

Abstracts

(listed alphabetically by first named speaker)

Lanfranco Aceti (Sabanci University, Turkey and University College London, UK),
'Curating Post-Humanity? Art in Between Utopia and Dystopia'
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The paper will discuss the vision of a future that has moved from the optimistic approach of the Futurists, in which a technologically based utopic world would represent the panacea to the problems of humanity, to one of a contemporary dystopic vision in which the 'maimed' post-human body represents a temporary hybrid response to the cataclysmic events of a humanity in a world in crisis.

The visual representation of the new aestheticized crises, both in film and fine arts, is one that still concentrates on technology as the suitable response. This is a technological response to crises that, in the contemporary dystopic visions, can only ensure a temporary survival, before collapsing humanity in a worse crisis than the one technology originally attempted to solve. Technological solutions are presented as delayed failures that only ensure the final collapse through a technological betrayal of human hopes.

The new technological hybrid-body, in the dystopic vision, is something that needs to be constantly curated as a consequence of humanity's departure from the perfected image bestowed by the creator – homo est clausura mirabilium dei (man is the closing point of the marvels of the universe) in Paul Virilio, *Virilio Live: Selected Interviews*, 21.

The paper will conclude by arguing that the curatorial role in presenting these visions of the human body is not one based on utopia or dystopia, nor based on the perfect existence of an original image of the body to which one should adhere or that should be 'curated' of its sinful acquired imperfection. The vision of the post-human body is that of an evolutionary process within which failure in a crisis is only but one of many different possible outcomes.

Alice Andrews (Goldsmiths College, University of London, UK), 'The Futures of Autoimmunity: Science, its Fictions, and the Unforeseeable "to come"'
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This paper will address a certain unforeseeable and terrifying relationship to the future in terms of Derrida's use of the trope 'autoimmunity'. Autoimmunity is the means of protection that harms the self it has been designed to save; it is the necessary risk taken with every attempt at living on. However, autoimmunity presumes an immune self and therefore the organism; it is a term that implicates life and the biopolitical, and yet, what happens to the assumptions of the discourse of autoimmunity in the global age of population management and 'securitization', when 'life', economy and society are brought into a grand non-linear matrix?

What are the ethical implications in the shift of the analysis of protection from those based on the organism to those of securitization and systems theory? And further, what is the role of science fiction and popular culture in the making-safe, as well as the creative critique of these relations to the future?

I will consider the mechanisms of autoimmunity and securitization in terms of two science fiction texts. Firstly a film, *The Dead Zone* (Cronenberg, 1984), where prophetic visions of a *certain* future reveal the trauma, ethics and autoimmunity involved in the attempts to secure a future which is to-come'. Segueing via the limitations revealed by Derrida's essay on nuclear criticism 'No Apocalypse Not Now' (1983) to an analysis of the novel *The Child Garden* (Ryman, 1994) and the emergence of life via the viral control of populations' biology, I will consider the forms of control that demand new, pre-emptive, creative and problematic relations to the future.

Emmanouel Aretoulakis (University of Athens, Greece), 'The Non-Quest for the New in Literary Studies'
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In an age of disseminated fear and globalized anxiety about the accelerated rhythms of (post)modern life, the high frequency of terrorist incidents, and the constant reconfiguration of human activity, should literary studies and criticism strive for the altogether 'new'? Does acceleration in civilization necessarily call for intensification of the critical mind in the context of literary theory? If culture lies at the threshold of a global crisis of immeasurable proportions, is theory/criticism inevitably at the brink of a crisis, thus having to reconfigure itself to fit the new environment of instant change and progress(ion)? I am interested in the question of whether the intensive search for the new or the 'next' in contemporary culture is of any importance for literary studies. Recently, the *PMLA* announced a call for papers on the issue of 'what is next?' in literary theory and criticism, asking for new critical pathways that will pick up where previous theories like Structuralism, Deconstruction, or Psychoanalysis allegedly left off (January 2008). I want to argue that there is too much intellectual risk involved in persistently and consciously calling for the 'new' or the 'next step' in the appraisal of a literary, or any other, text. In fact, taking into consideration Walter Benjamin's own assertion in the 'On Concept of History' (later called 'Theses on the Philosophy of History') that 'there has never been a document of culture that is not simultaneously a document of barbarism' will lead us to suspect that the scientific (or civilized) quest for a new theory that will eventually replace, or dispose of, theories and approaches that are supposedly outdated or worn out may end up degenerating into a positivistic, market-oriented, venture into the world of excessive global consumption. The 'original' or 'new' in literature will probably derive from a less 'civilized' and rather unconscious 'effort' – a sudden flash of imagination or creativity, for instance.

I would like to connect such an 'un-civil' stance regarding literary interpretation with the question of ecology. There has been too much talk of what 'ecological thinking' means. Deep ecology would argue for an open celebration of nature and its gifts. However, a truly ecological stance would paradoxically dictate that one avoid discussing it – not to mess with it is to respect it. How is such an ecological approach applicable to the question of producing (or not) ever new literary theories?

Muhammad Safer Awan (International Islamic University, Pakistan), 'Apocalypse Now?: Post-September 11 Power Politics and Global Futures'
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Years before September 11 happened, Francis Fukuyama (1992) pointed out that the twentieth century had 'made us all deep historical pessimists'. Since September 11, 2001, the global pessimism about the future of humanity has increased to tragic proportions. Terrorism, alongside an asymmetric response to eradicate it, moral panic, increasing poverty, the capitalist alliance with the Military-Industrial complex, the machinations and greed of corporate-politicians and a host of other factors are responsible for the new pessimism and an irrational fear of the 'other' that has gripped us all. Even in a predominantly religious society as in Pakistan, the suicide rate is increasing to an alarming extent. Not only the 'private suicides' are on the rise; the suicide-bombers are multiplying by horrendous numbers. In this paper, I have chosen a few recent novels and films to study how capitalist greed and the asymmetric response (in the war on terror) to terrorist activities are increasingly making our world a dangerous place and our common global futures very uncertain. My case study will focus on Pakistan, Afghanistan and the United States of America. The novels in this study include Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007) and John Updike's *Terrorist* (2006). Racial profiling, the corporate media's role and a whole new concept of 'law' adopted by the governments (in Pakistan, UK, USA, and India) have also contributed to the making/turning of many moderate-thinking people to 'reluctant fundamentalists'. For a theoretical framework of my paper, I have employed Michel Foucault's discourse theory, and Antonio Gramsci's concept of 'hegemony' alongside Louis Althusser's 'ideological state apparatuses'. It is an interdisciplinary approach to analyse the way power is politically manipulated in times of crises.

Bill Balaskas (Royal College of Art, UK), 'Re: Making History: The (New) Alien Invasion of Hollywood After 9/11'
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Although Martians first 'landed' on U.S. soil in the 1950s as a metaphor for the 'communist menace', ever since then, aliens have not stayed far from the American borders. It seems that in periods of commotion and political or military crises Hollywood cinema has diachronically employed the alien invaders as a lens through which to theorize the opposite pole, the sinister 'Others'. The 9/11 attacks and the ensuing 'war on terror' became catalysts for the production of a whole new generation of alien invasion films, which, on the one hand, acted as mechanisms of commemoration of the events and, on the other hand, were employed as interpretative tools for the new world which appeared to emerge from the Twin Towers' debris. This paper intends to investigate the ideological dispositions promoted by the revival of alien invasion films in American cinema after 9/11. A close examination of the imagery and plots encountered in such films brings to light a variety of affinities not only with the neoconservative movement, but also with antecedent theorizations of the global condition, like Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations', or even McCarthyism's rhetoric and cold-war propaganda. The paper will suggest that although a significant number of American science fiction films uncritically adopted such approaches early after 9/11 and the beginning of the Iraq war, some later films

appear to gradually adhere to a more moderate view on the post-9/11 world, through a many-faceted exploitation of the alien invasion narrative.

Matthew Beale (Hongik University, South Korea), ‘The Impossibility of Salvation: Judaism and Messianism in *Y: The Last Man*’
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This paper addresses the issue of global risk as presented in the comic series *Y: The Last Man*. The story setting for this comic is a world in which all animals on Earth with a Y chromosome, with the exception of the protagonist and his pet monkey, immediately and simultaneously perish due to unknown circumstances in the year 2002. What follows is a post-apocalyptic world where women fill the myriad vacuums of power, commerce, and art that the sudden expiration of every male on the planet leaves. My paper discusses how this ‘gendercide’ explores, satirizes, and subverts *and* elevates real-world topics such as the nuclear arms race, the economic recession, and the concept of messianism through both its narrative and art style. The gender-specific plague itself is a warning regarding the fragility of the interconnectedness of the world. In my paper, I look at how the immediacy of the plague and the subsequent explanations of its cause explore what the shrinking world means for individualism and how the protagonist, the last remaining man on Earth, exposes the conflicting and concurrent aspects that such a philosophical stance means in the unified world. The paper concludes by asserting that *Y: The Last Man* offers a sense of recovery from apocalypse, but that institutions by which global politics and commerce currently operate are inadequate to address it.

Khadija Belfarhi (University of Annaba, Algeria), ‘Globalization and Discursive Literature: Impossibilities’
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Globalization is hypothetically setting one axe to the world, supposing it feasible since the world recognizes the need to decrease conflicts in order to cohabit under similar conditions. Such ambition fails with some discourses such as literature. The latter is open, discursive and vague, which makes it lack a particular genre of reading and interpretation (see Jacques Derrida, ‘La loi du Genre’, *glyph* 7 [1982], 176-232). Globalization of literature is trivialized by the inability to make literature homogeneous. In other words, globalization cannot apply to literature because the ambitions of literature and globalization are different.

Literature is a free-addressed discourse relating to the fragmentation of the world and produces fragmented works accordingly; whereas globalization is an ambition with a face value. It aims at setting a global modality to discourses that are ontologically discursive, and at the same time it does preserve the plurality of these discourses. Literature cannot be globalized because writers cannot produce readable works, free from the puzzle of interpretation. Literature would remain correlated with ambiguity because the latter depicts the world’s real construction. Other artistic fields, however, can be globalized. Theatre, for instance, can cope with a homogeneous modality because its modes of expression are very direct. Modern literature, in the opposite, is a static mode of communication that does not explicitly state what it intends to say.

This paper aims at tackling the impossibility of globalizing literature by referring to the internal discursivity of literature, and more particularly to the concept of genre which cannot be categorized and cannot thus allow the task of globalizing literature.

Aleksandra Bida (Ryerson University and York University, Canada), 'Risking Culture: Globalization and Future Cultural Wastelands'
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John Tomlinson's understanding of globalization as 'complex connectivity' can be used to frame the global cultural experience through the sense of proximity it provides and the resulting cultural deterritorialization. Further to this uprooting from place/people and cultural commodification, I examine what can be called 'direct connectivity' through new technology and 'indirect connectivity' via the global village. A view of post-traditional culture also fits in with the proliferation of technology and access to global information through the changing experience of time and space in much of the world.

David Mitchell's 2004 novel *Cloud Atlas* weaves through time and space and then back again in six connected novellas. In the middle of the book the story of a post-apocalyptic world is created and unravelled by the other tales, illuminating the process of globalizing culture. The tales exemplify direct and indirect connectivity as well as cultural commodification and the many ways in which deterritorialization occurs. The very structure of Mitchell's novel emphasizes the need to understand our approach to these concepts and how both time and space continue to structure life though many may try to ignore this.

The ways and frequency with which ethnic, local, and national cultures are inserted into the world market has engendered a deterritorialization and globalization of culture. Consequently, is the reterritorialization of culture merely a new cultural amalgamation heavily influenced by homogenized consumption, or is it possible for reterritorialized culture to remain rooted in traditionally intangible notions of culture? *Cloud Atlas* maps possible futures on both accounts.

Daniel Brennan (Bond University, Australia), 'Vaclav Havel's Response to Heidegger's Crisis of Modernity'
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My paper will explore the philosophical and literary writings of the Czech dissident, playwright, politician, and human rights advocate, Vaclav Havel and his interpretation of the crisis of modernity. I will further explore the Heideggerian influence in Havel's writings and propose that Havel moves beyond Heidegger's thought in that where Heidegger sees no possibility for humanity to rescue its downward spiral into its increasing technologisation and industrialisation of human identity, Havel explicates a recovery through meaningful and responsible social and political action. I will explicate the difference between Havel and Heidegger's thought by claiming that Heidegger is essentially unable to offer a political philosophy. His involvement with the Nazi party and subsequent near silence on the issue serves to strengthen this position as it reveals Heidegger to be politically inept. For Heidegger, the task of thinking is best conducted through poetry and art rather than through politics and

social action. Havel on the other hand uses art to stimulate meaningful political action whereby the human subject recognises their contribution to the sustainment of whatever social reality they inhabit; hence the individual is responsible for the social conditions in which they live. Havel's philosophy of responsibility is therefore a step past Heidegger's. Havel also presents his thought outside of the realm of any specific ideology; hence his philosophy of responsibility has a global significance. Havel's conception of responsibility is a possible global solution to any crisis of modernity that the twenty-first century world faces.

