “Printing mobilizes the word in space-time by permitting it to reach a wider audience, spread out among many countries and potentially over many centuries. This mobilization in turn frees up structures of social power and authority, beliefs, rules, and values...This new space of the audience corresponds to a new type of time and a new dynamic of social power” (p.30). In other words, books engage ideas and spread them, and this leads to further engagement with ideas. Every book, in this
sense, begins a process and, as Adams would surely note, that process itself occurs in, and transforms, space. Geographies of Media and Communication thus is an important beginning, and communication geographers will benefit greatly from taking up Adams’ lead and continuing the conversation.

References