

Ilona Hongisto; Toni Pape; Alanna Thain

Introduction: The ring of the true in contemporary media

2017

<https://doi.org/10.25969/mediarep/3378>

Veröffentlichungsversion / published version

Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Hongisto, Ilona; Pape, Toni; Thain, Alanna: Introduction: The ring of the true in contemporary media. In: *NECSUS. European Journal of Media Studies*, Jg. 6 (2017), Nr. 1, S. 61–75. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25969/mediarep/3378>.

Erstmalig hier erschienen / Initial publication here:

<https://www.necsus-ejms.org/test/introduction-ring-true-contemporary-media/>

Nutzungsbedingungen:

Dieser Text wird unter einer Creative Commons - Namensnennung - Nicht kommerziell - Keine Bearbeitungen 4.0 Lizenz zur Verfügung gestellt. Nähere Auskünfte zu dieser Lizenz finden Sie hier:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>

Terms of use:

This document is made available under a creative commons - Attribution - Non Commercial - No Derivatives 4.0 License. For more information see:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>

Introduction: The ring of the true in contemporary media

Ilona Hongisto, Toni Pape, and Alanna Thain

NECSUS 6 (1), Spring 2017: 61–75

URL: <https://necsus-ejms.org/introduction-ring-true-contemporary-media/>

Keywords: aesthetics, ecology, fabulation, intermediality, speculation, true, truth

The editorial process for this special section began before the term ‘post-truth’ was picked up and circulated widely in the summer and autumn of 2016 to address the increasing irrelevance of fact-based politics in the wake of new populisms. Since post-truth is the proverbial elephant in the room, we would like to problematise the concept to introduce the concerns of this special section.

The notion of post-truth is directly related to questions of mediatisation so central to the mandate of NECSUS. In highly mediated and polarised campaigns such as the British referendum regarding the country’s EU membership, bits of information are selected and circulated not for their truth-value but for their affective impact. The notorious factoid of the 350 million pounds that the UK pays to the EU on a weekly basis is an example of this. This statistical figure, stripped of the various contexts of trade benefits and subsidies, became one of the refrains of the Leave campaign which rang true because it resonated with and amplified an affective resistance to the EU – an aversion years, if not decades, in the making. Feelings come to count as facts. The ‘filter bubbles’ and ‘echo chambers’ of social media are usually understood as catalysts for an increasingly fact-averse public. Ralph Keyes’ *The Post-Truth Era* (2004) and Harry Frankfurt’s *On Bullshit* (2005) are only two books from the last decade that deplore the state of ethical decay, a ‘whatever works’ attitude that knows but ignores the distinction between truth and lie, and a new tendency to invent and aggressively disseminate factishes that ring true enough to pass muster. Discoupled from

tending to truth ethically, the most important criterion for political speech is whether it produces the desired effects.

What is a good approach to confront this worrisome trend? In public and scholarly discussion, one can observe a variety of reactions, ranging from what one might call a relativist skepticism or even cynicism ('You can't believe anything anymore') to a return to positivist, strictly fact-based notions of truth ('If the very notion of *fake news* is to mean anything, it is only in distinction to real news containing hard facts').[1] Neither approach is entirely convincing. To bypass the pitfalls of binary oppositions in the post-truth era, we are interested in exploring the speculative, aesthetic, and ecological emergence of truth in contemporary media practices. This does not imply a resolution to the current crisis in news media, but merely suggests avenues of caring for the true in contemporary media.

In the process leading up to this special section, we have returned time and again to the notion of fabulation, inspired particularly by Gilles Deleuze's enactment of the concept in his own philosophical praxis.[2] In Deleuze's work, fabulation takes multiple forms and answers to several names, ranging from the character of the forger in Orson Welles' cinema to the speech-acts in Pierre Perrault's documentaries, from the direct time-image to the becoming of real characters. Deleuze inflects the concept with a relevant urgency, arguing that 'we ought to take up Bergson's notion of fabulation and give it a political meaning', where Bergson's fabulation described the productivity of false representations in the context of religion.[3] Throughout his work, Deleuze forges a connection between fabulation, Nietzsche's powers of the false, and the Bergsonian postulation of actualisation. From this nexus arises the political project of a people to come.