Fiona Cameron (University of Western Sydney, Australia), 'Climate Change, Risk, Museums, and New Institutional Forms'
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In an increasingly interconnected global society uncertainty prevails. Our lives are in a constant state of transformation – characterised by fluidity and mobility. New risks, threats and global hazards emerge such as global financial meltdowns, climate change and terrorism, all requiring action. Increasingly, individuals are charged with a greater responsibility for themselves, necessarily requiring them to make decisions in many areas of their lives. Taking a critical approach to Beck's theory of world risk society along with empirical data from the *Hot Science* project and theories relating to network society, I critique the modern museum project as a first step towards reconsidering and reframing institutional forms according to contemporary social conditions around climate risk. Museums were established on the basis of earlier forms of social life, and risk governance and control regimes. They operated within a national framework, represented collective patterns of life and acted as places to set moral standards and control cultural conversations. In the second part of this paper, I argue and demonstrate how institutions might innovate to more effectively become part of new risk management structures operating as nodes in fluid, trans-national networks.

Liam Campbell (University of Ulster, UK), 'Shadows on the Landscape: Contemporary "Green" Themes in the Works of J.R.R. Tolkien'
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The withering of all woods may be drawing near
(J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Two Towers* [London: HarperCollins, 1993], 461)

A new death for the old world, science that crosses boundaries because it can, winds of industrial change that gust across green hills and dales, ambition and desire for power that corrupts forces once good, machines and callous hearts that dig deep into the ecosystems of earth as trees crash upon the shrinking forest floors. This is the darkest hour of Middle-earth, as presented in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* – this is the natural world at war, on a global scale, with the rising shadow of a new order. How curiously all of this resembles the real world: the troubled and tainted planet upon which we live, the environmental issues that surround us and the irreverent, indiscriminate power-lusts that preside over our fate.

This paper proposes to show that ecological themes lie just below the surface of Tolkien's work, like a mother-lode waiting to be tapped, and that contained within

Tolkien's great mythic creation is an ecological augury: a foreshadowing of the vanishing beauty and the terrible destructive power of an environmentally imbalanced and fragile planet. I further propose to assert that Tolkien, far from being an 'escapist' writer of fantasy, was a writer of his time and primarily concerned with the defining issues of the twentieth century.

Anthony Carrigan (University of Leeds, UK), 'Postcolonial Disaster, Pacific Nuclearisation, and Disabling Environments'
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The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki signalled the start of the nuclear age, with changing global power structures registered by increasing degrees of US intervention in the Asia-Pacific region. These events have attracted dystopian readings of this increasingly transnational space. The capability to exact mass death, represented by a series of nuclear tests which decimated small island ecologies in the Pacific, correlates both with the debilitating operations of necropower and eschatological conceptualisations of human violence. Yet rather than approaching imperialist interventions in apocalyptic terms, it is also possible to understand Pacific militarisation and power consolidation as creating a 'disabling environment' in which disability and disaster operate in processual terms. This essay examines these post-World War II transformations of the Asia-Pacific region in relation to their portrayal in Maori writer James George's novel *Ocean Roads* (2006). It builds on recent attempts to locate disability studies within postcolonial and globalisation discourses by looking at how the catastrophic experiences depicted in the novel highlight the importance of collaboration between disaster studies, disability studies, and postcolonial studies. In particular, the essay suggests that the intersection of these disciplines puts concepts of 'recovery' and 'reconstruction' under pressure. Both terms refer conventionally to the ways in which societies are rebuilt materially following catastrophic events. However, George's narrative suggests that notions of 'recovery' can be exclusionary if their logic marginalises – or suggests the eradication of – disabled subject positions. His novel shows how, both on micro and macro levels, politicised considerations of disability are crucial to responding to the disastrous effects of Pacific nuclearisation. Without these, the potentially emancipatory dimensions of postcolonial politics and post-disaster 'recovery' remain circumscribed.

Rachele Ceccarelli (University of Aberdeen, UK), "'Hysterical Symptoms" of the Lebanese Civil Wars: Walid Raad and the Atlas Group'
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The Atlas Group, established by Lebanese artist Walid Raad in 1999, is an archival project that focuses on the contemporary history of Lebanon, in particular on the Lebanese Civil Wars of 1975- 1990/91 and their aftermath. However, the Atlas Group does not conform to the stereotypical idea of archive as reliable and indisputable authority based on documentary evidence but, on the contrary, dismantles it from within by corrupting the allegedly factual nature of the archive with the parasitic presence of what is considered the archenemy of objective history: fiction. All the works (mixed media installations, photo-essays, lectures/presentations) are distinguished by displaced, fabricated or ambiguous information.

The aim is not to provide a truthful depiction of facts, but to highlight the structural inadequacy of factual and documentary historiography, pointing out that any attempt to offer a comprehensive and neutral account of the variety of events clustered under the name of Lebanese Civil Wars would just be the contrived and anecdotal product of a single biased perspective. This paper contextualizes the Atlas Group within Jalal Toufic's notion of 'The Withdrawal of Tradition Past a Surpassing Disaster' and links it with Derrida's discussion on the archive and Foucault's counter-memory. It investigates Raad's pieces as 'hysterical symptoms' that tentatively uncover the possible, forgotten and imaginary stories of the Lebanese Civil Wars, exploring the plurality of unstable and abstract configurations constantly emerging and dissolving within the metamorphic discourse of war.

Janet Chan (University of New South Wales, Australia), 'Dangerous Art and Suspicious Packages'
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This paper examines art making that may be regarded as dangerous in the current climate of insecurity. It sets public reactions to 'dangerous' art against the political context of the 'war on terror' and the new culture of suspicion. The paper analyses how the notion of 'suspicious packages' is constituted by government advertising campaigns and discusses the ironic consequences of institutionalising a 'precautionary logic' in everyday life.

Oksana Cheyesh (University of Alberta, Canada), 'Science Fictional Models of Adaptation to Post-Apocalypse'
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Myths and religious stories world wide often contain apocalyptic plots with their usual attributes: catharsis and the beginning of the main plot line. Perceivers approach such catastrophes rather abstractly, because of temporal and spatial distance between them and the events. Such cataclysms changed or will change worlds, detached from perceivers of the stories.

Science fictional phenomena depict possible catastrophes that might happen in the near future and ruin the life contemporary humans are attached to. Therefore, human-assimilating post-apocalyptic dystopias in science fiction show models of human adaptation to changed environments. This paper will analyze five models of adaptation found in science fictional phenomena from different cultures. I will show that Japanese anime *Ghost in the Shell* constructs a model with slow adaptation, lack of acceptance and catharsis; Ukrainian video game *S.T.A.L.K.E.R.* proposes that its gamers regress to the mythic perception of nature as an uncanny entity; Ukrainian science fictional novel *Wild Energy. Lana* depicts a female-saviour of post-cataclysmic society who approximates technology to nature and initiates a synergy between the feminine and technology, similar to human-nature relationships. North American animated film *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within* portrays a feminine goddess-nature, threatened by the progress of technology. The goddess is monotheist and pre-Christian, since it saves the planet with the help of people who believe in her help and powers. North American film *The Matrix* proposes a model of resistance and ends with a philosophical observation of the cyclic nature of apocalypses and revivals.

Cornelius Collins (Rutgers University, USA), 'Early Apocalypses: The First Age of Globalization in Thomas Pynchon's *Against the Day*'
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Since globalization became a mainstream idea in late twentieth-century discourse, apocalyptic themes have likewise seen renewed, sustained attention. Where these elements meet in narrative, a crucial difference from the classical teleology of apocalypse emerges: the most trenchant contemporary end-of-the-world narratives, that is, those which engage the realities of global crisis, depict – instead of a period of tribulation that ultimately resolves in favor of the writer's faithful community – a permanently unsettled trajectory of deepening disorder, of increasing chaos without obvious end. The spread of risk around the globe has led to different ways of narrating large-scale catastrophe – away from the definitive, terminal disaster and toward endemic decline and breakdown.

Few works of contemporary literature exemplify this shift more vividly than Thomas Pynchon's major novels. *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973) typifies Cold-War apocalypticism by portraying the modern march toward annihilation as arising from the Second World War and the subsequent nuclear terror. But Pynchon's latest novel, *Against the Day* (2006), finds a more capacious account of global crisis by setting its historical narrative at modern globalization's formative stage, the early twentieth century. Pynchon revivifies the period's subgenres of adventure and science fiction in order to envision globalization as a process that encompasses multiple, dispersed disasters, each of seeming world-ending magnitude – from the Tunguska explosion to The Great War – which yet do not derail in the slightest the larger, overwhelming force that spawns them: the growth of modern multinational corporations.

Daniel J. Connell (Brunel University/East Berkshire College, UK), 'Facing the End of *The Road*: A Critical Interpretation of Cormac McCarthy's Novel and the Legacy of his Post-Apocalyptic Tale'
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Brian Massumi stated that 'What society looks toward is no longer a return to the promised land but a general disaster that is already upon us'. Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006) – with its bleak post-apocalyptic setting, brutally sparse prose and vague description of what caused the disaster – appears to confirm Massumi's notion. But what of the end paragraph, where 'all things were older than man and they hummed of mystery'? This juxtaposition between the cannibalistic, futile majority of the book and its final paragraph creates an intriguing paradox, where it suddenly appears to turn into a tale of hope and resurgence. Is green campaigner George Monbiot right to consider *The Road* the most important environmental book of all time? This paper asks whether McCarthy's ending is in fact tapping into a neo-luddite romanticism present a decade earlier in Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club* (1996). In that novel, Tyler Durden wistfully tells the narrator, 'you'll hunt elk through the deep canyon forests around the ruins of Rockefeller Center...'. There is also the relationship in both with consumerism and its loss in a post-apocalyptic world, plus the role of nature versus the artificiality of man. The role of language – and the change of style in the final paragraph – is also considered. Is the last paragraph a part of McCarthy's caution, or

is it an individual concern, born of the relationship between global risk and the heritage of McCarthy's young son?

Russ Couch (Keene State College, USA), 'The Threat of Darkness and the Prospect of Illumination'

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As Erich Fromm easily recognized, the Great Promise uttered with modernity's onset has since become the Great Threat – a threat not only to the dignity of individual human beings, but the very world in which they live. The darkness of this situation of risk, as I will maintain, can be understood through Hannah Arendt's contention that the dimness of the world occurs as the world itself is lost – a loss of the space of appearances – and it is such a contention that both provides an insightful account of a risk that is global in scale, and simultaneously a prospect of resistance. As economic and political forces uproot people and consumption and mass media technologies increasingly erode the permanence of the world, the private and public spaces made possible by the world are constricted. Ultimately, plurality is replaced by uniformity, while thought is replaced by information systems incapable of detecting spontaneous action. Even in dark times such as these, Arendt finds illuminating power through exemplary writers and thinkers, for it is they who through their words and actions provide events of disclosure that maintain the 'in-between' space between individuals. Arendt's conception corresponds to Gadamerian hermeneutical understanding in the significant respects of allowing dialogical confrontations to be made that are capable of shedding light on the world and the individual – revealing that all is not what it has been maintained to be. It is in this sense that resistance can be found and one fundamental condition for it are *art*-ifacts that put into question the historical situations in which they are found.

Paul Crosthwaite (Cardiff University, UK), 'Phantasmagoric Finance: Risk and the Supernatural in Contemporary Finance Culture'

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One of the central paradoxes of the age of global risk is that the most advanced forms of scientific knowledge, technological ingenuity, and administrative expertise are utilized to bring into being systems and networks that – in their scale, complexity, and potential for danger – heighten a sense of the occult, the gothic, or the divine in everyday life. Nowhere is this paradox more acute than in the world of finance. It has often been claimed – by financial professionals themselves, as well as by neoclassical economists, anti-regulation legislators, and neoliberal pundits – that the infrastructure and practices of the financial markets maximize transparency, efficiency, and rationality. Over the last decade, however, scholars in so-called heterodox branches of economics, such as behavioural finance, as well as in other disciplines including sociology, anthropology, politics, and cultural studies, have challenged this confident, if not complacent, vision of the markets. Their arguments have derived substantial force from the successive crises that have shaken the global financial system since the late 1980s, culminating in the shuddering 'credit crunch' that began in the summer of 2007. In this paper, however, I want to take this critique a step further, and show how the epic movements of the markets illicit, in those who work in and around them,

modes of thought and behaviour that transgress the boundaries of the rational to an extent that even the discourses of ‘herding’, ‘mania’, and ‘panic’ cannot accommodate. From this perspective, the vision of finance as an orderly, professional system of negotiation and exchange fades away entirely, and in its place appears a strange, phantasmagoric realm pervaded by superstition and magical thinking, populated by fervent supplicants and adepts in esoteric lore, and presided over by brooding, otherworldly beings. A map for exploring this alternate dimension of the financial universe can be pieced together from a range of recent narrative texts, in which its zealous initiates and arcane practices emerge distinctly into view.

James R. Daniel (University of Wisconsin, USA), ‘The Ecology of Disaster: Slavoj Žižek and the Democratization of Disaster’
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The current post-9/11 global climate is poised between two seemingly contradictory master narratives: the presumption of a post-historical globalized world order, and the expectation of global disaster. Though the presentiments of a unified post-historical society as espoused by Fukuyama’s *The End of History and the Last Man* and Hardt and Negri’s *Empire* have been largely criticized in the light of twenty-first-century conflicts, the paradigms of globalization and unification continue to underpin our understanding of the fragmenting global climate.

