

## Appropriation of Symbols and Recursive Consumption

The appropriation of images and symbols for the purposes of recursive critique is something that has been a wide spread for a myriad of purposes and causes. One of the most key factors with the appropriation of images and symbols is the context they are placed in to make their critique. At the same the chance for recursive consumption of the appropriated altered image or symbol is a possibility. However, upon realizing the critical nature of the hijacked image or symbol will often result in the attempt to disarm the embedded critique.

Context is key to the effective appropriation of images and symbols for the means of critique. An image maybe placed back within its original context or placed in some other context that maybe divorced or very disconnected from its original context. The Yes Men have thrived upon using official contexts of corporate entities, where they display information and present information to the public. The Yes Men have made extensive usage of creating websites that mirror their corporate targets' websites in design, aesthetics, and language as well as having similar web addresses. In this case the Yes Men inhabit the same context and space, that being the Internet, and thrive off of the potential to be discovered by mistake or in parallel and to be perceived as a sanctioned entity of said organization. This then allows them to inject their own critique or viewpoints of the organization, that are validated by their context and the appropriations of imagery that is a component of the identity of their targets.

In many ways some of the work from, conceptual artist John Baldessari, function in a similar way, in which being placed within the context of the sanctioned gallery system and art market has been able to give a critique of it and art practice itself. Baldessari's series of paintings that was comprised of text taken from how-to art guides and art publications, places phrases, passages, and terms used by the art world to quantify value, discuss art, and to be successful at making profitable work. "Tips For Artists Who Want To Sell" is a piece that is comprised of text on canvas displaying text that set out specific guidelines for what art to make in order to profit. One of the sections of text offers this advice, "Subjects That Sell Well: Madonna and child, landscapes, flower paintings, still lifes (free of morbid props...dead birds, etc.), nudes, marine pictures, abstracts and surrealism." Another piece from the same series by Baldessari is "Terms Most Useful In Describing Creative Works Of Art" that contains the title and a list of words to be used in art discourse. These works having been displayed in art world contexts as well as being painted on canvas, the traditional medium for art, allow it to actively critique and engage it, especially so when placed in group shows with other work since it can be seen as actively critiquing everything within its context.

Removing an image from its original context can be effective in calling attention to issues that surround symbols or images that are being currently ignored or passively engaged in their original context as well as illustrating the relations and relationships that are pertinent to a larger context. An animated short that I completed in 2006, "Death, Destruction and the Weather Coming Up

Next,” involved the appropriation of television news footage of the Afghanistan and second Iraq Wars and placed them in suburban landscapes. This was done by making sequences of images from the appropriated footage that were then placed into the context of posters. The film was comprised of photography of these posters within these spaces. However, the installation of the posters within the suburban landscapes also functioned as a series of temporary installations that directly addressed the inhabitants with a physical manifestation of the news and in this case the current campaigns that comprise the War on Terrorism. The scale and number of posters ranging from fifty to over a hundred at any given time forced attention upon them along with the imagery they were comprised of that in turn forced the viewers to become very aware of the original context for the images as well as the relationship between their current context and those images and their relationship to the images and their original context.

On March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2007, I participated in an anti-war protest in Los Angeles, California, with a group of students from the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) and the newly formed Los Angeles chapter of Artists Against the War. A ten person contingent of the group wore plain clothes and black hoods that looked similar in fashion to those used to cover the heads of detainees from the current “War on Terrorism.” These hoods were created by Audrey Chan, a current CalArts graduate student, and were worn during the course of the march. The group walked in silence and was primarily clustered together and at times marched in a horizontal line throughout the route.

The visual image of the hood is not necessarily something new in regards for usage within the context of protest and is often accompanied with an orange jump suit that creates in even more complete simulation of the attire worn by detainees. The hood originates from the detainee yet the image that the public has of hooded individuals is derived from the media and for most people is limited to that context. However, by making use of this image and placing it within the public and domestic context of the United States it creates a physical manifestation of what is depicted in the news media that is confrontational, with not only the association of the detainee but also the recent scandals over detainee abuse. The usage of hoods within public protest though has in some ways become a normal occurrence and in some ways maybe seen as now being a new context with which this image is scene liken to the peace symbol. The incomplete simulation created by the plain clothes individual wearing a hood though is something different in the fact that it is creating a hybrid image of both the detainee, the hood, and the everyday, plain clothes. This context appears to be incongruent and paradoxical, yet within that paradox is the other critique. This other critique is that of the suppression of voices of the domestic population and the loss of civil liberties in post September 11<sup>th</sup> U.S. society. Through this seemingly paradoxical context is embedded this further critique.