'People to come' explicates both Deleuze's politics and his approach to truth, where truth is not already out there but must be created.[4] This involves the falsification of established ideas in a process that tends toward new articulations. The creation of truth takes place in a series of operations where no truth can be presumed to persist. Rather than being a case of 'alternative facts', this process of creation is always fundamentally linked to the actuality of a given situation where 'the people are missing', where social groups have been deprived of their rights; rather than a restorative norm that would inclusively expand existing categories, the contention that the 'people are missing' requires a creative, generative element on behalf of a 'people yet to come'. Here, the (re)constitution of a people to come begins

with the falsification of subjugating norms and ideas. The creation of truth belongs to a similar process.

In the context of this special section, fabulation challenges the positivist ideal of truth through an emphasis on the audiovisual methodologies with which the true comes to be. In the same vein, we challenge the sceptic stance by insisting on the affirmative potentials of ‘falsification’ – the aesthetic, speculative, and performative modalities that produce truth-effects. We critically retain the distinction between fabulation and a lie. Fabulation presumes that what a social collective holds to be true or considers a fact is neither arbitrary nor set in stone. Some of the major achievements of the Civil Rights and decolonial movements, feminism(s) as well as LGBTQ activism, over the last 60 years consist in having falsified previously accepted truths. Such falsification can save lives. For us, the question is whether such acts of falsification support and perpetuate hegemonic formations (of patriarchy, whiteness, etc.) or whether they speculatively open up toward a people to come. The important difference is between a lie that protects an oppressive status quo and a fabulation that is not yet quite true, that pushes toward the unknown. The former does not care for what is true whereas the latter has a deep commitment, a yearning even, for a different truth, or, put another way, for the difference of truth. Related to this, we further differentiate between the opportunist dismissal of verifiable information on the one hand and, on the other, a profound investment in developing procedures or methodologies to historicise, contextualise, and de-essentialise ‘known facts’ with the aim of showing that they participate in systemic violence and need to give way to alternative social assemblages.

The articles presented here explore various media practices that question or transform how we come to know and understand the world. Across very different objects and methods of inquiry – ranging from an exploration of speculative crime boards in television detective fiction, to considerations of audiovisual techniques such as framing, thermal imaging, and first-person films, to the self-transformative potential of performance – we highlight noteworthy conceptual overlaps and philosophical resonances. First and foremost, all articles address what we would like to call *the ring of the true*. While we are not interested in proposing a strict terminological distinction between the truth and the true, for us the ring of the true indicates a conceptual shift toward an ecological conception of the truth. The sonic metaphor, linked to testing the veracity of coins or quality of glass, makes the question of truth rely on felt resonances with the surrounding

world rather than essential properties of things or statements. The ring of the true is thus relational and open to modulation. We elaborate the conceptual implications of this approach in more detail through the notions of speculation, aesthetics, and truth-effects which cut across this issue and the articles that follow. In the following overview of the contributors' work, we foreground resonances that sound this special section's collective ring of the true.

Speculation: Uncertainty and the temporalisation of truth

The recent renewal of interest in speculative philosophies has a number of important implications for the notion of the 'true'. The first implication concerns the 'seat' of the true. Despite a wide diversity amongst contemporary speculative philosophies, they share in the rejection of anthropocentrism.[5] New ecological and geopolitical challenges have sensitised thinkers to the fact that the world is not a collection of inert matter for humans to understand, act upon, and instrumentalise, calling into question a complex of philosophical concepts – stable subjecthood, rationality, and agency – that are dear (and true) to humanist modernity. Given the transversal feedback effects within complex systems such as the financial market or what, following Donna Haraway, we might call naturecultures, it is hard to believe in humans as self-determining agents.[6] Given our own and partial implication in those assemblages, conceptions of the human as rational, distant observer of the world and guarantor of (at least a phenomenological) truth fail to convince. Additionally, at the same time that we realise that agency is distributed across complex (media) systems, that we are swept up by those systems, and that affect informs our actions at least as much as our presumed rationality, those very assemblages increasingly escape our intellectual grasp. In an age of uncertainty, the truth of an issue – understood for the moment as a consensual, verifiable account of the facts pertaining to that issue – available as a starting-point for responsible, deliberative action often remains elusive. The question that arises is how one is to act in such a situation? How is one supposed to know what to do when one does not even know the circumstances upon which one acts? Speculation as a tentative mode of navigating the world thus speaks to the relational (though not relative) and ecological status of the true.