As Slavoj Žižek writes in *In Defense of Lost Causes* (2008), ‘the dominant discourse today is “Fukuyamaian”’ (421). Žižek suggests that what subsists post-9/11 is a synthesis of Fukuyamaian post-historicism, and a belief in a unified world order, with the presentiment of its collapse. As a result of the accoutrements of globalization (the interdependency of the world economy, the rise of transnational corporations, and the fall of the nation-state) actions and events have the heightened capacity for global resonance: ‘For the first time in history, the act of a single socio-political agent can really alter and even interrupt the global historical process’ (Žižek 421).

This paper will explore the implications of such an ecological theory of the global order in considering the democratization of global disaster. I argue that Žižek’s critique suggests a re-articulation of Fukuyama’s original postulation: a state of utopian democratic participation in so far as all socio-political agents are equally capable of precipitating global disaster, and equally subject to its consequences.

Gabrielle Decamous (Goldsmiths College, University of London, UK), ‘The Future of Nuclear Technologies: Modernity, Art, and Colonialism’
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My paper will consider the future of nuclear technology in our post-modern contexts, its artistic rendering, and the risks inherent to the development of atomic technology into new forms of colonialism. Within the tension emanating from the contradiction between ever growing needs for energy and global warming, nuclear technology appears as a providential science for modernised and modernising countries. However, once technology is defined as limiting – a *Gestell* (enframing) – as Heidegger does, and once the notion of modernity is questioned for its lack of self-analysis and self-criticism, as Bruno Latour points out, then nuclear technology has to be understood as

a strategic source of knowledge to possess, and addressed in terms of power, a colonialist power. My paper therefore aims at stressing the risks of such power.

I will first consider Eisenhower's 'Atom for Peace Campaign' and how it quickly established the duality of the atom: atom for peace and atom for war, and will compare it to current atomic policies and their global implications: the American atomic policies in the Middle East, and the French use of nuclear energy in terms of global marketing strategies targeting eastern countries (with the firm AREVA).

Secondly, I will apprehend nuclear technology through three artistic projects: Yves Klein's letter to Eisenhower concerning the possibility of a blue revolution and blue atomic explosions to help in detecting radioactive waves; James Accord's life-long still unachieved project to sculpt and exhibit radioactive material (James Accord is the only private individual who have been granted a licence to manipulate radioactive material in the U.S.); and *La Diagonale de Tchernobyl* by the French dance company Brut de Béton's (based on the writings of the Byelorussian Sveltana Alexievitch, testifying to the catastrophic consequences on the lives and bodies of nearby Ukrainians).

Lidia Anna De Michelis (Università degli Studi di Milano, Italy), "'It's All About the Outcomes and No One Knows What They'll Be': Risk and Morality in Ian McEwan's *Saturday*"
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This paper aims to map out the fictional space of Ian McEwan's *Saturday* (2005) through the privileged focus of current sociological theories on global risk (Beck, Giddens, Furedi, Mythen, etc.). Relying, mainly, on a cultural studies approach, it highlights the way these theories have been popularised and pervasively circulated across multiple public spheres, giving currency to the so-called 'discourse of risk': one that, echoing Beck's 'clash of risk cultures', also implies ideological and cultural 'bordering'.

Saturday thematises the systemic fear inherent in our way of life as a result of the ever receding boundaries between public and private violence against the backdrop of the London peace demonstration of February 15th, 2003. The Iraq war thread represents, of course, a paradigmatic fictionalization of the issue of risk. Confronted with Tony Blair's massive persuasive deployment of the discourse of risk, McEwan's protagonist, neurosurgeon Henry Perowne, attempts in vain to rationally assess the elusive moral balance and speculative accounting of risk, only to experience, instead, that feeling of utter 'ambivalence' (2005: 141), which Beck describes as systemic to the world risk society.

More broadly, however, *Saturday* is a compelling exploration of the human 'imagining' of risk, staging the myriad ways in which our mind (again in accordance to Beck) interprets life as an unrelenting effort at anticipating imagined futures which can help avert unexpected outcomes and 'manage' threats. Such 'dark imagining' (McEwan 2005: 39), which is intriguingly suggested to be the result of evolution, is represented as *the* defining feature which inscribes the world of social risk within the grander discourse of genetic 'chance' and (possibly) evolutionary self-destruction. As the encroaching of private and public risks, of bordering and intruding progressively maps out a combat field where humanity itself is put to the test, the novel appears in the end to coincide with the cognitive, emotional and creative experience of the artistic imagination, itself understood as the ultimate, bond-creating act of risk-taking.

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Sarah Dillon (University of St Andrews, UK), '(Post)apocalyptic Contemporary Fiction: Maggie Gee's *The Ice People*'
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In an entry on (post)apocalyptic fiction the editors of the *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* note that most writers of (post)apocalyptic fiction are not closely connected to genre sf yet at the same time they argue that such a theme is the most popular of sf, that 'the rusting symbols of a technological past protruding into a more primitive, natural, future landscape are the most potent of sf's icons'. My current research takes off from this paradox – the fact that mainstream texts constitute the body of work on a subject that is also deemed the most significant in sf – and seeks to explain in detail *why* this might be the case and how this is significant for our understanding of contemporary literature in particular and of the literary in general. This paper focuses on the work of the contemporary British writer Maggie Gee. Whilst Gee's first (post)apocalyptic text, *The Burning Book* (1983), responded to the crisis of the nuclear age, *The Ice People* (1998) responds to the threat of global environmental disaster. This paper will address the latter text – an account of human beings struggling to survive in a new twenty-first century ice age – in the context of modern theories of apocalypse (Derrida), cognitive estrangement (Suvin), hope (Bloch) and the future, paying particular attention to the text's self-referential reflections on the role of literature in an age of global risk.

Dmytro Drozdovskyi (National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Ukraine) and **Oksana Prykhodko** (Rivne University of Slavic Sciences of the Kyiv Slavic University, Ukraine), 'Postmodern Literature: Ruined Aesthetics or New Frontiers?'
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For many years it has been like a dogma that nation spirit, embodied in its literature, is what makes literature of this or that culture interesting and specific, as it represents the most important features of the national mentality. Each literature has its canons that represent the most outstanding works. Professor Harold Bloom in *Western Canon* provides a project of a great Canon of the most important works of all times in European culture. But the last period in his Canon is Modernism. What shall we do after?

The canon is the basement of the teaching of literatures. Students should be aware of the best examples of the contemporary literature process. But, in fact, Post-modernistic theories destroy the difference between *good* and *bad* texts, *high* and *low* standards of writing. Anyway, despite this post-modernistic point of view, bad texts still exist. But school teaching should be orientated to prepare *good readers*. And *taste* for good literature is possible only in the result if analyzing good examples of writing.

As for this moment in Ukraine we have a twelve-year-studying school program. That's why the problem of creating a canon of the best works that represent the contemporary period of literature is highly important. Our main tasks in this paper are the next ones: (1) providing criteria for including texts of the contemporary literature period to the canon for school courses; (2) creating small canon (or sub-canon) of the texts that from the aesthetical point of view reflects contemporary literature process, its tendencies and perspectives.

Mauro Dujmovic (University of Juraj Dobrila, Pula, Croatia), 'Dystopian Present vs. Dystopian Future of *1984* and *Brave New World*'
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Aldous Huxley wrote *Brave New World* in 1932 while George Orwell wrote *Nineteen Eighty-Four* between 1945 and 1948. Aldous Huxley and George Orwell's anti-utopian novels share many similar aspects and thanks to their prophecies of the future of society, they are regarded as the dystopian novels par excellence.

The aim of this paper is to consider how the mood of despair about the future of man from the novels matches with the belief in human progress and in man's capacity to create a world of justice and peace. It is an interdisciplinary approach to these two literary texts dealing with the spreading power and ideology of modern technology and the mass media. Huxley and Orwell understood the danger and influence of the mass media over people and marked this event in different ways. In *Brave New World*, the influence of the media over people was so corroding that citizens inadvertently used advertising sentences in their speech. Orwell adopted the 'telescreens' and drew attention to their obsessive presence in every citizen's life in Oceania: there, people were obliged to listen carefully to the instructions coming out from the video.

Many modern inventions have transformed the world and people as well. It is for this reason that both Huxley and Orwell felt scared about the continuous innovation of technology and its effects on human beings. It is our notion that mass media, through advertising as its most vivid expression, may give rise to a form of a new totalitarianism.

Yoshie Endo (Osaka Gakuin University, Japan), 'Major Kusangi's Transcendental Body in *Ghost in the Shell*'
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Donna Haraway's essay 'A Cyborg Manifesto' contends that the cyborg's transgressive combination of the organic and the mechanical will challenge the dichotomy between natural and artificial, promising to free the subject from imposed categories of biology, gender, and race. As the Japanese anime is filled with

mechanized female bodies, both euphorically powerful and objectified, commodified, and victimized, Haraway's theory can be applied to the mechanized bodies in Japanese anime. One such female body is represented by the cyborg heroine Major Kusanagi Motoko in Oshii Mamoru's *Ghost in the Shell (Kokaku kidotai)* (1995). Major Kusanagi, a cyborg agent, works for Section Nine, a security force that constitutes one of several government factions in 2029; she leads her team in the investigation of a network terrorist, the Puppet Master. Although Kusanagi is a strong cyborg heroine, her body and mind belong to the government; she cannot leave Section Nine without surrendering her body and a portion of her memory. One may conclude that it is this split between her physical body and the pure data of her cyborg entity that leads to the destruction of her physical form and unification with the Puppet Master at the end, and that this split reflects the director's hatred of the female body. I, however, propose a different reading of Kusanagi's 'death'. After her body is destroyed, her partner Batou steals off with her brain and transplants it into a new body, leaving Section Nine to assume that she is dead. The destruction of her body becomes a physical transformation that allows her to escape the role as an agent; and her rebirth in the Puppet Master urges her to fulfill her human desires. She challenges the boundary between information, human, and machine; she transcends and at the same time endorses fixed gender roles.

David Feyver (University of Southampton, UK), 'Plastic Fantastic: Technology, Tipping Points, and Crisis of Environment in J.G. Ballard's *Kingdom Come*'
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Within the sense of global risk at the heart of contemporary culture lies a series of anxieties and concerns for the physical and cultural sustainability (and indeed survivability) of the environment. Yet what is thought of as 'the environment', and how that environment's state of being 'natural' or 'sustainable' or 'right' is defined, is unstable.

This paper examines the role of commodified technology as a trajectory for crisis of environment within J G Ballard's *Kingdom Come*. Drawing upon Donald Ihde's modalities of relationship between the human and the technological (1990), the paper examines Ballard's use of contrastingly 'transparent' and 'hermeneutic' technologies in the situation of a localised environment in crisis, and the extent to which this problematises and debates broader cultural assumptions about the relationship between dystopic post-industrial environments and a notionally ideal, or 'natural', environment under threat.

This paper pays particular attention to contemporary notions of the technological and its impact upon and relationship with the environment in the text. Beginning with a short overview of the novel's dual-constructions of technology and environment, the paper then examines the text's deployment of consumerist technology as a force in constructing contemporary notions of environment and sustainability. The paper then discusses the narrative's use of crisis as a means of situating and debating the physical and cultural processes and threats that act upon such environments in the course of the text. It concludes with a consideration of how this reading can provide insights into the broader public understanding of these crises.

Marc Foley (Queen's University, Canada), 'This Most Dangerous Game: Drugs, Risk, and Ontological Void in William Burroughs' *Naked Lunch*'
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This paper concerns itself with bodies-on-drugs, in space – more particularly, in urban space. Examining William Burroughs' brutal novel, *Naked Lunch*, I intend to analyze the intersections between bodies, heroin (or what Burroughs calls 'Junk'), and the urban environment. The addicted body is a spectral or veiled trace of a certain form of urban risk; existing in a state where, with each injection, the body is exposed to the trauma of overdose or the contraction of infection (i.e., HIV, hepatitis), the urban site of addiction is one in which the calculation of risk requires recalibration. This prolonged and exaggerated permeability of the boundary between the live and broken or dead body produces a reconfigured notion of risk which involves, in a sense, a particular form of reward – one that is dialectically articulated within and by the urban 'burrow' itself. In *Naked Lunch*, there is a peculiar yoking of anxiety and pleasure, or *jouissance*, beneath a parabolic risk, which has its impact upon the articulation of subject-object relations and the relationship of the body to paradigms of temporality and space. In this interstice, Burroughs turns to various tropes of supplement (i.e. toxic, mechanical, animal) which, as that which both extends and becomes a substitution for the addicted body, produces a form of 'heterotopia', or lawless zone; this newly articulated relationship to urban environment makes possible alternate constructions of both human and non-human identity.

Charlie Gere (Lancaster University, UK), 'The Incredible Shrinking Human'
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On the Plane Stupid website the first paragraph of the section on 'What causes climate change, and why should we be worried?' reads as follows:

Climate change is bad. Not bad like one of those days when you can't get your hair to stay straight, but bad in a catastrophic, poo-your-pants kind of way. Luckily it's not inevitable, but stopping it means making some fairly major changes to the way we live, work and interact with each other: challenging corporate and political authority, reducing our impact on the environment and improving our communities and relationships with ourselves and other people.

Thus climate change is not just a question of how we use our resources. It is the result of our failure to live properly, an example of Kantian radical evil, of the innate human propensity to do things for the wrong reasons, or in other, more theological words, sin.