Consumption of appropriated and potentially altered images may be seen to have enough resemblance to the original or real in order to precipitate their consumption at face value or in reality error. Creating imagery and symbols that are near simulation of the original that may as a byproduct seem completely

indistinguishable from the original or the real, is a particularly effective tactic when placed within the contexts in which the original source of the images or symbols typically preside or engage in. The Yes Men have a long track record of using these tactics in order to be consumed by the media, which for them is their primary medium or theater of operations. This consumptive nature of the media can in many ways be tied to narcissism. The BBC interview on December 3, 2004, with “Jude Finisterra” of The Yes Men on the Bhopal Union Carbide disaster, is an interesting case of the media being interested in itself and its own identity. The BBC had been one of the primary news outlets to cover the Bhopal Union Carbide disaster and has sustained the interest Bhopal since 1984. Therefore on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bhopal disaster, the BBC would have to report upon this subject in order maintain consistency with their own self-image. This then leads to the coincidence of the BBC stumbling upon The Yes Men’s fictitious website [dowethics.com](http://dowethics.com) which they believed to be genuine due to the various parallels of images and symbols that The Yes Men had appropriated and in turn offered as part of the sanctioned space within which Dow Chemical presides within, that being the Internet. The interview with “Jude Finisterra” resulted in the injection of misinformation or false statements of Dow Chemical taking responsibility for the Bhopal disaster as well as providing compensation to the victims.

Another aspect of appropriating images however is placing them in inconsistent contexts or contexts that contain paradoxes. The familiarity with the images or symbols panders to the sensibilities of those who are potential

consumers and hence facilitate this consumption. Yet careful analysis would reveal that there is other embedded information due to the relationships between the disparate contexts.

The march that I participated in on March 17<sup>th</sup> resulted in a large response by the media in the form of a continuous stream of press photographers and videographers following us throughout the route as well as an interview by staff reporter, Charles Proctor, of the Los Angeles Times. I was singled out by Proctor to be interviewed. He was firstly interested in the hoods themselves and the meaning behind them. However, upon me responding to questions about my background, he was shocked in some ways for me being a current New York University student finding myself in Los Angeles for an anti-war march. I responded that the march was dealing with an issue that I am very much invested in, especially so with friends and family of mine serving or having served within the current wars in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as the issues of human rights and civil liberties. This then interested him further in the fact that I myself come from a family with an extensive military background, with one uncle who has currently served in special operations in Panama, the Gulf War, Afghanistan, and two tours in the current Iraq War. As well as the views on the current Iraq war that my friends who have served or are currently serving, hold. He went on to ask me about the effectiveness of protest and the probability that it will create a dramatic shift in policy. I replied that I did not believe that marching today would result in the withdrawal from Iraq or a drastic change in foreign policy. Marching instead is more of a mobilization of the base in order to form a large

enough mass or voice in order to cause change within the future rather than short-term change. As well as attempting to activate my current generation that in many ways has remained, from my own personal experience, cynical and apathetic to thoughts about change within the government or U.S. policy and their ability to cause change. In the end the symbol of the hood that has primarily lived within the context of the media for the U.S. population was what lured the media to engage our group and in turn allow myself to present our critique that was embodied by the hood and my own views on the current U.S. engagements and the effectiveness of protest.

At the end of the march, Audrey Chan and myself opted to remain hooded and attend the rally. Mock coffins draped with American flags had been made and carried by members of Veterans Against the War and had been placed in the street. We decided to stand amongst these coffins, which resulted in a flurry of more photographers and videographers attempting to capture the images of the hoods and the coffins. Both of these images are well known images that have been produced time and time again by the media or in the case of the coffins within the current war have been unable to due to the backlash and prohibition by the government. In many ways this is not dissimilar to the silencing of the detainees and the vacuum that is created by the prohibition of contact with the outside world, due process, or even formal organizations such as Amnesty International and the Red Cross that would normally report on the conditions of detainees. Just as the detainee has been silenced so has the media and with this juxtaposition it places two entities that are being censored within the same

context and thus allowing the media to present an image that contains this relationship that is inherently self-reflexive. The media is able to consume both images that they are familiar reporting upon as well as being able to exercise their own desires to be free to take images of the prohibited. In this way it is a very self-satisfying image to be able to consume and it was readily consumed for the constant duration of approximately a half hour.

