Counter Cultural Production: A Militant Reconfiguration of Peter Bürger's "Neo-Avant-Garde"

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Abstract

This article re-examines Peter Bürger's negative assessment of the neo-avant-garde as apolitical, co-opted and toothless. It argues that his conception can be overturned through an analysis of different sources – looking beyond the usual examples of individual artists to instead focus on the role of more politically committed collectives. It declares that, while the collectives analysed in this text do indeed appropriate and develop goals and tactics of the 'historical avant-garde' (hence meriting the appellation 'neo-avant-garde'), they cannot be accused of being co-opted or politically uncommitted due to the ferocity of their critique of, and attack on, art and political institutions.

Introduction

Firstly, the reader should be aware that my understanding of the avant-garde has nothing to do with how Clement Greenberg used the term.[1] I am aligning myself with Peter Bürger's position that the 'historical avant-garde' was, primarily, Dada and Surrealism, but also the Russian avant-gardes after the October revolution and Futurism.[2] These are movements that Greenberg saw as peripheral to the avant-garde. Greenberg did, however, share some of Bürger's concerns about the avant-garde's institutionalisation, or 'academisation' as he would put it.

I borrow the term 'neo-avant-garde' from Bürger, but with some trepidation. In *Theorie der Avantgarde* (1974 – translated into English as *Theory of the Avant-Garde* 1984) he describes the neo-avant-garde of the 1950s and 1960s as movements that revisit the historical avant-garde, but he dismisses them as inherently compromised:

> The neo-avant-garde institutionalizes the *avant-garde as art* and thus negates genuinely avant-gardiste intentions. This is true independently of the consciousness artists have of their activity, a consciousness that may perfectly well be avant-gardiste. It is the status of their products, not the consciousness artists have of their activity, that defines the social effects of works. Neo-avant-gardiste art is autonomous art in the full sense of the term, which means that it negates the avant-gardiste intention of returning art to the praxis of life.[3]

Bürger's highly influential negative assessment of the neo-avant-garde as apolitical, co-opted and toothless has tainted our assessment of neo-avant-gardism. His pejorative assessment builds on Renato Poggioli's *Teoria dell'arte d'avanguardia* (1962 – translated into English as *The Theory of the Avant-Garde* 1971) which asserts that, as the avant-garde is necessarily radically new, it is unrepeatable. Such assessments of the neo-avant-garde can be overturned and neo-avant-gardism can be understood as a major influence on contemporary, politically committed, art activist practices, but only if we reconceptualise them, distinguishing them from these earlier understandings.

Criticisms of Bürger's theory are well documented. Hal Foster, for example, takes issue with the characterisation of a singular avant-garde and how Bürger envisages a neo-avant-garde based entirely on his reductive conception of the historical avant-garde.[4] My main argument with Bürger concerns his examples. As David Hopkins correctly points out, Bürger's book, which has so heavily defined the terms 'historical avant-garde' and 'neo-avant-garde', tends to focus on 'French Nouveau Réalistes and Andy Warhol' for examples of the neo-avant-garde.[5] For example, Bürger questions the political efficacy in Warhol's silkscreens:

> The painting of 100 Campbell soup cans contains resistance to the commodity society only for the person who wants to see it there. The Neo-avant-garde, which stages for a second time the avant-gardiste break with tradition, becomes a manifestation that is void of sense and that permits the positioning of any meaning whatever.[6]

Bürger is right to criticise such examples as being weaker and institutionalised manifestations of the historical avant-garde, but if he is looking for radically political practices that seek to fuse art and life, he is simply looking in the wrong place. Alongside Nouveau Réalisme and Pop, other post-war movements that have been termed 'neo-avant-garde', such as Neo-Dada, Minimalism and Conceptual Art, similarly contain institutional critique and inherit the radical political project of the historical avant-garde 'only for the person who wants to see it there' – if at all. Bürger's examples, and indeed line of inquiry, run entirely contrary to my expectation of a neo-avant-garde. He completely overlooks the examples that I will shortly propose. My position is aligned with that of Hal Foster, who accuses Bürger of failing to 'recognize the ambitious art of his time' and who speculates that, had he been more aware of more radical art of his time, his conception of the neo-avant-garde might have been different.[7]