Rob Coley's study of crime boards in contemporary television series provides one answer to this question: if one cannot know for sure, the only choice is to think and act in a speculative mode. Coley shows how contemporary crime fiction dramatises the epistemological and methodological shifts in police work by tracing how crime boards have come to be used less as faithful representations of reality. Instead, they are operationalised as speculative mappings of an uncertain world that allow for the creation of new truths which can at least be acted upon. If the truth has become unavailable as a starting-point or foundation, it nonetheless plays an important role as the outcome of one's probings into an uncertain relational field. In his account of post-9/11 military doctrine, Brian Massumi has described this mode of operation as one of preemption which requires that you

test and prod, you move as randomly and unpredictably and ubiquitously as they [i.e. the enemy] do, in the hopes that you will brush close enough to provoke a response. You avoid making yourself a sitting target. You move like the enemy, in order to make the enemy move. He will be flushed out into taking some active form, and in taking active form will become detectable and thus attackable. In other words, you go on the offensive to make the enemy emerge from its state of potential and take actual shape. The exercise of your power is *incitatory*. [7]

Coley's account shows that recent crime television thinks through this shift toward a speculative mode of power through its own aesthetic tropes, most importantly the crime board as a future-oriented tool for the creation of truths (as opposed to a past-oriented tool for the uncovering of a preexisting truth).

In a number of Coley's case studies, the rejection of anthropocentrism is also articulated through neurodiverse detectives who depart from the norm of the humanist subject. In this way, characters like Carrie Mathison from *Homeland* or Saga Norén from *Bron/Broen* foreground the 'richness of ontological experimentation' in direct contact with the world, a relational approach to the truth that becomes available and productive past the limiting constraint of rational, detached observation.[8] At the same time, this raises a more general question that we will return to later in a consideration of media's therapeutic potential: how does the world integrate this kind of experiential diversity, and what role can media play in this?

Another relational approach to truth is found in Ilona Hongisto's conceptualisation of the documentary frame in her article 'Sweeping changes in Eastern Europe' on Gerd Kroske's *Kehraus* trilogy about street sweepers in East Germany after the fall of the Berlin Wall. In a gesture that opens 'the

documentary' beyond indexical representations of an already existing reality, Hongisto insists on the liminal and territorial functions of the frame. The first, she argues, puts the emphasis on how the world depicted in documentary films continues beyond the frame. The dynamic relationality between visibilities and statements and their outside draws attention to the conditions in which the given visibilities and statements come to be. This connects the documentary with what cannot be seen, heard, or even known, but that is nevertheless felt. In Hongisto's argument, the documentary trilogy tells the truth of the Eastern European transition period through activating the frame as limit. The frame captures and expresses the immanent governmentality that conditions the precarious lives of the sweepers during the transition period.

This links with the territorial function of the frame, which rests on the premise that the real bodies and objects depicted in documentary films are composed of actual and virtual qualities. They are implicated in an ever-varying movement of virtual differentiation, and the bodies and objects we see, hear, and recognise are the actualisation of this movement. Hence, when the documentary frames real bodies and objects, it captures them in a process of actualisation. Moreover, when the documentary takes on a position of reciprocal presupposition with what is framed, it begins contributing to how real bodies and objects actualise. Through actualisation, the work of the documentary extends from representation to realities in the making: 'the rules of actualization are not those of resemblance and limitation, but those of difference or divergence and of creation'.[9] In Kroske's trilogy, actualisation intertwines, for instance, with the affinities that come to be through the filmmaking process.