There is a third activity that Audrey and myself engaged in prior to the start of the march and during the march and this was the recreation of known artworks while wearing these hoods as well as my own poses with various forms of law enforcement and touristic poses with known places within the Hollywood and Vine areas. These poses were photographed and have been distributed on the web by us and the students and artists that comprised our group. One of the artworks we recreated was the Magritte painting “The Lovers” from 1928 that shows a man and a woman who are wearing hoods embracing one another. René Magritte’s work is highly identifiable and in the case of “The Lovers” it is striking due to the literal manifestation of love being blind by placing hoods upon the individuals embracing. In a similar manner the image of the hood is highly identifiable in the United States and is synonymous with detainees. By merging readily identifiable images from the current with an art historical context it is able to create a hybrid image that can address and be consumed by a larger audience and in turn make social critique of the current by appropriating not only the imagery from an art historical context but the message within in the work. Therefore, the recreation of this painting by Magritte within the context of an anti-

war protest, while wearing plain clothes and hoods would make the comment of the blinded and suppressed population of the United States.

Posing with elements of law enforcement both by myself and with some members of the group created an interesting visual clash. Many of my poses with the police had a sensibility of belonging to their ranks with them remaining very passive and disengaged from the events they were there to watch. The group poses with law enforcement primarily mirrored their formations. Both of these sets of poses place the image of suppression, being the hood, with the sanctioned enforcer that often participates in the role of suppression. In most instances the stances and image of law enforcement were relatively passive and in many ways representative of the banality of following orders and protocol. This can be extrapolated to the relation of the hoods and the abuses of detainees such as in the Abu Garib detention facility that involved soldiers carrying out actions that are highly reprehensible under the grounds of following orders. This also would bring up Hannah Arendt's concept of "the banality of evil." Therefore the complacency and lack of critical engagement by the forces that wield official power are susceptible to engaging in horrendous acts due to these deficiencies. With the tourist style poses that I created within the Hollywood area while wearing my hood, they once again point to the everyday and the current status of the domestic population and the relationship to the state. With civil liberties, privacy, and freedom of speech being curtailed by the current climate and U.S. policy.

After the event was completed images of our hooded contingent began to circulate and propagate the Internet. We engaged in some of this propagation via blogs, emails, and images being uploaded to the Internet. The Los Angeles Times posted an article on their website by that evening about the protest. The article was fairly long and had a pro protestor leaning even though it also discussed the smaller contingent of anti-protestors' pro war sentiments. I myself was included in the article and had three paragraphs covering my background, and two quotations from the interview I had with Charles Proctor. The article was also mirrored verbatim on some of the organizations' websites, including local station Channel 5 KTLA, that are owned by the Tribune Company, who is the parent company of the Los Angeles Times. Images taken by Reuters photographers also were posted to indymedia.org's article on the protest.

For the temporary poster installations for "Death, Destruction and the Weather Coming Up Next," the primary consumers were indeed the citizens of the community who are also the prime consumers of the original news images. They were placed there in order generate discourse or thought both on the images within the posters but also to pose the question of the relationship between them and their neighborhoods. Some people remained passive yet a surprisingly large portion of them directly addressed me with the question of either why they were there or what was it. Upon beginning to explain they quickly recognized the relationships with the various iterations of recontextualizing the news with the aspects of manufacturing news as well as their own passivity in engaging news. Many of them pointed out the familiarity of

the video images within the posters. On one occasion an individual actually attempted to take posters. He simply stated that he wanted one in this instance, yet this raises the issue of the lack of reality within news media and in some ways the poster itself being tangible, physical, and intervening within his space fulfills some nostalgia for the real and the need for connection with news events.