Much of the current rhetoric about global warming remains thoroughly theological. It offers a contemporary version of the Judaeo-Christian myth of the Fall, in which Man is punished for the original sin of knowledge and expelled from Eden. Implicit (and sometimes explicit) in such rhetoric of a return to a more simple accommodation and less exploitative relationship with the environment is a longing to return to an edenic state of one with nature.

Without denying the seriousness of climate change such rhetoric is based on a number of problematic binary oppositions, including that between nature and culture and between the human and the technical, as well as on a disavowal of the 'economy of violence' that binds together nature, culture and the technological. Above all it

remains utterly anthropocentric, with man still placed in a position of power, dominance and instrumentality over nature coupled with the desire to return to a situation closer to nature, while remaining in control.

With this in mind I look at Jacques Derrida's reading of the myth of the naming of the animals in Genesis, from 'The Animal That Therefore I Am', which I believe offers a way of thinking about the relation between the human and nature without falling into a state of nostalgia for an impossible edenic state (which is also still one of mastery over nature and animals). Instead Derrida offers us a means of thinking of each animal in its singularity and otherness, and in which 'tout autre est tout autre'.

'The Animal that Therefore I Am' famously starts with Derrida being confronted by his cat while in the shower. In the 1957 film *The Incredible Shrinking Man* the protagonist, Scott Carey, having been exposed to radiation shrinks. As he does so he confronts the otherness of other species, including his pet cat which now towers over him. The film offers an interesting way of thinking about a new relation with nature, with Carey coming to terms with his diminishing size and presence and with the otherness of the creatures with which he is confronted, and with the mutability and contingency of the environment.

Rebecca Giggs (University of Western Australia), 'The Rise of the Edge: Catastrophic Seascape and the Ecological Uncanny'
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We live in an era of ecological uncanniness. The strange and sublime agency of natural disaster manifests as a latent presence in our experience of environments that are not conspicuously catastrophic, as well as those that are. As we look out over the surf breaking and receding, the seductive fantasy of the sea's retreat (all the livery creatures and wrecks left exposed) is accompanied by the distinct apprehension of the return of a tsunami or the permanent flooding of the land by global warming's melt-water. *Here*, we say, standing on the edge of our continents, *in a decade this will all be underwater*.

A sense of the ecological uncanny operating within a broader dialectic of environmental depredation and natural disaster pervades our experience of modern seascape.

Situating its analysis within a milieu beset by the memory of violent environments including Hurricane Katrina, the Great Sumatra-Andaman undersea earthquake and the Asian Tsunami Disaster of 2004, this presentation looks at one manifestation of the ecological uncanny in seascapes and other waterscapes; the aerial perspective.

Using images from Richard Misrach's *On the Beach* series and textual support from Cormac McCarthy's novel *The Road*, the presentation explores the spatial configuration of the ecological uncanny with specific reference to the ocean. Citing the work of Jonathan Bordo and Paul Saint-Amour, the paper discusses how these 'shots from satellite' function to both obfuscate human aberrance in the ecological system by creating a transcendental viewpoint, and at the same time dwarf the subject in a theatre of the catastrophic sublime.

Rebecca M. Gordon (Reed College, USA), 'WALL-E and the Affective Structure of Erasure'
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At the end of the animated film *WALL-E* (2008), the robot hero reconnects romantically with the search probe EVE when WALL-E remembers the 'feeling' of hand-holding. Meanwhile, the twenty-ninth-century humans who have returned to a ravaged Earth after 700 years' absence replant one seedling and dream of sowing 'vegetable plants...and pizza plants!' The final credits of the film feature a brief history of art, including animated cave paintings and agricultural motifs on Greek pottery. In other words, the film ends with a vision of human civilization beginning all over again. Yet the film does not evoke hope for a future humanity; rather, it marks a post-human fate.

Most 'disaster films' or 'post-apocalyptic films' invite identification with 'good' human beings, typically those characters who seek a cause for the planet's afflictions. *WALL-E*, however, assumes we understand the cause of the planet's uninhabitability – human over-consumption. Thus, rather than 'a return to the promised land', the film makes us watch the effects of a 'general disaster' that, as Brian Massumi puts it, 'is woven into the fabric of every-day life' ('Everywhere You Want To Be', 8). The film's lack of interest in pursuing the cause of catastrophe removes the cathartic opportunity either to mourn or celebrate; after all, 'we' no longer exist. Indeed, it even stifles the urge toward 'fear' as an appropriate response; instead the film evokes shame, the shadow-affect to narcissism. In this paper I elaborate on this interpretation of *WALL-E*'s affective structure, and its implications.

Helen Hughes (University of Surrey, UK), 'Viewing Risk from Above, From Below, and From Within: On Hubert Sauper's Documentary Film *Darwin's Nightmare*'
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This paper will discuss the representation of a community in Tanzania in the documentary film *Darwin's Nightmare*. The story of a region is turned into a cautionary tale about the effects of globalisation. The reference to Darwin refers to the predatory Nile perch which, having been artificially introduced into Lake Victoria, is taking over the whole environment and eating its young. The fish are an allegory for the human race.

The film, which makes links between the development of the 'cash crop', the import of arms to Africa via freight airlines, the influx of farmers driven from the land by drought and famine, the rise of prostitution and the spread of HIV and AIDS, provoked a sustained critique from the journalist François Garçon and from Tanzania's president. The filmmaker Hubert Sauper has been accused of a colonialist viewpoint, motivated by commercial reasons, for his negative portrayal of the region. This paper will focus on the cinematography of this controversial film, exploring the ways in which the social, economic, political and ecological issues are made visible. The rhetorical structure, made up of narratives of arrival and departure, of images from above, below and within significant spaces, of interviews, and of observation, will be discussed in terms of the problem of how to communicate the complex network of causes and effects within any particular region. The risks taken by the filmmaker in terms of what can be asserted, implied, or must be left out, will be explored as part of this discussion.

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Penelope Ironstone Catterall (Wilfred Laurier University, Canada), 'Narrating the Coming Pandemic: Avian Influenza, Anticipatory Anxiety, and Neurotic Citizenship' pironsto@wlu.ca

In this paper, I will discuss the relationship between anticipatory anxiety and what Engin Isin has called 'neurotic citizenship' as it pertains to constructions of time, space and subjectivity in examples drawn from popular science publishing on H5N1 and two made-for-TV films that dramatize imagining of a coming influenza pandemic, Richard Pearce's (2006, ABC) *Fatal Contact: Bird Flu in America* and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's docudrama *Black Dawn: The Next Pandemic* which aired in January of 2006. In this analysis, I will illustrate the ways that constructions of time, space, and subjectivity generate anticipatory anxiety and help, along with other imagined risks, to support the production of the neurotic citizen as a hinge for articulations of neoliberal governmentality. Anticipatory anxiety has served to support an idea of risk and uncertainty that entrenches particular neoliberal or late-liberal democratic government-mentalities that produce both affectively and politically loaded responses to the difficult information of pandemic disease. More specifically, analysis of H5N1 in media and popular culture illustrates the ways that affective life has been conjured up in support of various practices and techniques of government and self-government under the auspices of managing a coming pandemic. This research underscores the ways cultural representations of pandemic influenza reflect larger social, economic, and political concerns with risk management and work to reinforce contemporary techniques and practices of governmentality, not the least of which hinges on individualization of responsibility for emergency preparedness.

Alissa G. Karl (State University of New York, Brockport, USA), 'Casino Royale, Financial Markets, and the Fate of National Agency' akarl@brockport.edu

This paper examines how stock short selling in the recent James Bond/007 film *Casino Royale* (2006) articulates and troubles the status of national agency (here, Britain's and by extension that of the U.S.) in the context of contemporary global financial risk. Stock short selling, or the practice of 'buying high' and 'selling low' using borrowed shares, is a risky investment maneuver that seeks profit from an anticipated fall in stock prices. I will discuss how the film's treatment of the short sell initiated by villain Le Chiffre (a far more sophisticated form of risky investment than that of his counterpart in Ian Fleming's novel of the same name) effectively re-works the question of national ideological coherence by rendering the nation-state yet another player in the global financial markets. I pursue a reading of the nation as always acting in the uncertain space between the 'short' and the 'cover' – a climate of irresolvable tenuousness that is reinforced by the film's treatment of sex as an

analogue for the perilous power plays on the markets, and by a narrative trajectory that permanently suspends affirmation of an ideological or political *status quo*. Overall, this paper asks how the figure of the short æll might be extrapolated to generate a pessimistic view of national agency and ideological consistency within a precarious financial system in which anyone can play, or a cynicism that un.masks 'national interest' as a rationale for interventions aimed at profit on the global markets.

Emrah Kavlak (Sabanci University, Turkey), 'Human Avatars in Posthumanity: Using Technology to Reach a Peer-to-Peer Mind Sharing in Immersive Reality'
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The paper will present a possible future vision of a transhumanistic technology through which humans would be able to communicate with each other in space by remotely sharing minds via brain signals. Unlike the avatars in metaverses, where the freedom of control and the level of immersion is limited by the computer interface, this is the vision of a person that would have the chance of experiencing someone else's body and his/her senses in the real world.

This ideal system would provide an environment with shared perception for a unique peer-to-peer immersive reality and mind sharing experience. The motivation for the emergence of such technology could be rooted in the crisis of the body and the planet. This crisis could necessitate the use of the human brain as a transferable and sharable medium. The human brain is already 'installed' in the human body and its capabilities are advanced with a device able to redistribute knowledge and preserve biological information.

Mind sharing technology would allow in a time of crisis the ubiquitous presence of knowledge and create a common media, that of the brain sharing technology, able to ensure a powerful interface between individuals. The user, as a human who uses his / her own body as an interface, would use the body and its senses as a natural interface allowing an exchange of data with no artificial screens, in-between devices or technological interfaces needed.

The paper will conclude by analyzing if the vision of mind sharing is a possible response to crisis or if it represents a form of technological escapism in an era of dystopia.

Adriana Kiczowski Yankelevich (Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Spain), 'Shaping "New Terrorism" from Literature'
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Within the realm of policy and social sciences many authors have tried to give interpretations or explanations of a 'new' kind of terrorism which has emerged since September 11. Literature is not at the margin of social interpretation. Writers are grappling with this terrorism as well as other thinkers do. A huge number of novels have been written featuring 9/11; they are diverse in themes and styles, not to mention literary quality. However, we think it is important to give an idea of the representational shapes of 'Islamic terrorists' drawn by contemporary writers and how those representations seem to have permeated Western public opinion. The World Trade Centre attack – apart from the permanent state of fear, uncertainty, and distrust – produced a direct confrontation with Terror. At the same time, an authentic moral

earthquake removed the more basic pieces of socialisation. Terrorists in the age of globalisation are frequently depicted as external beings; sometimes their values are presented as irreconcilable with ours, or even as non-human values. By contrast, works such as Martin Amis' 'The last days of Muhammad Atta', Don DeLillo's *Falling Man*, or John Updike's *Terrorist: A Novel* – among others – are attempts to submerge themselves into the terrorist mind in search of a more complex model of agency that goes far beyond the model supported by a Huntingtonian bipolar clash of civilisations. Literature is not an innocent eyewitness; it is in the middle of the turmoil of facts.

Jaroslav Kušnir (University of Prešov, Slovakia), 'Messianism, Futurity, and the Parody of Mass Culture in Chuck Palahniuk's *Survivor*'
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The contemporary age of global risk evokes not only uncertainty, but also a disillusion leading to individuals' escape to virtual reality (computers, television), religion or mass culture. All these 'alternative realities' distort people's vision of the world by isolating them from a direct contact with nature and reality. In his *Survivor*, which depicts the Creedish Church, a death cult, and, at the same time, parodies such cults and the popular and celebrity culture of the contemporary period, Chuck Palahniuk points out the manipulative power of popular religious preachers, Messianistic sects and the media. In this novel, he shows how they misuse uncertainty and fear of people for not only ideological and religious, but also, and especially, commercial purposes. My paper will analyze Chuck Palahniuk's use of parody, intertextuality, metafiction and other narrative techniques to point out his depiction of the postmodern sensibility and his critique of mass culture, death, Messianistic cults, and the consumerist nature of contemporary American culture, which misuses religion and media for commercial purposes.

Chung-Hsiung Lai (National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan), 'On Deconstructive Messianism'
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The aim of this paper attempts to answer the very question: In what ways can we effect a reconciliation between Levinas's ethical messianism and Marx's political messianism? I will contend that Derrida's deconstructive (im-patient) messianism can be an excellent nexus to connect Levinas's ethical (patient) messianism to Marx's political (impatient) messianism in the age of globalization. Drawing on the Jewish tradition of prophecy, Marx's work offers the sufferers both a powerful critique of the current age (the early capitalism) and a messianic vision of the ideal community (communism) for which we should strive. However, Derrida argues that Marx grounds his critique of capitalism or his exorcism of the spectral simulacrum in *ontology*: an attempt to ontologize the undesirable and ungraspable spectre of the commodity. Therefore, Marx's critique as a grand narrative (a Hegelian determinism) to pursue social justice is *critical* but *impatient* and *pre-deconstructive*. While Marx's political philosophy promotes an end to history and demands a messianism of impending apocalypse for social justice, Levinas's ethical messianism requires the absolute patience to justice and therefore is specifically Jewish, in that it anticipates

not an otherworldly redemption, but a hope which is always ‘not-yet’ but ‘to-come’. For Levinas, one must be absolutely patient when waiting for the absolute Other to come. Nevertheless, this uncompromising demand to wait for Godot (the Other) who will never come in the reality becomes an unbearable ‘absurdity’ to the sufferers. Accordingly, one may argue that it is everyday politics which reveals the Achilles’ heel of Levinas’s absolute-patient messianism. Accordingly, in this paper, I will contend that Derrida’s spectral (im-patient) messianism attempts to demonstrate, with recourse to both Levinasian ethics and Marxist politics, the im-possibility of moving from the ethical relation to political without a return to ontology.