Actualisation leads to the second important implication of the move towards speculation, which concerns the conceptual relation between the true and time. Deleuze writes that 'time has always put the notion of truth into crisis'; critically, time challenges the very notion or concept of truth, not just one particular truth.[10] This is because the notion of truth tends to be associated with unshakable facts, the eternal validity of a (e.g. religious) doctrine, and essences at the core of beings. In process philosophy becoming takes precedence over being(s) and, indeed, tends to continuously falsify them into their next iteration. In other words, time challenges truth's presumed stability. This does not mean that we must let go of the concept of truth altogether; rather, we need to temporalise it.

The aesthetic paradigm: Theatres of subjectivation

The essays in this section work on and with the aesthetic dimension of the true in contemporary media. At stake in these discussions are the aesthetic techniques, practices, and compositions that facilitate the ring of the true, the falsification of established truths, and the speculative inquiries into the make-up of the real. However, aesthetics is not merely a tool or device, but part and parcel of the real itself. Unsurprisingly, in many instances here, what is given as 'the real' is subject to creation, fictional settings, or performances.

Aesthetics here supersedes technological or mechanically-secured articulations of the true, as with Deleuze's discussion of the direct time-image, where he argues that '[t]he fact is that the new spiritual automatism and the new psychological automata depend on an aesthetic before depending on technology'.^[11] Félix Guattari explicates the immanence of aesthetics through what he calls 'the new aesthetic paradigm', where the aesthetic belongs to subjectivation, to the becoming of subjects in relation to ecological, corporeal, psychic, economic, and institutional registers.^[12] For Guattari, the aesthetic belongs to the pull of difference that marks subjectivation: '[i]t is a striving towards this ontological root of creativity that is characteristic of the new processual paradigm.'^[13] The aesthetic at the root of subjectivation signals the organisation and pattern of the registers through which subjects come to be. Simon O'Sullivan characterises Guattari's aesthetic paradigm as 'an expanded field of life practices'.^[14]

Guattari's aesthetic paradigm coincides with mediated 'life practices', emphasising the production of subjectivity through techniques borrowed from fiction films and theatre. Emanuel Licha's essay 'Training the eye for war: A politics of spatial fictions' explores this conundrum through his experience of Medina Wasl, a US military training centre in the Mojave Desert designed to train troops for overseas deployments. Built and operated by Hollywood professionals, with extras largely drawn from the Iraqi diaspora in the US, it reproduces the architecture of war zones to enable familiarisation with the environments soldiers will later encounter during missions. It is an extensive theatre of operations aiming to be as close to reality as possible, relying on an elaborate mise-en-scène. The media ecology of the fictionalised space extends to journalists, whose images of the facility train viewers on how to comprehend images of war.

Elaborating on the image-event that emerges from the fictional setting of the training centre in terms of a new regime of representation, Licha draws from Jacques Rancière to argue that this new regime conflates rather than separates fact and fiction from one another. This, Licha argues, is evident at Medina Wasl where reality and fiction are indiscernible to begin with. Himself a filmmaker, Licha notes the potential ethical and political downfalls of images that result from the conflation of fact and fiction, but he maintains the productivity of the new regime through distinguishing conflation from deception. Licha explores the effects of the fictionalised space on his film *Mirages* (2010), and particularly the need to manipulate the images of the given mise-en-scène. For him, fictionalising the images of Medina Wasl intervened in the established frame of images of war, akin to Rancière's point about fiction as a means of 'giving meaning to the empirical universe of actions'.^[15] In the new regime of representation, fiction is on par with the reality of actions – instead of emerging after reality has already occurred – and thus it can potentially instigate new realities to take form.