In many ways all of these examples contain certain aspects of narcissism on the part of the consumers of the appropriated images and symbols that reflect upon their own self-image, interests, or knowledge. The BBC's image has a relation with the Bhopal disaster therefore it is readily apt to consume information that reflects itself. The Los Angeles Times and photographers and videographers, including those of Reuters, were apt to consume the images of the hood that has been produced and reproduced time and time again by news media. Citizens that are familiar with news images consume posters that include news images. All of these images and symbols that have been appropriated are apt to be consumed by their original contexts, in many cases being the media, due to the fact that it continues to fuel their own apparatus of news reporting. Conversely, people with knowledge or familiarity with the appropriated content also consumes these images and symbols, due to the fact that it reinforces and or adds to their own knowledge bases. Therefore, this recursive consumption can be seen as an attempt to self perpetuate, reinforce, or reproduce their own ideologies and apparatuses.

The media relies upon events and happenings that can be quantified and commoditized into news. News is the lifeline of the media and it must maintain a

steady stream of news in order to function as well as remain pertinent. In this manner some of the most useful news is news that has the potential to generate more news, an unraveling or developing story or a story that may take a long period of time to reach a conclusion. This can justify continuous coverage and analysis to the nth degree that may actually never contain anything new or relevant but since it has been deemed an incomplete event it therefore is infinitely relevant. Therefore anything that reflects news or images and symbols that the media creates or presents is useful to them in order to make further news. This mirror effect of news mirroring news and the consumption of events to mirror events that are reporting upon is narcissistic and in turn can result in the consumption of appropriated and altered images and symbols that are critiquing those very images and symbols that the media is interested in.

This blind narcissistic consumption can therefore cause a crisis of identity within the consumer. Liken to the idea of the buffer overflow exploit where excess data is supplied in order to cause programs to begin to write to memory that is outside their bounds that may result in crashes, erratic behavior, the injection of malicious instructions, or incorrect operation. Post consumption of appropriated and modified images and symbols that resemble or simulate reality may be reassessed and therefore determined to contain other information or aspects that are not congruent with their original counterparts that the consumer believed them to be. This is not dissimilar from the proposition of a simulated bank robbery by Baudrillard, in his "Simulacra and Simulations.

“Go and organize a fake hold up. Be sure to check that your weapons are harmless, and take the most trustworthy hostage, so that no life is in danger (otherwise you risk committing an offence). Demand ransom, and arrange it so that the operation creates the greatest commotion possible. In brief, stay close to the ‘truth’, so as to test the reaction of the apparatus to a perfect simulation.”<sup>1</sup>

Therefore this simulation of the original or aspects of the original causes a questioning or cross checking of these simulated images with the identity of the real and in turn call into question the response to the simulated. In this way it creates a crisis of identity within the consumer since it now realizes that the images and symbols it has now consumed are not the real or if they were not mistaken as the real they contain the virus of critique within them.

The crisis of the identity of the consumer having consumed a simulation has particularly dangerous ramifications for the consumer since it may have many outcomes that point back to its own self rather than the content it is attempting to consume and reintroduce as its own. Therefore in this way the deceptive simulation or the appropriated image that has been injected with critique of the image or the image and its context is far more dangerous than the critique being posed directly to the consumer. As Baudrillard stated, “Simulation is infinitely more dangerous since it always suggests, over and above its object, that law and order themselves might really be nothing more than a simulation.”<sup>2</sup> In this case it is more dangerous to the consumer since it questions the very

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to cited work #1

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identity of the consumer and the origins and contexts of the images and symbols that have been appropriated.

In the case of the Los Angeles Times, it is a complicated story, since its own identity has been problematized since its acquisition by the Chicago based media company Tribune Company in 2000. Since the acquisition the Los Angeles Times has seen two publishers and two editors leave. The first editor to leave was John Carroll who during his time with the Los Angeles Times unrolled job cuts as ordered by the Tribune in order to increase profits. Profits did increase however the Tribune Company was still unsatisfied and John Carroll left in 2005. Dean Baquet, Carroll's successor was ousted in 2006, after not making further job cuts. Andrés Martínez, the Op-Ed editor, fired two members of the opinion editorial staff and installed a new group of columnist that was seen to be an attempt to suppress liberal writers and liberal viewpoints in late 2005. Another incident in 2007, linked publisher David Hiller with bringing on former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to be a guest editor for the Opinion section of the Los Angeles Times. David Hiller and Rumsfeld have had a known friendship for many years along with Rumsfeld having served on the Tribune's board of directors for a substantial period of time and has been seen as a conflict of interest. All in all since the acquisition by the Tribune Company, the Los Angeles Times has been dealing with a forced shift to a more conservative point of view by its parent company.