Foster and Benjamin Buchloh attempt to re-evaluate Bürger's notion of the neo-avant-garde by proposing Daniel Buren and Marcel Broodthaers as examples of artists who apparently better exemplify a return to praxis through their critique of art's institutional conditions.[8] Foster divides the neo-avant-garde into two different phases. He claims that the first neo-avant-garde phase merely acts out the anarchistic attacks of the historical avant-garde. For Foster, this first phase, of the 1950s and '60s, includes artists such as Robert Rauschenberg and Allan Kaprow. Foster's second phase of the 1960s and '70s apparently only goes so far as to laboriously develop such attacks – his examples here include Buren and Broodthaers.[9] Bürger, Buchloh and Foster all focus on individuals for their examples. Buchloh even goes as far as to name Yves Klein the 'quintessential neo-avant-garde artist'.[10] Bürger, Buchloh and Foster ultimately share a pessimistic view of the neo-avant-garde propagated by their own choice of examples, which, with the exception of Kaprow, I do not recognise as avant-garde at all.

Gavin Grindon describes an 'other neo-Dada' that emerged from European and American social movements 'through groups such as the Provos, Kommune 1, Diggers, Yippies, Black Mask, and Chicago Surrealists.'[11] Movements such as these, according to Grindon, have inspired 'contemporary art-activist "interventionism" practiced by collectives such as the Yes Men, Reverend Billy, and the Church of Stop Shopping, Etcétera, the Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination, and the Centre for Tactical Magic.'[12] My position is that Grindon's assessment is correct, but not complete. In the following section, I will explore one of Grindon's 'other neo-Dada' groups, Black Mask, as well as the affiliated collectives Up Against the Wall Motherfucker and King Mob. I assert that these groups follow the avant-garde's anti-institutional stance and revolutionary politics more closely than Bürger's, Buchloh's or Foster's examples and that they are the overlooked true successors to the historical avant-garde. Later on in the paper I will turn to two of Grindon's contemporary examples, the Yes Men and Etcétera, and add Voina as a third example of contemporary art collectives that continue the avant-garde project.

The 'Other Neo-Dada': Militant Neo-Avant-Gardism

Black Mask, Up Against the Wall Motherfucker and King Mob are interconnected art collectives from the 1960s and '70s. My assessment of Black Mask and Up Against the Wall Motherfucker has only been made possible by recent publications such as the PM Press

anthology *Black Mask & Up Against the Wall Motherfucker: the incomplete works of Ron Hahne, Ben Morea, and the Black Mask Group*.[13] A history of Black Mask is also available online in the form of an autobiographical thirteen-page pamphlet.[14]

My assessment of King Mob has been possible thanks to Tom Vague's compilation of the original King Mob Echo publications (2000)[15] and the Tate article 'The Mob who Shouldn't Really be Here' (2008).[16] In 2013 Donald Nicholson-Smith deposited some King Mob related materials in the Mayday Rooms (London), an initial cartography of which is available online.[17] This builds on David Wise's autobiographical 'A Critical Hidden History of King Mob', which he published on his website from 1999-2003 and which is now available as a book.[18]

Black Mask and King Mob were both included in the recent exhibition Art Turning Left (Tate, 2014) and there was also a recent exhibition examining anarchism through counter-cultural artistic practices, which featured an accompanying text entitled 'Black Mask: Revolution as Being'.[19] Aside from the compilations of original publications by these groups and their own autobiographical histories, there is very little research or scholarship about these groups.[20]