The generative configuration of aesthetics is also a concern in Maria Walsh's article 'Acts of laughter, acts of tears'. Through Oriana Fox's therapy chat show *The O Show* (2011-ongoing) and Gillian Wearing's experimental documentary *Self Made* (2010), she discusses performances of sincerity as acts that can profess truths through being 'heartfelt'. Walsh argues that the seeming immateriality of neoliberal capitalism and digital technology have produced a new desire for authenticity that is enacted through public acts of sincerity. These acts are not 'truth', but in 'not being false' they proffer what Michel Foucault would call 'truth-effects' of identity.^[16]

Walsh discusses the production of truth-effects in the context of contemporary cultural production devoted to individual change. Epitomised in popularised discourses of self-development and recovery, reality television, and online support forums dedicated to individual journeys toward 'true selves', public acts of sincerity are a passage to authenticity. The two artworks Walsh engages with in her essay foreground the therapeutic value of these acts as well as the continuous 'slippage between the sincere as performative truth act and authenticity as a genuine truth'.

From the point of view of aesthetics, Walsh's delineation of performative truth acts as impersonations is particularly interesting. Aligning her argument with Lionel Trilling's notion of sincerity as 'a means of being true to oneself',^[17] Walsh establishes sincerity as something one does as op-

posed to a quality one possesses. Trilling's insistence on sincerity as an act where 'we play the role of being ourselves'[18] takes on new significance in relation to contemporary media culture predicated on role play and self-presentation. Here, truth-effects are generated in performances that borrow from acting and therapeutic techniques; although the acts themselves may be deemed insincere, their authenticity is validated in the contexts of production and circulation. Impersonation's truth-effects engender this new sincerity and are decidedly social in that the participants of *The O Show* and *Self Made* collectively speculate healthier versions of themselves into existence.

Walsh's therapeutics of impersonation as a mediated life practice speaks to the need for resources of response to the contemporary media condition, akin to Coley's exploration of crime boards as an ecological response to neurodiversity and non-anthropocentric epistemological crises. In particular, the primacy of relation displaces a distributive relativism as a way of negotiating the hierarchy of objective and subjective divisions of knowledge. Walsh's piece echoes Guattari's insistence on the therapeutic as a paradigmatic instance of the social ecology, but only when it goes beyond Guattari's critique of the one-way delivery of the therapeutic scene, with the therapist/expert 'behind the back' of an inert, immobilised patient. Rejecting a restorative approach, Guattari insists that 'the only acceptable finality of human activity is the production of a subjectivity that is auto-enriching its relation to the world in a continuous fashion',[19] and sought in his therapeutic and critical practices modes that encouraged such relational and partial subjectivations. In this way, Guattari hits on a key dilemma of the contemporary moment: which forms of life promote existential mutations that might make existence more liveable, and which hold in place exhausted forms of oppression, consensuality, and control?

Truth-effects: Ecologies of true embodiment

The question of efficacy is a final concern across the articles, which address the productive effect of what media does in a lived ecology of relations. Such lived relationality is a key concern in 'Cinema's Turing test: Consciousness, digitality, and operability in *Hardcore Henry*'. Chang-Min Yu takes up the question of contemporary image consciousness in the first-person perspective film *Hardcore Henry* (2015), particularly the truth-effects

that the permeability of the digital image across media forms (cinema and videogaming) can produce. The film's first-person perspective, held together both by Henry and the audience's shared audiovisual perception, solicits an active form of spectatorship that ambiguously occupies and recognises a subjectivity at work, and moves from a 'representation of subjectivity to its representability that depends on spectatorship'. This shifts the terms of participation and experience in a contemporary media ecology of internalised surveillance and control. Yu's piece explores the sensory optical image as a mode of thought which solicits both intermedial forms and the cross-modal perception of the spectator's vision and touch, but ultimately concludes that the film restores the visual to its position of superior and disembodied knowledge.