Therefore an article that was created with a pro anti-war stance would obviously conflict with the current climate, trends, and identity of the Los Angeles

Times. Likewise with the BBC's realization of its error with conducting an interview with a member of The Yes Men and Baldessari's artwork being displayed in the art gallery context and group shows along other artwork. All of these situations contain elements of a crisis of identity that has been caused by the consumption of appropriated images and symbols that seemed sanitary or genuine.

In order to rectify this crisis the consumer must take action against the appropriated images, symbols, or simulations. Since after closer analysis the items that were consumed did not uphold the principles that define their Identities. Action must be taken, however in some instances it maybe too late, since the consumer may have already disseminated the consumed items. A number of strategies or courses of actions may move into play to sanitize and rectify the situation and in turn realign the image and identity of the consumer.

One course of action is actually taking control of the consumed item and integrating it within the system it is critiquing. This is often seen in the corporate world where, companies buyout competition or the outlets that are criticizing them. This effectively silences and disarms the appropriated critical images, symbols, and simulations that pose a clear and present danger to their existence or to exposition of their underlying motives or inner workings. At times a reconfiguration of identity may need to be under taken in order to maintain a unified image and keep the reflection of itself looking like itself. This is extremely prevalent in politics where political candidates exercise the ability to continually redefine their identities, positions, and views in accordance to what is expedient,

while still maintaining a guise of continuity. By assuming formal control or a simple reconfiguration of identity it may allow the integration of the anomalies that threaten the institution.

An example of this phenomenon maybe seen in the consumption of John Baldessari's work by the art market. Despite his critical positions of the art market, art critique, and art practices, specifically abstract expressionism, he has found himself a part of that very system he critiques and therefore in some ways has been disarmed. However, he still exercises influence outside of the art world through his teaching practice that he has maintained during the course of his career.

A direct attack upon those who have created the deceptive image would be another means to rectify the situation. This may take the form of discrediting its sources, slander, or spin that is aimed to redirect attention to the creators. The follow up interview with The Yes Men's Andy Bichlbaum, in relation to the Bhopal interview was in some ways just this. The BBC anchor grilled Bichlbaum repeatedly about the false hope that Bichlbaum had created during his original interview. The follow up interview was focused around the simulation that was carried out rather than the actual issue that the simulation had critiqued. However, in this case, it may have helped rectify the BBC's reporting identity in conjunction with their formal apologies, yet it did force Dow Chemical to reassert their Identity and position on Bhopal that remained unmerciful. This in many ways fulfills the critique of Dow Chemical's practices and business model that does not care about human lives or the environment. It also had a direct

monetary impact on Dow with a loss of three percent to their stock. Therefore despite the rectification and reestablishment of reality the short-lived simulation was still able to effectively critique and affect the targeted company.

Another tactic is censorship or omission both prior to the release of information or post release of information. Editorial control is a key check to prevent these crises of identity. In regards to the media they are in the position to directly influence and control the information that is dispersed. Therefore they may decide to have an article revised, rewritten, or potentially omitted. This sanitization process may catch most offending bits of information however the system does not always catch everything. In the case of the Los Angeles Times' article on the March 17<sup>th</sup> covering the anti-war protest it was forced to issue a new version of the article by March 18<sup>th</sup> and prior to the paper going to press. The newly revised version of the article was highly edited and in many ways was a completely different article. The original March 17<sup>th</sup> article contained five hundred and seventy-five words and nineteen paragraphs where as the revised March 18<sup>th</sup> article contained two hundred ninety-eight words and eleven paragraphs. An approximate forty-eight percent word count reduction and forty-two percent paragraph reduction was the difference between the articles. The title for the article was changed from "4,000 march in Hollywood to protest war"<sup>3</sup> to "Thousands protest in Hollywood,"<sup>4</sup> a less specific title. The byline changed as well with the original article being credited to Times Staff Writers and then being changed to Rong-Gong Lin II. The March 18<sup>th</sup> article started with placing actors

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<sup>3</sup> Refer to cited work #3