New York-based radical anarchist art collective Black Mask (1965-1968) came from a street and gang, rather than middleclass art school, background.[21] They gained notoriety for their eponymous broadsheet, which has recently been republished in its entirety by PM Press, as well as for their public actions and demonstrations, which I argue render Bürger's critique of the neo-avant-garde inadequate. The front cover of the first issue of *Black Mask* (November 1966) begins with an assault on art and on culture:

> DESTROY THE MUSEUMS - - our struggle cannot be hung on walls…
> Goddamn your culture, your science, your art. What purpose do they serve?[22]

They go on to announce their disgust at a society where the rich stockpile art while there is war and oppression. The fact that they say damn 'your art' implies not a call for an end to all art, but an end to a particular bourgeois art. They proclaim that there are people seeking a new world and that:

> The machine, the rocket, the conquering of space and time, these are the seeds
> of the future which, freed from your barbarism, will carry us forward. We are
> ready… Let the struggle begin.[23]

This clearly expresses Futurist sympathies and tone. Founding members Ben Morea, Dan Georgakas, Ron Hahne were inspired by the apparent science, elegance and violence of Futurism and stories such as Marinetti beating up Wyndham Lewis in a toilet before hanging him by his coat collar on some spiked railings.[24] Black Mask have cited Futurism and Dada as their only artistic inspiration, although in a 2007 interview Ben Morea also acknowledges Surrealism as an influence.[25] It is clear then, that Black Mask – from the outset – saw themselves as an extension of the historical avant-garde art project.

Bürger would presumably admit that Black Mask possesses 'a consciousness that may perfectly well be avant-gardiste' but he would tell us to examine 'the status of their products' which, according to Bürger, as part of the institutionalised neo-avant-garde, would be found wanting. Let us examine some of their actions and determine whether or not they were institutionalised.

Black Mask's first act was to call for the closure of the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA). An account of this action, along with correspondence with MOMA is published in *Black Mask* issue one. They were successful: MOMA closed temporarily through fear of what they might do.[26] Thereafter they disrupted and sabotaged dozens of art lectures, exhibitions and Happenings. The art world fought back; a panel of experts on Futurism, Dada and Surrealism advertised, throughout the underground press, a trap for Black Mask – in the form of a debate about the true revolutionary meaning of modern art. Black Mask responded by distributing thousands of plausible, well printed, invitations to a free party with free music, food and drink at the same time, place and date as the 'ambush'. They issued the invites to the homeless and 'the hardest bastards they could find' in Harlem and the Lower Eastside shortly before the 'ambush' was scheduled.[27] Such actions are hardly the typical behaviour of a group that has been co-opted into the art world.

One of Black Mask's most infamous stunts, the 'mill-in' at Macy's (1967), involved organising large numbers of people to enter the store in small groups posing as regular shoppers or staff. Their aim was to cause maximum disruption during the store's peak business hours in the build-up to Christmas. Activists systematically moved stock around, stole and broke items, gave objects away and released animals, such as dogs and cats, into the food department. Even a buzzard was allegedly seen terrorising staff in the china section. Decoy activists identified themselves with flags and banners but made sure to stand alongside regular shoppers, who were subsequently roughed up and chucked out by security and floor

staff. In another action, they shot the poet Kenneth Koch (with blanks) as a symbolic assassination of the bourgeoisie.[28]

I am uncertain that actions such as these negate 'the avant-gardiste intention of returning art to the praxis of life', as Bürger claims. Far from it: Black Mask rejected traditional art media and took as their practice forms of performance that exist outside the gallery system and in opposition to the gallery system. They also embraced a dematerialised art practice that fused art (performance art) with life (protest). I claim that this is a suitable candidate to inherit the avant-garde moniker and a counter-example to Bürger's criticism. In the last statement of the last issue of *Black Mask* (April/May 1968) the group proclaimed:

> We are thru being assimilated: we will no longer make objects/our Art is Life/our medium revolution/& in a world based on repression our only message is Liberation. Our function is to make the Left hip & to make the "Hippies" left/to bring the body & mind back together/the unification of social consciousness & body consciousness/the creation of the Total Man.[29]

In late 1968 Black Mask went underground and reformed as Up Against the Wall Motherfucker (henceforth UAW/MF).[30] The statement above can therefore be read as a declaration of UAW/MF's intentions: intentions that embody everything that Bürger claims cannot exist in the neo-avant-garde. Going underground and the complete departure from making art objects can be seen as a deliberate attempt to avoid being co-opted into the art world. Note, however, that the foundation of UAW/MF was based on a declaration about art and life: from the outset UAW/MF was themselves as artists.

UAW/MF's first action was to dump garbage on the Lincoln Center of Performing Arts (1968).[31] New York was in the middle of a garbage collection strike and, although the richer areas were able to hire private contractors to clear up the mess, the poorer neighbourhoods were in an increasingly desperate state. UAW/MF saw cultural production as somehow masking such uncivilised practices present in US foreign and domestic policy. In their words 'America turns the world into garbage, it turns its ghettos into garbage, it turns Vietnam into garbage.'[32] They therefore proposed a 'cultural exchange' of 'garbage for garbage'. In doing so they aimed to put an end to a situation where the garbage strike mess was excluded from sterile palaces of culture that distract from America's cultural attacks in Vietnam and on its own black and indigenous peoples.

It was not long before MOMA became their target again, when they objected to an exhibition called 'Dada, Surrealism and their Heritage' (1968).[33] For UAW/MF, the likes of Rauschenberg lacked the revolutionary and militant credentials to merit inclusion in such an exhibition. This offended UAW/MF enough to inspire them to organise four hundred down-and-outs to storm the exhibition on the night of the private view, screaming obscenities, hurling paint, flour and smoke bombs.[34] Other actions included organising free parties and cutting the fence at Woodstock to allow people free access.[35]

UAW/MF's chief goal was the integration of art into the political program of anarchist revolution,[36] but they petered out after many of their members were arrested and imprisoned for terms ranging from ten days to ten years. Fleeing New York City UAW/MF spread across the States attempting to form their own, independent cells (much like the Weather Underground in their later days).

Across the Atlantic, there was an affiliated and similar English radical art collective. King Mob were based in London in the 1960s and '70s where they sought to emphasise the cultural anarchy and disorder that they saw as being ignored in Britain at the time. Brothers David and Stuart Wise (who had studied art in Newcastle) developed a combination of hard-edged politics derived from Russian nihilism with the disruptive anti-art potential of Dada and Surrealism. Hari Kunzru explains that 'they found fundamental questions being asked about value, politics and the (lack of) social function of art' in texts such as Dmitry Pisarev's *The Destruction of Aesthetics* (1865).[37] After they moved to Notting Hill the brothers came into contact with the Situationist International (SI) – two of whose members (Chris Gray and Donald Nicholson-Smith) later became King Mob members.

King Mob used a variety of techniques, which could be categorised as either propaganda or direct action. Examples of propaganda included, graffiti, distribution of flyers, posters and their publication *The King Mob Echo*. Their most famous graffiti slogan appeared as a message, agitating commuters on a stretch of the Hammersmith and City line. It stayed there for several years, surviving until the 1990s, it read:

> Same thing day after day- tube - work - dinner - work - tube - armchair - TV - sleep - tube - work -how much more can you take? - one in ten go mad, one in five cracks up.[38]

In fact, King Mob took their name from a piece of graffiti that appeared on Newgate prison during the 1780 Gordon riots. Rioters smeared the walls of the prison with the phrase 'His Majesty King Mob' after having gutted the prison itself. As well as graffiti, King Mob used posters and their publication *The King Mob Echo* to disseminate their political beliefs. These publications advocated violence by applauding murderers such as Jack the Ripper, Mary Bell, and John Christie. They even went as far as to celebrate the 1968 shooting of Andy Warhol by Valerie Solanas (an act also defended by Black Mask) and to include a hit-list of several celebrities including: Yoko Ono, Mick Jagger, Bob Dylan, Richard Hamilton, Mario Amaya (who was also shot by Solanas), David Hockney, Mary Quant, Twiggy, Marianne Faithfull, and *International Times* editor Barry Miles.[39]