The film's participatory lure, which Yu characterises as both passive and active, establishes the perceptual field of media as the audience's 'ordeal of dizziness', exacerbated by a disjunction between an overstimulated brain and an incapacitated hand. Where then does 'operability' lie? In a notion of the operable as a 'tactile manipulability [...] indivisible from optical operability', implicated in an aesthetic regime tied to war machines and cultures of surveillance. What is true in this image regime is inseparable from its productive, rather than evidentiary, effects; this is the quality of the composite and aggregative that Yu identifies. In an analysis consonant with Deleuze's shift from the disciplinary to the control society, Yu proposes that 'digital cinema itself is no longer defined by the fissure of montage, but by a continuous permutation of one image and its pixel transformation'. In this way, the film proposes an intra-operative agency, a subjectivity grounded in a double sense of intelligence inseparable from a networked condition: intelligence 'first as consciousness to promptly react to external threats, then as a drone that collects vital data, perpetually hooked onto the internet'. The result is that 'Henry becomes a conscious medium that acts and is acted upon, and it's hard to tell whether or not he has the so-called agency'. Yu's key insight is that a dynamic of passive *or* active, one held out by the promise of 'interactive' or participatory as the quality of a newly agential digital media, is revealed to be ultimately recuperated by cinema's Turing test in a fantasy of disembodied intelligence.

What conditions then can thicken perception to slow down judgment in the working of the true? Emanuel Licha recently mounted an exhibition at the Montreal Museum of Contemporary Art titled *Now Have a Look at This Machine* (16 February to 14 May 2017), consisting of an hour-long creative

documentary titled *Hotel Machine*, where the screen is framed on three sides by five archival stations. Each station offers spectators a reframed view of the documentary, both mimicking the position of a war hotel's privileged vantage point and offering access to texts, documents, publications, and audiovisual clips to contextualise the documentary's subject. This expanded and integrated viewpoint sits provocatively adjacent to the film itself. In and around the journalistic coverage and the embodied, lived experience of the hotel residents that form an entangled hub of media communications infrastructure, creature comforts, ad hoc repurposing as sites of news conferences, socialising, emergency hospitals, and places of refuge and sites of targeting, the war hotel is presented as a machine for looking at and looking through knowledge production in the chaos of war's violence. Viewers occupy mobile and shifting positions that fail to cohere, animating the often contradictory 'functions' of the war hotel: 'proximity, vantage point, security, communication and hub'.

To look is thus already to be taken up in the machine's function, and Licha's intervention renders ambiguous whether the spectator (and by extended implication, the war journalist) is part of the mechanical reproduction of the same, or through a machinic vision is taken up by the forces of partiality, which Meaghan Morris describes as a method of analysis that is 'openly incomplete' and 'partisan in its insistence on the political dimension of knowledge', full of affective inclination. The media ecology of forms cross fact and fiction to a condition in which truth is not a property of the world 'out there', but a quality of true embodiment that is neither relative nor subjective, but ongoing, lived, and vulnerable.[20] Licha's exhibition participates in a critical engagement of a media ecology, rather than an environment, in which our implications are vague, felt, and inextricable. Licha tweaks the design of the war hotel to put bodies back in the picture. What kind of machines and what ecology of practices can help to promote the desire for tactics that jam the mechanical reproduction of 'known facts' and short-circuit affect's potential into captured reactions that perpetuate social injustice?

To pose this question via a thinking of 'truth-effects', we might ask: what are the requirements of a media practice – of critique, of production, and of consumption – that might engage the true via a fabulation of 'known facts', such that oppressive and violence effects might be rendered sensible and thus changeable? Yvette Granata's 'False color/real life: Chromo-politics and François Laruelle's Photo-fiction' considers three historical visual media

moments of false coloration: false colorisation in early film history through debates linking colour to death, through Bazin, Barthes, and Eisenstein's notion of 'chromaturgy'; then moving from chromaturgy to chromopolitics, through the emergent hegemony of colour film in cinema and photography, via recent work by Richard Misek and Lorna Roth on the non-innocent fetishisation of 'whiteness' as industry standard, and the unacknowledged design propositions undergirding colour film techniques that linked racist social exclusion with aesthetic norms; and finally the 'pseudo-colour' of contemporary thermal images derived from surveillance and tracking technologies, used to make visible what falls below the human perceptual threshold.