<sup>4</sup> Refer to cited work #2

and musicians at the forefront of the description of the group that marched. “Actors and musicians joined thousands of demonstrators marching through Hollywood...”<sup>5</sup> as opposed to the original article’s, “Several thousand anti-war demonstrators began a march through Hollywood.”<sup>6</sup> The very beginning of this article attempts to marginalize the group that was involved in the march as the socially economically privileged few, thus bringing up the issue of class and attempting to marginalize and compartmentalize the larger diverse group. Whole paragraphs were removed, including the three paragraphs that I was covered in, as well as a large amount of quotes from the protestors. The third paragraph, in the March 17<sup>th</sup> article, which gave the larger context that the march was part of, that being marches in “...more than 200 other cities nationwide,”<sup>7</sup> was removed in the March 18<sup>th</sup> article. Quotes that were instead used by protestors spoke of low turn out and frustration with the ongoing war. “And marcher Michael Sanchez, 50, of Montebello was upset that the turnout for the march wasn’t larger.”<sup>8</sup> Quotes from a pro war tourist’s were exchanged for quotes that reinforced the marginalized image the Times was asserting with the March 18<sup>th</sup> article. “‘It’s kind of a freak show,’ said Conkey, wearing an orange shirt and shorts. ‘But it’s kind of neat to see this on Hollywood and Vine. It’s entertaining.’”<sup>9</sup> In the context of the actual printed paper it is even more interesting with this article being surrounded by a larger more lengthy article

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<sup>5</sup> Refer to cited work #2

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<sup>7</sup> “”

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about similar protests that took place in Washington D.C., on March 17<sup>th</sup>. This article focused mostly on the role of pro-war counter protestors as well as having a sub heading above the main heading, “Counter-demonstrators gather too. The rally is smaller than January’s.”<sup>10</sup>

These are some of the editorial changes that were made to the article within the time span of less than a day. This idea or tactic of post publication revision or replacement is interesting most specifically in the relationship to digital means of distribution. Digital information with its ability to release information with unprecedented speed also is the nearly infinite editorial abilities. These were exercised by the Los Angeles Times with the replacement of the March 17<sup>th</sup> article with the March 18<sup>th</sup> article without any apparent trace of a revision, save for the excess white space that was left at the bottom of the page along with the note that “Times staff writers Charles Proctor and Ashley Surdin contributed to the report.”<sup>11</sup> This inclusion of mentioning staff writers is a common tip to potentially heavily edited or revised articles. However, aside from those traces the web address remains the same and the images on the page remain the same, nearly no evidence of such a revision. The March 18<sup>th</sup> article of course is substantiated with it being the actual print version of the article and therefore can be seen as a piece of tangible evidence that that was indeed the news and the original article.

Actually after the article had been replaced or revised I attempted to speak with Charles Proctor since he seemed most likely to potentially speak with me

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<sup>10</sup> Refer to cited work #4

<sup>11</sup> Refer to cited work #3

however due to policy he was forced to refer me to the media relations department. I would also find out that any questions that were along the lines or nature of questioning the coverage of any story would not be allowed. I am still waiting to receive word back from the department of media relations. It seems to be indicative of the institution and the climate of the Los Angeles Times.

It is quite ironic that I myself wearing a hood a symbol that embeds inherent censorship was indeed censored. In many ways this may seem to be a substantiation of the threat of appropriated imagery that has been taken out of its sanctioned contexts as well as the critique that the everyday population of the United States is indeed being suppressed. Yet the actual images of the hoods still proliferated due to their iconic quality and their familiarity.

The issue of construction of history and the real is not disassociated from the practice of appropriating images and symbols to create simulations as well as the tactics used to combat them. George Parker, a professor at the Stanford Business School of Finance, had this to say on the idea of financial reporting actually being accurate or rather appearing to be historical fact,

“It must be kind of easy to represent sales, because when you see a number sales in a financial report, it looks pretty precise. It looks, actually looks amazingly detailed. Sometimes you have sales of sixty one million; eight hundred ninety thousand, four hundred sixty one and occasionally they go thirty-eight cents. And you think nobody just invent that.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Refer to cited work #5

This is a double-edged sword that can be used to both create and or repurpose images and symbols, to generate critique, as well as being used to combat these very things.

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