Reading Responses

On *Second Thoughts* by Ulises Carrión: Ulises Carrión perspective on books is interesting - it seems they believe novels are boring whereas poetry utilizes space in a more intentional, deeper way. They believe that using space to tell a story makes a "book" more interesting. "The New Art of Making Books" was an interesting read - and I'm not sure if I understood all of his words, but I think what they mean is that the new art transcends tradition - it requires different interpretation and room for that interpretation in general. "From Bookworks to Mailworks" challenged my ideas regarding storytelling and book-making in general. It's interesting how different authors/artists have utilized the known structure of books to make new art with them. I also enjoyed learning about mail art; I've never heard about it before this reading. This reading really allowed me to revisit how I imagined art and typical mediums of art. It made me think what other ordinary structures people could transform to create new original works.

On *Warez: The Infrastructure and Aesthetics of Piracy* by Martin Paul Eve: Before reading this, I didn't know that there was such a huge organized network of pirate groups, even though I was aware of pirating in general. It was intriguing to learn about the software and hardware infrastructures of the Scene, and how these technical parts worked together to make a functional system that operates as a pirating network as well as a social one. I also enjoyed learning about the perspective of those that participate in the Warez Scene and how the Scene should be understood as an aesthetic subculture descended from other computer-artistic cultures, as it intersects with the DemoScene and the ASCII art space. It's interesting that for some, participating in the Scene can be seen as a badge of prestige in programming ability and computer security knowledge, even though it's difficult to "show off" that status to people in real life due to the illegality of pirating. Learning about the Scene made me think about how spaces like this even exist: how far people are willing to go to be a part of something "exclusive" even when the consequences are high; however, because of the aspect of secrecy, I can see why being a part of such a community can be seen as exciting or competitive.

On *Creative Independent and Are.na: How Do You Use the Internet Mindfully* by Willa Köerner, Laurel Schwulst, & Édouard U: I fully agree that a website helps express your identity, and that artists can be extraordinary in this practice. I believe websites should not only tell someone who you are, but show them through artistic design or interactive elements. I like the way

Schwulst compares the web to a "flock of birds" or a "sea of punctuation marks" instead of a cloud; it makes the Internet seem less like a collective, and more like a collection of parts (which it is).

On *Publishing from Post-Digital-Print* by Alessandro Ludovico & Florian Cramer: I found Ludovico's idea that "print is liberating" to be eye-opening; it's interesting to think about how hacking/pirating can be seen as a method of information-sharing and communality in the same way that book-sharing is. I also agree with the conclusion that there is no strictly distinct separation between "print" and "electronic" in the post-digital age such that the rise of the digital has killed off appreciation of print. Print has instead transformed with the digital, in the way that print can amplify the experience of something digital, and something digital can amplify the experience of print.

On *New Modernism(s)* by Ben Duvall: It's interesting that to the post-modernist, the most commonly used typefaces were almost the most boring. I like that Keedy and Sciullo created their own typefaces to attack the "perfection" that rose with the development of typography. I like that with the rise of any sort of new design or art medium, there is also a rise in protest to it. With this, I feel like art will always be evolving and developing into new forms - from modernism to postmodernism, and maybe to something further beyond that.

On *Alt-Text as Poetry Workbook* by Bojana Coklyat & Shannon Finnegan: I knew that alt-text existed as a way to make images accessible to those who cannot view the images, but I didn't think of alt-text as poetry. In DSGN 264 with Avery Lawrence last year, Avery would include "alt-text" descriptions next to where we submitted our design work, and would encourage us to use it as a space to elaborate on our designs. I mostly would describe what I created plainly, but now I realize I could have used that space more creatively. Now that I think about alt-text as a form of poetry, I wonder how to make a written translation of my visual work while still making it easy to understand.

On *White Night Before A Manifesto* by Metahaven + *Dispersion* by Seth Price: It's interesting how function and value are now separately acknowledged things when thinking about product design. Metahaven criticizes how the value we give to objects makes otherwise functionally useless objects seem worthwhile to have (authentic branded items, timepieces, etc.) -- and I

agree with their point. Take [this pair of Balenciaga Crocs](#) for example... I don't believe that anyone would pay $600+ for this if it wasn't a fashion brand widely recognized. It almost seems like design becomes less important when faced against value.

On [*A *New* Program for Graphic Design* by David Reinfurt](#): When Reinfurt described his experience designing the interactive portion of the MetroCard machine, I was impressed by both how much has and how much hasn't changed. I visited New York during the summer and then again last month with friends; the first time I visited, I tried to use the MetroCard machine (which, from what I can remember, looked almost the same as the images Reinfurt took, so the design really hasn't changed much), but it didn't work, and we all resorted to using contactless payment to board the metro. The second time I visited, I didn't even touch the MetroCard machine because I knew contactless payment was available. Now that I know how much planning, work, and redesigning went into creating the human-interaction portion of the interface, I feel some shame, and also realize how technological advancement has affected me and my interactions with design personally. Reinfurt predicted that the MetroCard machine will be phased out soon enough at the time of writing (2019), and now I've just found out that [he was correct, and the machine is getting phased out after this year.](#) It's sad how, as designers, we must be aware of how our products will be used in the future - in the wake of new technological advancement, societal changes, etc., our products which once may have been useful might become useless, and that seems like a hard truth for any creator to bear.