Richard Letteri (Furman University, USA), ‘Heideggerian Homelessness in the Films of Wang Xiaoshuai’
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As one of the leading voices of China’s Sixth Generation of filmmakers, Wang Xiaoshuai brings to the screen a vision of contemporary urban China mired in the struggle of cultural traditions, social identities, and political economies brought by China’s opening to capitalism and globalization. This struggle played itself out in a variety of ways in Wang’s films beginning with artists who search for identity and meaning through art but find neither, to the plight of migrant workers looking to survive in their new alien urban environs, to his latest investigations of the social-psychological consequences of China’s sentimental attachments to the familial in the era of economic modernization. Regardless of each film’s setting or story, this paper will argue that what remains consistent throughout Wang’s films is the exploration of a feeling of estrangement from ourselves, others, and the world characteristic of modernity that is represented by Martin Heidegger’s notion of ‘homelessness’. Concentrating on *So Close to Paradise* (1998), *Drifters* (2003), and *Shanghai Dreams* (2005), the paper will show how each film explores different elements of Heidegger’s philosophical sense of homelessness while the lack of speech characteristic of the protagonists of each film similarly reflects that ‘silence’ which Heidegger contends is the only proper response to the modern condition. The paper will further show how this silence also reflects the psychological-cultural catatonia that results from the schizophrenic freedoms engendered by late capitalism as defined by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari.

Hannah Lippiatt (Cardiff University, UK), ‘Disaster Movies and the Media Framing of 9/11’
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Throughout the twentieth century, disaster movie cycles responded to fashionable anxieties: exploring the anguish of the First World War in biblical and Roman epics; reflecting world-wide fear of the development of nuclear power in the monster movies of the 1950s; responding to tension between classes and races and an increasing awareness of global responsibilities in the ‘Golden Age’ of the 1970s; and accelerating concern about the environment whilst building pre-Millennial angst in the 1990s. The spectacular nature of disaster movies, which are often categorised by cosmetic thrill-seeking and ever more dramatic special effects, raised obvious parallels with the attacks on New York on 9/11.

My paper examines the impact of 9/11 on film, focussing on how film-makers have represented 9/11 and the influence that the event had on the disaster movie genre. Numerous theorists, newscasters, and bystanders compared our witnessing of 9/11 to our experience of disaster movies, so why hasn't the event been successfully translated into a box-office busting movie? How have film-makers representing 9/11 been limited by the media framing of the event as an aesthetic 'brand'? And how has this brand been translated into popular culture through the next generation of disaster movies?

I hope to demonstrate the reciprocal relationship between 9/11 and disaster movies: how media coverage of 9/11 relied upon Hollywood tropes, and how subsequent disaster movies have been informed by 9/11. Referring to films such as *Cloverfield* and *Knowing*, I examine how the aesthetics and narrative of current disaster movies reflect current cultural anxieties triggered by 9/11.

Liani Lochner (University of York, UK), 'A Tale of Two Indias: Debt and the Myth of the Free Market in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*'
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Set in India – the poster boy for the past two decades of globalization – Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* has been hailed as a 'blistering critique of an economic system that can only be described as grotesque'. As Madeleine Bunting writes in *The Guardian*, globalization has resulted in 'an elite surfing on the tide of consumerism and cheap credit ... entirely dislocated from the majority of the country' living in 'abject poverty entrenched across swaths of rural and slum-city India'. The novel tells the tale of a country bifurcated by the Darkness and the Light – inhabited by Men with Big Bellies and Men with Small Bellies. In contrast to the scientific rationalism of neoliberal economic policies, *The White Tiger* is a narrative of social dissolution and misery in the context of free market fundamentalism. The labour market flexibility demanded by the IMF in developing countries has eroded the collective structures, including the nation-state, which could act as a buffer against a brutal regime of capitalist exploitation of labour power. The social costs of the relentless accumulation of wealth – including environmental degradation, class exploitation, and social oppression – seem to be paid for exclusively by the world's poor who live in a constant fear of violence, poverty, and unemployment. I will argue that while this puts into operation a generational debt-slavery perpetuated by so-called Third World debt, it also suggests an inverse of the debtor-creditor relationship. As Margaret Atwood argues regarding mankind's exploitation of natural resources, 'Every debt comes with a date on which payment is due'. *The White Tiger* illustrates that the social violence visited upon the poor by the inequalities inherent in capital's global expansion is paid for in turn by the spectre of insecurity and disaster that haunts their debtors.

Nic Lowrey (La Trobe University, Australia), 'Dystopic Pop: How to Alert and Alarm Your Target Market: Trent Reznor's *Year Zero* Album'
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Trent Reznor is the musician/producer responsible for the prolific art/music project Nine Inch Nails (or NIN). 2007 saw the release of his conceptually focussed *Year Zero* album – however this was just the culmination of a pre-release marketing

strategy/art project. For the prior six months the dystopic world in which *Year Zero* is set was slowly framed by Reznor through the creation of websites, fora, stencils, sound and film files disseminated through the internet. The construct of Planet Earth, Year Zero elicited a fragmentary engagement: investigation steered the reader from a website describing a sinister alien presence to a recorded piece of telephone surveillance describing an unseen menace which then linked to a static site resembling a web forum detailing missing dissidents. Some creative content – specifically sound (album excerpts) and ‘Illegal’ concert footage was centred around Reznor who styled his fictional analogue as a political outsider artist and his fans as lawbreakers.

Reznor’s apocalyptic vision was realised through a nexus of web technology, popular music and its attendant marketing, and outsider art in a manner unique to our zeitgeist: where marketing a pop project electronically becomes a powerful proliferation of an art project discussing global risk and dystopic futures in an environment which transcends the marketed music itself. This paper details the dystopia Reznor created and the unique way in which he utilised electronic communication platforms to encourage fans and listeners to consider their own responses to the global age of risk.

Nicky Marsh (University of Southampton, UK), ‘The Corporation of Terror: Rhetoric and Risk in Financial Fictions’
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The suspicion that al-Qaeda had profited from the stock market turmoil that followed the attacks on New York and Washington of September 2001 led George W. Bush to ‘put the financial world on notice’ and announce the sweeping terms of a ‘financial war on terrorism’. The administration’s concerted attack on the ‘underground’ financial economy depended upon a language of systemic risk that made connections between the dangers of high finance and those of terror: this was a language that critics have subsequently suggested constructed this new ‘Empire’s borders as it enables a calculative, technological and depoliticised operation of processes of inclusion and exclusion’.

In this paper I want to examine how contemporary fiction has found ways of disrupting the Manichean vocabulary for risk that was mobilised so dramatically in the closing months of 2001. I do this in two ways. Firstly, I want to point to a tradition of the novel that has long been concerned with destabilising the clear moral distinctions between financiers and terrorists. Novels such as Don DeLillo’s *Players*, James Patterson’s *Black Market*, and Peter Van Greenaway’s *Take the War to Washington* each culminate in a terrorist attack on Wall Street that appears to eerily predict the events of 2001. In very different ways these novels use this sensationalist plot as part of their critique of the militarised and self-sustainingly heroic languages of high finance. In the second half of the paper I want to contrast these novels against Kate Jennings’ novel *Moral Hazard*, which was written in the immediate aftermath of September 11th 2001. The sensationalism of these earlier novels, in which the literal destruction of Wall Street serves to cleanse America of the corrupting effects of the money economy, appears to be no longer available to the popular novelist. The careful parallels that Jennings draws between traders and terrorists, her implicit querying of the continuing sanctity of the money economy, relies, instead, on a discourse of absence and forgetfulness: in this novel dementia replaces military violence as a metaphor for a corrupt economy. My conclusion explores whether this

absence corresponds to the failure of political language, Ulrich Beck's 'explosion of silence', that has been perceived as one damaging legacy of 9/11.

Jodie Matthews (University of Huddersfield, UK) "A Symbol of Triumph on the Top of an Empty Hill": Nationhood After the Catastrophe in Fiction for Young Adults'

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In post-apocalyptic fiction for young adults, such as Louise Lawrence's *Children of the Dust* (1985) or Julie Bertagna's *Exodus* (2002), teenaged heroes may be called on to preserve the values of a culture now destroyed, or to refashion a semblance of society from the ashes. Using Sarah Dillon's description of a 'structural guarantee of a postcataclysmic continuence' in novels, this paper asks what it is that the adult writers of the texts under examination think their protagonists should be working towards. In particular, is a sense of Britishness something that can and should be preserved after a cataclysmic event? To what or whom are the young heroes expected to have an affinity? Is the political nation state partly or wholly to blame for the catastrophe? Finally, do the British nuclear fictions of the 1980s differ from more recent visions of environmental dystopia in the view of nationhood they present? The works are read not just as narratives in their own right, but as explicit cultural investments in an uncertain future. The paper discusses what is at stake in a text promoting itself in this manner, but also explores the other ways in which the novels might be read.

Erica Moore (Cardiff University, UK), 'Human-Manufactured Crises and Posthuman Responses in Don DeLillo's *White Noise*'

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Don DeLillo's *White Noise* is a text that explores the potential implications of a global catastrophe as well as the effects this might render on the human, and, as the possibility of large-scale disaster is made apparent, so too, is the potential for a crisis in humanism made manifest. The text invokes the peril posed by an integrated, interdependent system that, through its numerous and complex relationships, threatens systemic collapse. The human characters are unable to escape the human-constructed systems under which they reside, and, with the arrival of a crisis of conceivably global proportions, it is made apparent that the human is also held accountable for imminent structural disintegration. The characters' responses to the fallibility of humanity often consist of attempts to transcend the human by deferring to the 'technological' possibilities offered by society. Yet the potential opportunities that technology offers are practically counteracted by the threat of total collapse that the technological system comprises. A method of analysing this paradox is provided, in part, by theories of the posthuman, which re-endow technology, and the society it produces, with an alternative future. At times, DeLillo's characters attempt to exceed the traditional boundaries and definitions of humanism by re-conceptualizing 'the human' itself, a process that, according to N. Katherine Hayles and Scott Bukatman, in their respective theories of 'the posthuman' and 'terminal identity', involves the construction of a 'new subjectivity'. Importantly, however, this new subjectivity tends to rely upon a system that might, according to the scepticism contained within DeLillo's texts, engender its own destruction. *White Noise* thus seems to construct a

binary opposition between the possibility of integrated technologies causing human demise on the one hand, and the opportunity they might offer for a new form of human life and consciousness on the other. The protagonist of *White Noise* epitomizes the hesitancy with which the liberal humanist subject is approaching the potential future. The text exists as a pertinent cultural representation, and can play an important role in the dialogue concerning the response of literature to the unprecedented possibility of a human-constructed global crisis.

Misako Okuyama, 'Autobiographies of Culturally Diverse Women Artists'
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Using some of my research data, I will discuss how it is important for children to learn their cultural values and beliefs, and aesthetics in everyday life. Autobiography was used in this research to recall significant emotional and aesthetic experiences that influenced present circumstances. Autobiographies of six culturally diverse female artists show how their cultural and artistic identities were constructed in informal settings such as at the home environment, community centres, and general media coverage. However, informal education has been neglected by researchers and educators. Children learn a lot of things from their lives outside of school and this needs to be addressed. With regard to a discourse of identity politics, it is important to further research emphasising personal experiences in which the 'truth' of individual cultural values and beliefs is cultivated to reconstruct theories of diverse cultures towards real multicultural societies in the future.

Goldie Osuri (Macquarie University, Australia), 'A Risky Biopolitics of the Soul: Risk-Management and Religio-Cultural Identity'
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A post-9/11 approach to multiculturalism appears to stem from the perception of religion, Islam in particular, as a risk which needs to be managed. It is this assumption that appears to have propelled the Australian government under the previous liberal government to initiate a study into Australia's religious 'diversity', making the link between religion, multiculturalism, and the notion of 'safeguarding Australia'. The study, *Religion, Cultural Diversity, and Safeguarding Australia*, assumes that religion is a key factor in the context of possible future conflicts in a 'globalising world' and needs to be risk-managed by governmentally sanctioned initiatives at local and national levels.

This paper examines the alignment of risk-management, 'multiculturalism', and nation-state security discourses through a number of questions. What is foreclosed in the act of designating conflicts as purely religious? Are nation-states any safer from transnational movements of politico-religious movements through a risk-management approach? What are the outcomes of state recognition of religious identity? Do these forms of recognition reinforce essentialist constructions of both religious and cultural identities? The problematic issue may not be about the recognition of religion as such, but the outcomes of the manner of recognition in specific contexts. How do state-based initiatives engage in a biopolitics of the soul, as Foucault, would put it? In such a context, is there a need to highlight the transformative elements of cultural and religious identities? If so, how can we

retheorise the association between risk and the categories of culture and religion? Could the discourse of risk be oriented towards questions of social justice rather than a management of religio-cultural diversity?