Beginning from Godard's notorious claim that 'it's not blood, its red', Granata takes seriously a 'truth-effect' of Godard's distinction, bringing a fabulative emphasis to bear on the tension between a representational politics of adequation and an immanent ethics. For example, Granata identifies thermal imagery's 'pseudo color' as a chromo-politics par excellence, writing that

it tells us at the outset that its hues are not the real color of the scene it portrays, that it has been added, but that it represents the truth of what we cannot see and is an image of the real heat of living bodies. This is how thermal camera imagery also reconstructs exactly what Laruelle claims that philosophy has always done: it conflates its position in the Real (the inability to see heat) with its decisional manner for approaching this position (the pseudo-color of heat) as the truth.

Granata concludes that media technologies require a design practice up to the ethical challenges of media that is generative and not representational in its effects. Drawing on Francois Laruelle's non-photography (a variation on his non-philosophy), she asks what kind of design practice it takes to produce 'generic photography', which would be 'ethically people-oriented [*éthiquement orientée-hommes*], in service of their defense, and passes from the positive photo, devoted to narcissism of the world, to the generic photo'.^[21] This is not universal but that which is generative. In this way, a truth-effect is not simply an empty gesture. Granata proposes an embodied relation to media production rooted in a body that is situated, opaque, incomplete, working through a 'vision-force' as a critique of objectivity, to displace representation as the site of ethical adequacy. She concludes that Laruelle's call for photo-fiction is not an assessment of photography as a medium of truth, but a mediated life practice of 'taking a photo with one's eyes closed, on the condition that one admits they are closed, which is to

say they had been open and more precisely, they are half-closed, the beating of eyelids by which we take excessive measure of the world and through which we master the intensity of its hallucinatory aspect'.[22] Granata's immanent chromo-political critique echoes the work of fabulation and its service to the people yet to come. Perhaps instead of mastery, the essays collected here explore a more tentative and relational form of engagement with a contemporary media ecology and the stakes of a conception of the true that makes spaces for ambiguity, partiality, and the speculative in the service of more than just social assemblages.

Authors

Ilona Hongisto is Lecturer in Media Studies at Macquarie University in Sydney and Honorary Fellow at the Victorian College of the Arts, the University of Melbourne. She works across screen studies, media theory, and political philosophy, and specialises in documentary cinema. Her most recent work focuses on fabulation in post-Soviet Eastern European documentary cinema. Ilona's publications include the monograph *Soul of the Documentary: Framing, Expression, Ethics* (Amsterdam University Press, 2015) and articles in such journals as *Studies in Documentary Film*, *Journal of Scandinavian Cinema*, *Cultural Studies Review*, and *Transformations*.

Toni Pape is Assistant Professor of Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam. Focusing on television and video games, his work addresses the relation between aesthetics and politics. His current research deals with the political potential of stealth aesthetics. Toni co-authored the recently published book *Nocturnal Fabulations* on the cinema of Apichatpong Weerasethakul (Open Humanities Press, 2017). His monograph *Figures of Time: Television, Preemption, and the Anarchive* is forthcoming with Duke University Press in 2018. Toni's articles have been published in journals such as *Spectator*, *Inflexions*, *Studies in Documentary Film*, and *Feminist Media Studies*.

Alanna Thain is Associate Professor of World Cinemas and Cultural Studies and Director of the Institute for Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies at McGill University in Montreal. She also directs the Moving Image Research Laboratory (MIRL), devoted to the study of the body in moving image media. Her book *Bodies in Suspense: Time and Affect in Cinema* was published by

the University of Minnesota Press in 2017. Her current research projects include *Anarchival Outbursts: Dance and Movement Practices of Post Digital Media* and work on dissensuality. Her writing can be found in *Parallax, differences, Dance Research Journal, TDR, Senses of Cinema, the Oxford Handbook of Screendance Studies, Visual Anthropology Review, Music and Sound in Documentary Film*, and more. She is online at <https://www.mcgill.ca/english/staff/alanna-michael-thain>.