On [*Decolonising the Digital* by Josh Harle, Angie Abdila, & Andrew Newman (eds)](#): My writing seminar last year was Race After Technology, which focused on a book of the same title that discussed the racial inequalities technology perpetuated in artifical intelligence, machine learning, etc. These selections reminded me of what we talked about in that seminar regarding how "technology does not serve everyone evenly." This text talks a lot about the exploitation of oppressed groups in the context of digital media and new technology; I can even think of a recent development in digital art: the rise of artificial intelligence-generated illustrations, which promise to "advance" art, when it's actually taking the work of actual digital artists and exploiting it. I agree with the authors' sentiment that the idea behind "decolonising the digital" should be not only recognized but strived for as we continue to use media as a mode of display and communication.

On *Beyond Dark Matter from Logic Issue 15: Beacons* by Neta Bomani & Sabii Bornologic +
Performing the Feed by Paul Saulellis: It's interesting to think of leaks as "a feed in reverse."
Even before this reading, we've discussed the intersections between hacking/leaking/pirating
and protesting, and we also talked about how these activities can be seen as a statement or an
art form. My mind instantly goes to SciHub, and how their work is a protest to the exclusivity of
access to academic research. It's interesting to think about the development of "the feed" and
the next steps in terms of future "posts". I also found the second reading to be an interesting,
creative way to discuss limits as well as new and upcoming possibilities for technology
(especially those within the digital space).

On *Why Games, Or, Can Art Workers Think?* by Hito Steyerl + *Incalculable Loss* by Manuel
Arturo Abreu: What I found most interesting and relatable in the readings is how we have to
become like robots (filling out Capchas, passing tests, etc) to confirm that we are not robots.
We, in fact, perform very robotic actions in order to prove our humanity. This reminds me of
how, even outside the digital sphere, as someone who is neurodivergent, I feel like I have to
constantly adjust my facial expressions or moderate myself to appear "normal" or neurotypical
to other people. The standards I hold myself to in order to mask are based off of how others
behave; thus, I wonder how much of being human is simply copying other people - and how
different we are from algorithms training from data in that sense.

On *Cybernetic Serendipity - the Computer and the Arts* by Jasia Reichardt ed: I enjoyed
reading the computer texts and poems part of our reading. Actually for Section 3 Assignment
1, I had thought about using a randomizer function on a website to generate a list of "random"
instructions. However, due to the unpredictability of this function, I realized that the tasks
indicated by randomized instructions might be impossible to complete by humans. I think it's
interesting how, despite feeding a set of instructions into the computer in order to create
something, there is still the chance for error (bugs) - or in the case of a randomized function,
there is a chance that it would compute something unexpected. Thus in a way, computers,
despite having no "creativity" of their own, can still produce something "creative" - if we define
"creativity" as the use of original ideas.

On *Art on the Internet* by Boris Groys + *Computing in [Redacted] Time from Logic Issue 16:
Clouds* by Christine T. Wolfe: I think reading these 2 texts together really contextualizes how

the Internet provides a space for disabled artists to exhibit their art on their own terms. As someone disabled, I'm often debilitated by my conditions. I have accommodations like time extensions on exams or assignments to help me work at my own pace, but sometimes it doesn't really help—project deadlines are final, or homework deadlines can't be shifted, or exams must still be completed in x amount of time. I used to have a complicated relationship with art because of this: I was stressed about outputting art that other people would like, quickly. However, with internet art, every website I make or publish is on my timeline. What Groys said about the Internet essentially being a garbage dump — I'm kind of relieved by that. As he said, art on the Internet doesn't have to be part of a cohesive experience like it does in museums; the Internet being such a mess means that people choose to click on or perceive internet art. Additionally, there is no one operating above me, forcing me to stick to a timeline that I can't meet because I operate on a different one. Thus, the act of publishing, exhibiting, and archiving art becomes freeing. [(I want to keep this response short but attached are continued thoughts I have on this topic in text-to-friend format.)](link)

On [*A Repair Manual for Spaceship Earth from Logic Issue 9: Nature* by Alyssa Battistoni](link) + [*On Software or the Persistence of Visual Knowledge* by Wendy Hui Kyong Chun](link): I've never heard about Biosphere 2 until now, but Battistoni raised important thoughts for me. A sentence I found particularly interesting from the reading is "the cost of human labor has to be approaching zero for it to compete with nature's gifts." That made me think about how much of nature's work we've taken for granted - and how we often think about what we take for granted only when we face the cost of its loss. When I was thinking about why we were given these 2 readings in tandem, I thought about the invisible/automatic work of software outlined by Chun versus the invisible/automatic work of nature outlined by Battistoni. However, while the work of nature freely provides for us, the work of software takes away certain aspects of our freedom. Thus, the question that Battistoni raises when we employ software to replace nature is even more interesting - who will pay for the work of nature carried on by humans or machines?

On [*Groping in the Dark* by Donella Meadows & John Richardson & Gerhart Bruckmann](link): As a Computer Science major, I found the concepts discussed in this reading to be important. A lot of CIS courses actually discuss how we can model social systems in a computational way - however, as Meadows, Richardson, and Bruckmann caution, "computer models of social

systems should not be expected to produce precise predictions." I think the fault in the development of engineering models (especially in regards to computer models) is that there are many social factors that computers cannot account for, as well as biases perpetuated by computer models because of those who create them. Any future model used as a baseline for improving the quality of life must be developed as a collaboration between STEM and the humanities.