Some of King Mob's ambitious, but unrealised, Dadaesque plans included blowing up a waterfall in the Lake District, hanging peacocks in a London park and painting Wordsworth's house with the slogan 'Coleridge Lives'. One infamous stunt that was executed was a critique on the ownership of public and private space that saw the group, dressed as gorillas and pantomime horses, storm a private west London park and tear down its gating in order to open the park up as a children's playground.[40] Three of the four members from the British SI were expelled for their connections with Black Mask and went on to form King Mob.

A strong case can be made that Black Mask influenced King Mob's use of direct action. In the 1960s King Mob spent time with Black Mask's Ben Morea and co-signed at least one statement by UAW/MF.[41] Inspired by Black Mask's 'Mill-in at Macy's', twenty-five members of King Mob stormed London's Selfridges, with one member dressed as Father Christmas, to distribute the store's toys to children: the police were called and forced the children to return the toys.[42] King Mob was often an unwelcome presence at student events. For example, during the famous Hornsey Art College occupation they were thrown out for mocking the level of debate. At the LSE occupation, student leaders removed their sexually explicit posters.[43] Their legacy includes their effect on Malcolm McLaren, who claimed to have been at the Selfridges event, and who was allegedly influenced by Situationist models in his promotion of the Sex Pistols.

Bürger's example of Pop Art is indeed only superficially political in content. Foster and Buchloh's examples (Minimalism and Conceptual Art) only really serve to compound the problem, as they fall foul of Bürger's accusations institutional recuperation. My examples used protest as part of their performance practices causing havoc in shops and invading

private spaces to fill them with rubbish or convert them into public spaces. They were also committed anarchists. The fact that they attacked art galleries, art schools and were expelled from the SI is evidence that these groups were no tame version of protest co-opted by the art world; contra Bürger, they provide examples that protest can still be authentic in 'neo-avant-garde' practices and it is they who form the prototype for future militant forms of art activism. It is irrelevant whether they later became recuperated by the art world – in this they do not differ from the historical avant-garde. While it is true that, for example, posters by King Mob and materials by Black Mask have been included in a major art exhibition (Art Turning Left – Tate 2014), this does not differentiate them from historical avant-garde artists, who displayed artworks in galleries more often than the examples of neo-avant-garde art that I have cited. Display of documentation does, to some degree, recuperate the radical potential of the groups' original actions – as it implies that the work belongs in a gallery and that the material on display *is the artwork*. However, it could equally be argued that display of materials by collectives such as King Mob and Black Mask introduces their radical actions and intentions to new audiences. In this case the art gallery acts like a museum displaying artefacts that evidence that there was, in the 1960s and '70s, a radical neo-avant-garde that continued the intentions of the historical avant-garde.

Avant-Garde Legacy in Contemporary Art Activism

I have argued that when Bürger wrote his account of the neo-avant-garde he overlooked the more radical, politically committed variants. Foster, Buchloh and Hopkins equally overlooked this narrative when they sought to redress concerns about Bürger's negativity towards the neo-avant-garde. I will now give two examples of contemporary art activist collectives that I consider to continue the avant-garde project: Grupo Etcétera and Voina.