Mike Pankrast (San Jose State University, USA), 'Everyday Aesthetics and September 11, 2001'
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In this paper, I explore different ways in which the aesthetics of September 11, 2001 have been interpreted, grounding my discussion as a response to a paper written by Emmanouil Aretoulakis. I explore the response of artists Damien Hirst and Karlheinz Stockhausen to the aesthetics of September 11 and how their interpretations may or may not be used to generate authentic moral evaluations of the tragedy. I proceed by contrasting Aretoulakis's Kantian analysis of the 'Beauty' of September 11 and a Contextualist's analysis. I argue for a Contextualist theory of everyday aesthetic experience, showing in what ways one's 'situatedness' and 'knowledge' affects everyday aesthetic appreciation, and how ethical evaluations influence such an appreciation. Artists such as Hirst and Stockhausen offer unique ethical and aesthetic evaluations because of their particular situatedness – their 'seeing' through the 'artist's lense'. Whereas Aretoulakis argues that such artists correctly distinguish a pure aesthetic evaluation of the event, and are thereby in a better position to generate a disinterested and authentic moral evaluation, I argue that such disinterestedness is impossible, and their aesthetic evaluation is rather intricately mixed with the unique experiences that come through their particular integration in the art community. Thus, they come from a different situatedness than people integrated in other communities. Such situatedness affects both aesthetic and moral evaluations, because the two are interrelated. I make the argument that we can learn a lot about terrorist events from looking at the reactions individuals in different communities have, because they offer unique moral and aesthetic evaluations, but that we should give up the Kantian hope that such evaluations can attain any degree of disinterestedness.

John Parker and **Hilary Stanworth** (Swansea University, UK), 'The Form of the "Ordinary" Art-Life, Global Risks, and Art for Sustainable Living: A View from Below'

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Taking a critical realist approach to voluntary risk-taking, we discuss 'ordinary' visual artists' attitudes to risks associated with the art-life, their perception of global risks, and concern with art's potential to mitigate them.

Ongoing investigation of 'ordinary' artists' strategies and identities in a local visual arts scene does not suggest any necessary affinity between taking the alleged risks of the art-life, preoccupation with global risks, and doing art in ways which offer effective purchase on the latter. Our presentation will analyse the outcome of focus-groups and interviews specifically set up to obtain artists' views on global risks and how their art practice relates to them. How do they 'frame the earth' (Grosz)?

Surveys of exhibition themes, degree shows, personal web pages etc. already suggest that if their work thematises global risks it tends to use personal and local

frames. Our existing ethnographic field-work and interviews show that establishing and leading the art-life involves coming to terms with the emotional pressures of roles and institutions, which, in the post-modern context, give primacy to self-reference, competitive individualism, and local specialist solidarities. We discuss the implications of such frames for effective response to global risks. What can reasonably be expected of artists, as contributors to developing new forms of sustainable collective identities and powers of agency? If achieving sustainable living requires art practice to build the necessary emotional intelligence to live differently, does the 'art-life' itself need remodelling?

James Peacock (Keele University, UK), 'The Avoidance of Risk: Disappointment and Distraction in Keith Gessen's *All the Sad Young Literary Men*'
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Gessen's debut novel is not a 'post-9/11' text in the manner of *Falling Man* or *Terrorist*. It is not concerned, explicitly, with the aftermath of the attacks. Like many 'post-9/11' texts, however, it asks questions about the ability of writers to tackle big issues – tragedy, violence, history. The three main characters – Sam, Mark and Keith – are Ivy League-educated writers with an extensive knowledge of history, but have disengaged from history precisely because they live in books. For example, Sam believed it took 'courage' to eschew conventional jobs on leaving college and devote his life to 'the great Zionist novel'. He comes to realise that it wasn't courageous at all, and ends up in Palestine looking for real danger in the form of Israeli tanks.

This paper explores the ways in which Gessen ironically makes writing the opposite of risk in an increasingly risky world. For these disappointed young men it becomes, along with Google searches and internet pornography, a form of distraction, in the conventional sense and in the senses Margaret Morse employs in 'An Ontology of Everyday Distraction'. It becomes a derealized 'non-space' between experience and representation, where discourse (life lived) and story (narration of that life) coalesce and paralyse the writer, who finds himself unable to take risks or effect real change. The tendency for Sam, Mark, and Keith to allegorise their romantic relationships in terms of historical events shows how history gets segmented and privatised. Gessen poses a problem, exacerbated by the segmentation and immediacy of global media culture: writing has a responsibility to address historic events contemporaneously but increasingly, in competition with the visual image, only has power or purpose when viewed retrospectively as part of an earlier structure of feeling. So does historical distance forever rob writing of riskiness?

Gerald L. Phillips (Towson University, USA), 'Glimmerings of Utopia: Improvisatory Music, Alcoholics Anonymous, Punk Rock, and Adorno's "Distinctness without Domination"'
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Theodor Adorno's concept of distinctness without domination encourages hope for a range of possible reconciliations in human experience, regarding which, much of his thinking might otherwise seem to despair. This discussion will summarize central implications of this idea as it is articulated in his seminal paper, 'Subject and Object'. This summary will provide the framework for a brief examination of the more

perspicuously related characteristics of improvisatory music, alcoholics anonymous, and punk rock that this author believes provide hope that Adorno's utopian vision might be expanded and sustained through an evolving symbiosis of the characteristics thus outlined.

Each of these three phenomena exhibit autonomous behaviors and functions. Improvisatory music, now a world-wide phenomenon, is music that is not composed, practiced in advance, or preset in any manner, but performed 'on the spot' by performers who may never have previously met. The performances are thus unique and impossible to reproduce as commodities (unless recorded – which is often not done). A central tenet of AA is that it remain forever without political or economic connections to the world. Punk rock has been notoriously jealous of its economic and artistic autonomy with regard to the music industry and to popular culture in general. A symbiosis of the various means by which these phenomena manage to retain a significant degree of socio/cultural/economic autonomy will be briefly outlined in the conclusion.

Karen Pinkus (University of Southern California, USA), 'The Risk of Sustainability'
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I am interested in thinking through the terms 'risk' and 'sustainability'. These two terms seem incompatible. Sustainability would seem to mitigate risks associated with climate change, or at the very least, it is a desirable goal. Yet when we really think through these terms in relation to a number of examples from literature, architecture, and land art, we may find that risk is heightened just at the moment of 'sustain', of the note that rings out indefinitely, of non-change. In political terms, I am offering a critique of a certain approach to climate change that might be defined as 'practical', market-based and yet sincere and in some sense irrefutable. There where we posit a reduction of risk through local efforts at greening does risk threaten us the most.

Rainer Prohaska (Artist, Austria), 'KRFTWRK: Global Human Electricity'
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'KRFTWRK' = German word Kraftwerk ('power plant')

'KRFTWRK' is a social-political statement and an ironic comment on current problems like production and waste of electricity in industrial states, and overweight and lack of fitness of its population.

The target of 'KRFTWRK' is to create a consciousness towards these topics with artistic measures. The project consists of an artistic part in real space, a part happening in both spaces (virtual and real), and a virtual part. The most important parts are the staging of the virtual company, the internet-based simulation of a global electricity network, and the realization of usable fitness tools producing power.

The project is situated in the fields of architecture, installation, net art, and fine art.

The official ambition of the company 'KRFTWRK' is the planning and realization of a new generation of industrial plants, which gain electric energy by

muscle-power and chemical processes of human bodies. For example, fitness tools operate generators and depict usable sculptures at the same time. Additionally a community will be formed, which communicates and carries the content of the project.

Artistic targets and measures:

The appearance of 'KRFTWRK' on the internet:

On the internet 'KRFTWRK' will be staged as a 'reliable' and 'global acting' company.

The website is online since December 2006; it will be extended until summer 2009.

The internet-based simulation of a global electricity network:

To test the global possibilities of 'KRFTWRK', there is the chance to simulate a virtual connection to an electricity network, and there to the combined power supply, on the website.

After an anonymous registration on the 'KRFTWRK' website the participant can run a virtual human power plant. Per every 'work unit' on a home trainer or in a fitness studio, the participant informs the central coordination system on the 'KRFTWRK' website, about the length and intensity of the training units. In the end the total amount of energy gained by the worldwide operating 'KRFTWRK'-community can centrally be recorded and evaluated.

This application is under construction at the moment.

Usable sculptures:

A central artistic part of 'KRFTWRK' in real space is the conception and production of usable power-producing sculptures, which consist of adapted or specially developed fitness tools with connected generators.

- Oversized hamster wheels for a couple of people at one time (with 5 meters diameter)
- Bike-fitness tools which provide work-out space for 20 people.

The oversized hamster wheel was finished in April 2007.

Kirsty Robertson (University of Western Ontario, Canada), 'Changing Climates: Art, Oil, and the Environment'

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This paper takes the premise of this conference about the response of artists to the prospect and reality of global crisis, and turns it on its head, using a case study to ask what questions need to be asked when the arts are used in order to manage risk for wary populations. 'Changing Climates' takes as its example an image battle over the economic potential of natural resources versus attempts to protect the environment in Canada. Landscape imagery – tracts of empty boreal forest, pristine lakes, and craggy shields of rock – have long been used to strengthen a view of Canada as a nation defined by its wilderness. But the landscape of Canada popular in Group of Seven paintings and tourism brochures is also the lynchpin of the forestry, oil, and mining industries, and at the centre of growing concerns over bulk water exports. Natural resources have come to be seen as a sort of buffer between a suffering manufacturing economy and a growing 'immaterial' networked knowledge economy based on the development of creative industries. But the passage from material to immaterial is one

crossed with conflict. The Canadian federal government has withdrawn its support of the Kyoto Accord, Encana gaslines in Northern British Columbia are being bombed, and Native activist (and grandmother) Harriet Nahanee has died in prison where she was being held for her role in protests against the logging of Eagle Ridge Bluff for the pre-2010-Olympic expansion of the Sea-to-Sky Highway from Vancouver to Whistler. The debates over economic growth, environmental protection, and climate change are fraught with discord. And yet, in Canadian representation at recent international exhibitions on climate change and environmental degradation, one would be hard-pressed to find even a hint of the vehemence or ferocity of recent protests elsewhere. Rather, art, even that by supposedly 'environmental' artists, serves a double purpose of showcasing the seemingly unspoiled wilderness of Canada, while also highlighting the potential of those lands for resource extraction and foreign investment. By examining the repeated choice of parochial wildlife painter, inveterate capitalist, and strong environmentalist Robert Bateman as the Canadian representative at a number of international contemporary art exhibitions concerned with halting climate change, drawing attention to water rights and targeting the global destruction of old growth forest, I here investigate the way that art is used as a cultural broker to diffuse any tension in overlapping notions of Canada as part of a growing global hyper-capitalist economy and of Canada as a nation apparently defined by its wilderness. Painted into the art of Bateman, I suggest, is the potential of a future Canadian economy in a world starved for resources. This paper investigates government positions on the environment (particularly as manifested through the [abandoned] Kyoto Accord and the role of Canadian oil in global conflict), before turning to international action on climate change, and the potential for cultural production therein.

David Roden (Open University, UK), 'The Limits of Posthuman Justice'
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John Rawls argued that alternate principles of justice regulating the institutions of society could be assessed by imagining how their selection would go in an idealised Original Position (OP) in which a 'veil of ignorance' precludes morally arbitrary choices. Importantly, the veil in the OP is not complete since its deliberators are required to know about the variability of human talents and the 'primary goods' people need to realise their goals. Rawls claimed that these constraints favour a liberal distributive scheme, maximising the position of the worst off.

However, the use of transhuman enhancement technologies could fragment the universe of primary goods, rendering a Rawlsian model of constrained rational choice inapplicable to the problem of social fairness. This paper will explore this possibility, using as its model the posthuman divarication depicted in the acclaimed series *Battlestar Galactica*. In *BSG* the descendents of humanity's robotic slaves, the Cylons, have become immortal posthumans, abandoning social institutions in favour of the kind of reliable post-scarcity technologies dreamed of by modern transhumanists. Yet the world of *BSG* is a dystopian one in which genocide, torture and calculated sexual violence are visited by humans and posthumans on one another. I will show why Rawlsian principles wouldn't work for a hybrid human-posthuman society of the kind depicted in *BSG* and consider what this has to tell us about the prospects for justice in our own posthuman future.

Sónia M. Pedro Sebastião (Universidade Técnica de Lisboa, Portugal), 'Urban Legends and New Media: Postmodern and Technological Changes in Traditional Stories'

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In this paper the investigator will demonstrate how legends and rumours are shared more rapidly and intensively thanks to the expansion and acceleration of media and telecommunications networks, namely, the Internet and entertainment products such as TV series and movies, using an enquiry methodology. The study was handled in Portugal, with university students.