References

- Bergson, H. *The two sources of morality and religion*, translated and edited by R. Audra and C. Brereton. London: Macmillan, 1935.
- Bordeleau, É., Pape, T., Rose-Antoinette, R., and Szymanski, A. *Nocturnal fabulations: Ecology, vitality and opacity in the cinema of Apichatpong Weerasethakul*. London: Open Humanities Press, 2017.
- Deleuze, G. *Negotiations: 1972-1990*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.
- _____. *Bergsonism*, translated by H. Tomlinson and B. Habberjam. New York: Zone Books, 1991.
- _____. *Cinema 2: The time-image*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989.
- Flaxman, G. *Gilles Deleuze and the fabulation of philosophy*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011.
- Foucault, M. 'Truth and Power' in *The Foucault reader*, edited by P. Rabinow, interview with A. Fontana and P. Pasquino. New York: Pantheon 1984: 51-75.
- Frow, J. and Morris, M. 'Introduction' in *Australian cultural studies: A reader*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993: vii-xxxii.
- Guattari, F. *Chaosmosis: An ethico-aesthetic paradigm*, translated by J. Pefanis. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995.
- Haraway, D. *The companion species manifesto: Dogs, people, and significant otherness*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003.
- Hongisto, I. 'Realities in the Making: The Ethics of Fabulation in Observational Documentary Cinema' in *Ethics and storytelling: Historical imagination in contemporary literature and visual arts*, edited by H. Meretoja and C. Davis. New York: Routledge, forthcoming in 2017.
- _____. 'Impossible objectivity: free indirect perspectives in Finnish documentary cinema', *Studies in Documentary Film*, #10.2, 2016: 198-211; DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17503280.2016.1221672>
- _____. *Soul of the documentary: Framing, expression, ethics*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015; DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5117/9789089647559>
- Hongisto, I. and Pape, T. 'Unexpected Artivism: The Fabulatory Function in Kumaré', *Studies in Documentary Film*, #9.1, 2015: 69-83; DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17503280.2014.1002252>
- Laruelle, F. *Photo-fiction, a non-standard aesthetics*, translated by D. Burk. Minneapolis: Univocal, 2012.
- _____. *The concept of non-photography*, translated by R. Mackay. New York: Sequence Press, 2011.
- Massumi, B. *Ontopower: War, powers, and the state of perception*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2015.
- O'Sullivan, S. 'Guattari's Aesthetic Paradigm: From the Folding of the Finite/Infinite Relation to Schizoanalytic Metamodelisation', *Deleuze Studies*, #4.2, 2010: 256-286; DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3366/E1750224110000978>
- Rancière, J. *The politics of aesthetics*, translated by G. Rockhill. London: Continuum, 2004.
- Shaviri, S. *The universe of things: On speculative realism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014.
- Thain, A. *Bodies in suspense: Time and affect in cinema*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

Trilling, L. *Sincerity and authenticity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972.

Notes

- [1] For an overview of these discussions see 'What is Knowledge?', *New Scientist*, 234:3119, 2017: 30-41.
- [2] See e.g. Hongisto & Pape 2015; Hongisto 2015, 2016, 2017; Bordeleau et al. 2017; Thain 2017. For an elaborate discussion of Deleuze's project as fabulation, see Flaxman 2011.
- [3] Deleuze 1995, p. 174. See Bergson 1935, pp. 83-177; Deleuze 1989, pp. 126-155.
- [4] *Ibid.*, p. 126.
- [5] See e.g. Shaviro 2014, pp. 1-13.
- [6] Haraway 2003, *passim*.
- [7] Massumi 2015, p. 12.
- [8] Guattari 1995, p. 82.
- [9] Deleuze 1991, p. 97.
- [10] Deleuze 1989, p. 130.
- [11] *Ibid.*, p. 267.
- [12] Guattari 1995, pp. 98-118.
- [13] *Ibid.*, p. 116.
- [14] O'Sullivan 2010, p. 259.
- [15] Rancière 2004, p. 38.
- [16] Foucault 1984.
- [17] Trilling 1972, p. 9.
- [18] *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- [19] Guattari 1995, p. 21.
- [20] Morris & Frow 1993, p. xviii.
- [21] Laruelle 2012, p. 53.
- [22] *Ibid.*, p. 34.