Legends are stories originally spread orally with a cultural and social admonition (Campion-Vincent, V.; Renard, J.B.: 1998). It happened to someone's friend back in his/her homeland. So everyone heard about someone who becomes a legend. With technological and urban development, this legend came to cities and suburbia and turns out to be used as a source of fear and control. Fast Food with insects, cockroaches, rat pieces, and sick chickens are rumours used to restrain fast food consumption. 'Ghost in the road' attempts to deter driving under alcohol or drug effects or late in the night. 'Babysitter' and 'the man upstairs threatening the children' encourage people to take good care of children otherwise something bad may happen to them. Those are only some of the examples relating urban legends with postmodern values and habits. In an era deprived of moral values (Bauman, Z.: 1998), we need to find other means to enforce individual and social control.

On the other hand, while these legends used to be orally spread, nowadays the Internet is used as the main platform to spread and even originate some urban legends, such as: multinational companies paying for forwardable e-mails; virus threats transmitted by e-mail; solidarity chain mails and superstitious and magic mails.

Jana Speth (University of Cologne, Germany), 'Wizard Terrorism: Politics of Fear in J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* Novels'

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J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* novels provide a magic mirror showing us without mercy the threats and fears predominant in a world which seems to be gathering momentum as one ethical line after the other is crossed. Already much effort has been made in the critical appreciation of *Harry Potter* to trace back a lot of characteristics of Lord Voldemort and his followers to Hitler and his position within the Nazi regime. However the mirror that Rowling holds up for us shows before all and with an impressive up-to-dateness and comprehension precisely those fears which we became more and more confronted with within the last sixty years, as the age of terrorism began to unfold. The reader, who had to see the fuming wrecks of the Manhattan Twin Towers when J.K. Rowling was only halfway through writing her sevenfold series, can relate to the threatening atmosphere of terror intensifying more and more in the final three books. While he does not encounter a perfect effigy of our world, he is still confronted with a variety of allusions to differently structured types of terrorist groups and forms of government, and learns in what targeted a way fear is used as a means to rule within every system of power. Foucault once said that what might be called a society's *threshold of modernity* has been reached when the life of the species as well as that of the individual is wagered on its own political strategies. Indeed it is this idea of human beings serving as living weapons which forms the underlying

concept of some of Rowling's more explicit displays of horror. Harry as her main protagonist lives through a time where he is possessed by fanatical and murderous thoughts, desperately searching for the ultimate weapon supposedly hidden in the buildings belonging to the travesty of a government, until he finds out that he himself, manipulated by evil forces and fulfilled by both fear and the desire to assume power by fighting and killing, forms as *homo homini lupus* the true weapon. The potential consequences of the fanaticism existing on both sides of the terrorist war raging in the real as well as in Rowling's fantastical world provide a basis for the different parties employing politics of fear of which *Harry Potter* generates a new understanding. The experience of fear by the reader is more complex than usual in this case. In following the events in the novel, the reader undergoes a remarkable variant of the *transsituational transfer of fear*, the first source of fear being a fictional literary one, while the second one is placed in his real world of experience. The oscillation between literary empathy and real-world empathy provides for a very intense reading of the text, as the affective brain areas respond doubly to both the imagined and real tension, a psychological phenomenon explained by fMRI studies in 2007. Living in an age where terrorism as a new form of warfare aims to affect entire populations well beyond the scope of physical destruction, the reader can relate to the loss of security Harry and his friends experience as they fear for their lives and those of their loved ones. It is not only the news of the cars, tanks, and even trains exploding on a regular basis as the result of terror attacks in various countries, it is also the knowledge that more than 200 different pathogens including exotic agents such as plague, anthrax and tularaemia are carefully stored in countless thousands of biological laboratories in secret places all over the world or the ever present threat of a nuclear attack that frightens us. Terrorism has found its way into our lives through the recommendations for yearly vaccinations, through TV pictures of potential terrorists getting arrested in a city not that far from our own, or the suitcase bomb found in the tramway we use every day, or even the obligatory security checks at the airports. The *Dark Mark* as the wizard symbol of terrorism is hovering over our lives, too. Rowling explicitly connects this conjuration to terrorism:

You-Know-Who and his followers sent the Dark Mark into the air whenever they killed [...] *The terror it inspired... you have no idea [...]* Just picture coming home, and finding the dark mark hovering over your house, and knowing what you're about to find inside [...] *Everyone's worst fear... the very worst... (Goblet of Fire, 127).*

The reception of the stories about the dangers and fears in the mirror-inverted wizard world is further intensified by the fact that the *Harry Potter* novels were published successively in the age of increasing terrorism, the principle of actualism playing a remarkable role as we are constantly getting confronted with the ever growing existential fears on both sides of the magic mirror.

Robin Stoate (Newcastle University, UK), 'Grey Goo and You: Fictions of Ecophagy and the Permeable Subject'
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In his 1986 book *Engines of Creation*, nanotechnology pioneer Eric Drexler coined a name for a catastrophic potential phenomenon that was beginning to appear in science

fiction. The 'grey goo' scenario describes a situation in which microscopic, self-replicating technologies – intended for any number of beneficial reasons from medical aid to experimental science – spontaneously start to evolve and multiply beyond control, literally consuming their environment and turning it into a homogenous organic slop that eventually spreads to absorb and incorporate all matter on/in the planet.

This process, described as 'ecophagy' by Robert Freitas (2000), appears in a number of science fiction texts. Greg Bear's novel *Blood Music* (1985) is the most widely-cited example of this phenomenon; the novel describes a near-future world in which molecular 'bio-computers' consume and transform the world into a vast, formless stratum of matter. It is also, though, a concern that has attracted wider attention – futurists such as Raymond Kurzweil (2000) and mainstream media organs such as the *New York Times* (2003) have published pieces on the need to contain the potentially global threat of nanotechnology through a 'responsible' employment and development of the idea. Similarly, in 2004 Prince Charles responded to the notion in a way that did not name grey goo directly, but which urged deep concerns about the need for a careful handling of nanotechnology.

It is not unreasonable to expect the grotesque possibilities of this scenario to be played upon for the purposes of fictional horror, or indeed to be warned against in a more general sense. However, what can be uncovered in discussions of the grey goo scenario – fictional, critical, and otherwise – is a wider concern about the dissolution or absorption of the liberal humanist subject. The 'permeability' of the self that is seen in grey goo scenarios – that is, the non-death or the unwilling absorption of the mind-self into its body and the seep into the bodies of 'others' – is a reiteration of a pattern of rejection of potential subjective configurations that challenge the problematic Cartesian mind/body dualism. A posthuman or indeed 'gooey' approach to the of 'distribution' of the subject across bodies – which could, for N. Katherine Hayles (1999), open up the possibility of breaking down the logic of identity on which many prejudices are based – is marked as grotesque and fundamentally inhuman by the caricaturing effect of grey goo narratives.

In other words, it appears that the normative effects of grey goo narratives are often to constantly reaffirm the strict humanist understanding of the unified subject, to armour the consequent subject/object binary relationship between the human and the world-ecology, and to ratify a persistent and harmful remapping of that binary onto groups such as women who are already marginalised by a perceived bodily permeability or 'leakiness' (Grosz 1994, Shildrick 1997, Shail and Howie, 2005).

Examining the science fiction of Greg Bear, Wil McCarthy (1998), and Michael Crichton (2003); along with writings of Raymond Kurzweil and other self-described transhumanists of the 'Lifeboat foundation', this paper interrogates the extent to which narratives of grey goo mark potential alternative visions of embodied subjectivity as, at best, undesirable – and at worst, nightmarish.

Justin Sully (McMaster University, Canada), 'Reviewing the Population Bomb: Seventies Science Fiction Film and Global Population Crisis'
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In 1968, Paul R. Ehrlich published *The Population Bomb*, provoking a world already awash with disaster narratives to focus their attention on a new figure of catastrophe: global over-population. The effect of this projection of a new narrative of global crisis

was nowhere more keenly registered than in the cinema of the 1970s, and above all in the science fiction films of the time. My paper returns to this moment in the collective, filmic imaginary and attempts to outline what I read as a crucial document of the development of discourses of global risk, crisis, and growth during the latter part of the twentieth century. My argument proceeds through an examination of films such as *Soylent Green*, *Logan's Run*, and *ZPG*. Read alongside the political-economic turmoil of the mid-1970s, these films capture both the structural contradictions and discordant desires of a nascent mode of globalized capitalist accumulation as well as an early, ambivalent moment in the emergence of projections of global crisis as a privileged instrument of containment in late capitalist culture. Returning to this period in popular cinema forces us to ask how these representations of collective worry about the future *population* growth intersect with the emergent consensus by the end of the decade vis-à-vis *economic* growth. Part of a larger project that examines the way cultural theory addresses itself to late capitalist demographic anxieties, this paper closes with some preliminary remarks about how we might begin to untangle today's discourses of demographic crisis and mounting fears about global population aging.

Timothy J. Sutton (Auburn University, USA), 'Refining Fire: Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* and the Post-Apocalyptic Genre'
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This essay will discuss how Cormac McCarthy's 'post-apocalyptic' novel *The Road* attempts to reclaim the significance of the genre in C/catholic terms in the wake of the worldwide success of the *Left Behind* series. McCarthy's narrative serves as a metaphor for the human condition after ecological and subsequent financial collapse. A brief introduction to this essay will emphasize the origin of the word apocalypse, which is derived from the Greek term describing the unveiling of the bride at a wedding ceremony. The post-apocalyptic genre does not typically depict a catastrophe that unmask society on some level and helps better define what is beautiful and true and worthy of sacrifice.

In *The Road*, the narrator and his young son traverse a desolate landscape after an ecological event has almost entirely clouded out the sun. Because the boy was born at the commencement of the disaster, he has never experienced the joys of the world that has been lost. Unlike his father, whose primary objective is mere survival and who mistrusts others on the road, the boy believes his mission is to help others. The boy's sense of duty is more pure and inclusionary than that of his father for the very reason that he is not clinging to a past that has no chance of being reclaimed. Ultimately, I will argue that the novel is a successful example of a post-apocalyptic (and implicitly religious) text that emphasizes the simple moral that survival after social collapse is dependent upon humankind's willingness to serve each other rather than attempt to prove and preserve one's own salvation.

Ulrike Tancke (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Germany), 'Misplaced Anxieties: Violence and Trauma in Ian McEwan's *Saturday*'
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Ian McEwan's *Saturday* (2005) is usually read as the author's timely commentary on the state of a post-9/11 world that fears the incalculable risks of new and daunting

geopolitical and ideological constellations and is traumatised by the possibility of large-scale physical destruction.

Saturday recounts the events of a single day in the life of London neurosurgeon Henry Perowne. While the novel is clearly situated in the wake of the global 'War on Terror' and in the build-up to the Iraq war, it is an incident immediately reminiscent of the 9/11 scenario – a burning plane descending for emergency landing at Heathrow Airport – that crystallises its alleged concern with the portrayal of a society gripped by post-9/11 anxieties. As the burning plane proves to have been a mere accident, the protagonist's involvement in a minor car crash with a young man and the resulting violent confrontation suggest that the novel's real focus lies elsewhere.

As Henry discovers his own capacity for brutality, our attention is drawn to the random eruption of violence into everyday lives, the destructive nature of coincidence, and the uncontrollability of human actions and the human psyche. Critically and self-consciously exploring the contemporary fascination with trauma, *Saturday* uses 9/11 as a red herring: while it deliberately evokes the familiar, easily recognisable images of 9/11 and plays with our fascination with the horrific, the novel unmasks the seductively simplistic nature of such immediate associations and assumed collectivities, which deceptively conceal the unpredictably traumatising potentials of everyday violence and guilt. In so doing, *Saturday* reminds us where the real threat lies: a culture obsessively preoccupied with global, large-scale risks all too easily loses sight of the everyday, seemingly banal manifestations of violence and the individual human predisposition to inflict hurt on others.

Steve Tasson (York University, Canada), 'Why the Law Must Bear (False) Witness'
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In a recent work Kurasawa (2007) argues that there are several types of social 'work' we must recognize and take up in order to deal effectively with past, present, and future failures of human rights around the globe. One such practice – the practice of 'Bearing Witness' – informs and expands broader strategies of prevention and intervention and, importantly, is explicitly theorized as an alternative to strategies employing the dominant language of risk, risk assessment, risk management, etc.

On the contrary the 'labour of bearing witness' does not serve to merely produce an archive or evidence as such, but aims instead to: render 'public' past and ongoing injustices, to evoke identification and empathy between the 'audience' and those who suffer, to sponsor reflexive processes of representation and interpretation, and to inaugurate a kind of collective remembrance to guard against the 'oblivion' of forgetting (Arendt, 1968).

Drawing on this formulation of 'bearing witness', on Ricoeur's 'work of memory' (2000), and on Douzinas's work on the relationship between law and aesthetics (1994, 1999), I attempt to sketch out the relationship between this labour of bearing witness and our understanding about the capacities and limits of law in such projects.

As my title suggests, I argue that while law must respond and perhaps anticipate human rights failures, traditional law cannot help but bear a kind of 'false witness' in the face of these abuses. Certainly this does not mean nor condone the easy way out: wholly abandoning law as a mode of remembrance or as a strategy of prevention. Rather, investigating these liminal spaces should prompt us to first,

rethink the relationship between the ‘work of law’ and the ‘work of justice’. And secondly, engender a recognition of law’s role in the production and regulation of the visual field and so law’s existing and ongoing presence in the acts and practices of bearing witness.

Matthew Tiessen (University of Alberta, Canada), ‘Becoming Imperceptibly Creative: Anonymous Mobility and the New Politics of Transnational Surveillance’
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The neoliberal ‘landscape of events’ unfolding in urban centres globally presents the mobile consumer-citizen with a post 9/11 paradox: Can prosperity and protection coexist in large urban centres? Can profit be generated while risks are prevented? Put differently, the consumer-citizen is compelled to reconcile two seemingly divergent neoliberal imperatives: to innovate, be creative, and prosper while existing anonymously and securely while passing through the shadowy safety of the electronic and surveilled ether. These apparently paradoxical demands represent what I’d suggest is the new-normal neoliberal ‘security and prosperity’ partnership, one that requires, at once, knowledge-driven creative industriousness to co-exist alongside and within an increasingly pervasive web of surveillance, social sorting, and behaviour-predicting algorithms.

In this paper I map the contours of this emergent terrain, first by considering the seductive narrative of the ‘creative economy’, whose most celebrated booster is Dr Richard Florida, and second by revealing how developing security technologies increasingly take aim at urban dwellers and city spaces in an attempt to reduce risks and predict problems using adaptive algorithms and ever-growing archives of digital data. My suggestion is that this creeping network of surveillance technologies demands that consumer/citizens become, as Deleuze once suggested, imperceptible and anonymous in a bid to assure their safety and ‘freedom’; that is, emergent systems of state surveillance require that we become invisible in order to pass undetected across the networked ‘security’ systems sweeping across the digitized landscape in search of statistical anomalies, abnormal behaviour, and threats to neoliberal security.

I am attempting, then, to reveal how these paradoxical features of the neoliberal program are, in fact, mutually reinforcing, inscribing upon urban consumers a prescribed mode of being ‘creative’ and mobile that allows the engine of capital to continue to cater to our deep-seated affective desires while residing – resolutely – within a landscape premised upon what is described within military doctrine as ‘full spectrum dominance’ and ‘situational awareness’, the goal being a technoscape with predictive capacities able to engage in preemptive threat-interception within what has become the most dreaded theatre of war for conventional and contemporary military practitioners – the world’s teeming cities.

Dale Tracy (Queen’s University, Canada), ‘Impossible Necessities: Erotic Imaginings and the Armenian Landscape in Peter Balakian’s “The Oriental Rug”’
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Peter Balakian engages with a historical situation whose risk has already been realized as enacted danger. Translating fulfilled risk into representations of pain, Balakian’s speaker accepts a new danger in his close connection with an afflicted other, offering

his own suffering within an interactive relation of commemoration. Lacking an experiential link to the Armenian genocide and distanced from his grandparents' pain, Balakian constructs a poetic connection to his inherited memory in which the speaker's erotic relationship with the Armenian landscape enables him to respond to its pleasure; nature here not only memorializes the pain of others, but articulates a message of how one might open oneself to that pain through the actual contested land over which the pain was originally inflicted. This emplacement of pain creates a meeting ground which mediates between the physical hurt of one body and response in another. Though the land's pleasure and pain is important in the poem in its relation to human pain, the represented land is the key to engaging with this suffering; the speaker's connection to the land at the level of physical existence is fertile, resulting in a dynamic monument through which impossible necessities might be imagined.

Nicholas Tresilian and **Glenn Davidson** (Artists, UK), 'Scaling Risk in the Visual Arts'

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The presentation examines: (A) the micro-environment of professional risk within which visual artists nowadays operate, (B) the macro-environment of global risk which this conference recognises, and (C) *the gap between* – or how to scale art upwards from the micro to engage effectively with the macro. Nicholas Tresilian was for ten years a board member of the *Artist Placement Group (APG)* and author inter alia of a theory of Self-Organizing Artist Networks (SOANs) – with APG itself an archetypal first-generation SOAN. Glenn Davison is a co-founder of *Artstation*, a second-generation SOAN with a distinguished multi-disciplinary track-record of engaging the public in art as process. The presentation includes a demonstration of *Avatar.Map*, a scalable figure capable of engagement with a mapped environment across a range of magnitudes from macro to micro scale. It concludes with the 3-minute film *Closely Observed Waterfalls*, offering a more naturalistic approach to evolutionary metaphor.

Sessa Valentina (Birkbeck College, University of London, UK), 'The Aesthetic Beauty of the Artificial: When Prosthetic Bodies Become an Art Expression of Empowering Design Technologies'

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Technology is so predominant in the construction and visions of future modern worlds that the cyborg has become an expression of a technological invasion of the body for its preservation. The oxymoron of a technological transformation of the body for its preservation is reflected in the concept of hyper technology as the only viable escape from the consequences of a human and planetary crisis.

In the artistic practice of *Stelarc*, the cyborg is a posthuman technological entity adapted to live and survive in a new space determined by recurrent planetary crises. The human body becomes a site where technology as prosthetics may absolve both the aesthetic as well as functional goals. The merging of technological aesthetics and human body, particularly in the work of *Stelarc*, appears to realize the Futurists' vision of a new world inhabited by a machine and human hybrid.

Based on interviews with patients of the Limb Fitting Centre at the Charing Cross Hospital in London, who really live the condition of having a prosthesis implanted in their body, the paper will investigate the perception of prosthetics as physical reconstruction of the body and aesthetic enactments of Stelarc's and the Futurists' aesthetic vision.

The paper will conclude by discussing whether the possibility of a future 'merger between human and mechanical', as carried out by Stelarc in his aesthetic vision, can only be considered an unconventional and unachievable flimsy or if it is a phenomenon that can already be observed in action to overcome the current crises of the body.

Andries Visagie (University of South Africa), 'Global Capitalism and a Dystopian South Africa: *Trencherman* by Eben Venter and *Moxyland* by Lauren Beukes'
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Shortly before the start of the global financial crisis in 2008, two novels appeared about a future South Africa at the mercy of internal political decay coupled with the effects of global capitalism. In this paper, I argue that Eben Venter's *Trencherman* (2008, first published in Afrikaans as *Horrelpoot* in 2006) and Lauren Beukes' *Moxyland* (2008) are contemporary expressions of the particular dystopian strain introduced to post-apartheid South African writing by J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* in 1999. Responding to socio-economic realities in contemporary South Africa, Beukes and Venter imagine a future which is less marked by racial tension than by the growing divide between rich and poor. In his re-writing of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* as *Trencherman*, Eben Venter transforms the trope of two contrasting spaces in utopian/dystopian literature to an all-encompassing dystopian view of a ravaged South Africa on the one hand, and, on the other hand, an equally dystopian view of Australia as a space characterised by vacuous consumerism. *Trencherman* is Venter's response to the growing immigration of mainly white South Africans to Australia and other more prosperous regions of the world. In her representation of Cape Town as a corporate dystopia in *Moxyland*, Lauren Beukes explores the limits of political activism and the function of the arts in a wholly corporatised world. In the novel, the state, serving the interests of the globalised corporate elite, fosters activist interventions as a means to pre-empt any future actions that may endanger the position of the 'corporates' in their technologically advanced compounds that are set apart from the surrounding urban decay. Finally, this paper offers a reflection on Raffaella Baccolini's contention (2003) that utopian thinking has been co-opted and devalued by capitalism in contemporary culture.

Molly Wallace (Queen's University, Canada), 'No Apocalypse, Not Yet: Nuclear Criticism in an Age of Global Risk'
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In January of 2007, the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* officially moved its doomsday clock from seven to five minutes to midnight, reminding us that we continue to live under the shadow of the atomic bomb. But this new world of risk, what the *Bulletin* calls a 'second nuclear age', is characterized less by a single overarching threat and more by the multiplication of risks, a fact that the *Bulletin*

acknowledges by adding global warming to its calculations. In the 'second nuclear age', then, the term 'nuclear' operates as a synecdoche for global environmental risk more generally, what sociologist Ulrich Beck has called 'world risk society'.

This paper takes the occasion of the 'second nuclear age' as an opportunity to return to 'nuclear criticism', a subfield of literary studies that, given the end of the Cold War and the multiplication of environmental hazards, has largely been superseded by ecocriticism. This shift has been theoretical as well as thematic, for, while nuclear criticism often took poststructuralism as its *modus operandi*, ecocriticism has, at least until fairly recently, seen the focus on the textual as inimical to its politics. Though there have been attempts to articulate ecocriticism and poststructuralism together, few have remarked on the potential environmentalism of poststructuralism's nuclear turn. An experiment in rapprochement, this paper puts Derrida's seminal 'No Apocalypse, Not Now' in conversation with Beck's accounts of 'global risk' and Lawrence Buell's analyses of 'toxic discourse', proposing 'risk criticism' as an umbrella practice for the absolutely material and, as Derrida said of the nuclear, 'fabulously textual' threats of the second nuclear age.

Chad Weidner (Roosevelt Academy, the Netherlands), 'Antennae of Television to the Meaningless Sky: The Ruinous City and the Toxic Human'
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Since the 1970s, postmodern studies into William Burroughs, his cut-up narrative strategy, his views of subjectivity and the human body have been exhaustive. In the age of environmental disorder, though, the postmodern view is somewhat limiting. As Dana Phillips points out in *The Truth of Ecology*, 'The postmodern idea about nature is that nature is largely irrelevant to today's culture' (24). William Burroughs gradually moved towards an ecological consciousness late in his writing career. The stirrings of this subconscious shift began early, in his apocalyptic writing. The construction of *Naked Lunch* is atypical in that it recycles and duplicates imagery, which creates an overall organic consistency to the piece. An ecocritical examination of the lurid descriptions and catastrophic events described in the piece can bring added understanding to the text. What ecological meaning can be drawn from the ruinous landscape of the novel? Is the setting of the novel a metaphor for a contemporary, dirty culture in which spiritual, economic, and moral contamination has crept into all corners of society? Furthermore, can the addict be seen as bereft of free will, and ultimately as a symbol of modern toxic man? *Naked Lunch* can be read as a premonition from the future, as a narrative describing the end result of technological encroachment, media control, and ceaseless governmental power. This paper presentation will explore a core twentieth-century American text from a fresh theoretical perspective.

Alexa Weik (University of Fribourg, Switzerland), "'Your Planet?'" Emotional Engagement and Perceived Risk in Environmental Disaster Movies'
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Disaster films tend to reflect their audience's most pressing fears, and lately, the genre has been picking up on the discourse of human-caused environmental change and degradation. Roland Emmerich's *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004), and Scott

Derrickson's *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (2008) are two recent examples of films which present their fictional disasters as direct consequences of human environmental recklessness. While *The Day After Tomorrow* offers a highly melodramatic and exaggerated fictionalization of the abrupt climate change scenario, *The Day the Earth Stood Still* imagines an extraterrestrial penalization of humanity for its crimes against planet Earth.

Drawing on environmental risk theory as developed by sociologist Ulrich Beck and literary critic Ursula Heise, I will show in my paper how both of these films shrewdly play on their audience's fears and apprehensions regarding global environmental change to engage them emotionally. The exploitation of the audience's perceived risk is immensely profitable for the filmmakers (*Day After Tomorrow*: \$542,771,772; *Day the Earth Stood Still*: \$224,492,000), but the success of these films also shows how much people are interested in narratives about their possible environmental destinies. If we understand emotions with Martha Nussbaum as 'a kind of cognition', then it is likely that the emotional engagement that people experience while watching these films influences their thoughts about environmental risk in a way that rational arguments cannot. It is for this reason that *The Day After Tomorrow* has been cautiously praised by a number of climatologists, despite the movie's many scientific inaccuracies. Perceived risk and emotional engagement, I argue in my paper, are key to changing environmental attitudes and behaviors, and fictional representations of environmental risk scenarios thus have the potential to convey important knowledge to a wide audience. 'Your planet?' asks the alien Klaatu provocatively in *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. It is a question that stays with us long after we have left the theater.

Munazza Yaqoob (International Islamic University, Pakistan), 'Human Perversion and Polluted Space: An Ecocritical Reading of *Moth Smoke* by Mohsin Hamid'
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This paper presents an ecocritical reading of the novel *Moth Smoke* and examines the pernicious influence of pollution on the human psyche. It attempts to explain that a poisonous, unhealthy environment blots human reasoning and corrupts human emotions. The novel is set in Lahore – a city which is polluted by vehicle and air conditioning exhaust, heat, dust, and smoke. Studies show that the inhabitants of this city inhale air containing an average of suspended particulate matters which is 6.4 times higher than World Health Organization guidelines. This current analysis highlights that the inhabitants of this polluted city are suffering from obsession with money, luxury, sex, and drugs. The novel sets a parallel between the polluted environment and polluted human psyches. It is a story of deception and dishonesty, greed and corruption, drug addiction and lust. Elite or working class, police or Government officials, drivers or bankers, old or young, men or women, all inhale polluted hot air, vehicle emissions, and smoke and exhale their polluted psyches in their social roles and responsibilities. The novel does not speak for nature but it foregrounds air pollution and heat which have put nature in danger. The references to dead grass in Darashikoh's lawn which does not come to life even after torrents of monsoon, the grimy sky which hides the light of the stars, the smoke and stench of burning rubbish which clings to Darashikoh's body and mind contribute to our understanding of the interaction between the polluted environment and polluted society. We are made to realize that the cause of Darashikoh's fall is not the morally

corrupt and economically unbalanced society. In reality as the hovering images of heat dust, smoke, and stench suggest it is the devastating effect of polluted environment.