Etcétera is an Argentine collective that strongly cites Surrealism as an artistic influence. They have come to public attention having recently won the International Award for Participatory Art (2013).[44] In the same year they spoke at *The Politics of the Social in Contemporary Art* conference, (Tate 2013), before touring various venues in Europe. While Etcétera appear to have no qualms about accepting art prizes or speaking at mainstream art venues to promote their actions – they do not exhibit artworks, or make performances in galleries.[45] Despite their recent reception into the art world, there is very little written about Etcétera and most of

the texts on their website are only available in Spanish; in my research I have translated several of these texts myself.[46]

Etcétera became known for their development of '*escraches*' with the group H.I.J.O.S. and for their *Mierdazo* (*Shit Storm*).[47] *Escraches* are acts of public naming and shaming of corrupt political and corporate figures in their homes or places of work in order to influence government policy. Etcétera have named political members of Argentina's military Junta, who are exempt from prosecution: this includes launching paint bombs at their houses and erecting street signs saying 'mass murderer, 200 metres' followed by their address.

The *Mierdazo* (2002) was an infamous performance where participants were asked to deliver their own excrement to the gates of the Argentine National Congress while the government debated the budget inside. The event began with a performance where a member of Etcétera, while dressed as a sheep, sat on a toilet on a red rug and publicly defecated. Other protestors, who also felt the need, later imitated this act. The performance, which was widely reported on Argentine television, culminated in the public angrily hurling their faeces at the Congress building. At *The Politics of the Social in Contemporary Art,* I heard founding member, Federico Zukerfeld, explain how he initially struggled to gain support from local art groups, having to contextualise the act by citing Piero Manzoni's use of excrement as an art historical precedent. In reality the act had more in common with UAW/MF's garbage dump at the Lincoln Center, described above. On another occasion UAW/MF dragged a toilet to St. Marks Place and:

> … held a community "shit-in" which proved highly popular until a squad of infuriated; blushing, highly Protestant fuzz arrived and, perfect symbolical [sic] end of a perfect symbolical evening, literally beat it to pieces with their nightsticks…[48]

The Voina collective (founded 2005 or 2007 according to different sources) is an anarcho-absurdist collective that operates 'very much in the Dadaist tradition, mixing anarchism, the absurd and art'.[49] They are based mainly in St. Petersburg but have cells all over Russia with a fluid membership, which has included as many as two hundred people.[50] Its core members are husband and wife Oleg Vorotnikov and Natalia Sokol, Leonid Nikolayev and Alexei Plutser-Sarno.[51]

Examples of their performances include: a live public orgy at the State Biological Museum to mock the election of Dmitry Medvedev; a 180-foot-high projection of a skull-and-crossbones

on the exterior of Russia's parliament; theft of a supermarket chicken by inserting it into a member's vagina; shoplifting while dressed in a priest's robe with a policeman's hat; flipping over police cars; setting fire to a prison transport van; and painting an enormous phallus on a drawbridge facing the state security services (formerly known as the KGB) in St. Petersburg. Most of these actions have been filmed and are available on Voina's website.[52]

When Russian curator Andrei Yerofeyev, was arrested for 'inciting religious hatred' in his exhibition *Forbidden Art* (Sakharov Museum, Moscow 2009) Voina stormed the courtroom under the persona of a punk band called Cock in the Ass.[53] Also in 2009, Voina expelled husband and wife Pyotr Verzilov and Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, accusing them of being informers. Verzilov, Tolokonnikova and Yekaterina Samutsevich went on to form the Moscow faction of Voina. Tolokonnikova and Samutsevich would also create the feminist punk band Pussy Riot that gained widespread international sympathy when three of their members, Tolokonnikova, Samutsevich and Maria Alyokhina, were imprisoned for performing 'Punk Prayer - Mother of God, Chase Putin Away!' in Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour (2012). All three were sentenced to two years in a penal colony (after more than five months remanded in custody), but were then released before the Winter Olympics in Sochi, 2014. Verzilov became Pussy Riot's unofficial spokesman during their trial. 'Punk Prayer' clearly bears more than a passing resemblance to Voina's 'Cock in the Ass' courtroom intervention.

In November 2010 Vorotnikov and Nikolayev were arrested for their role in *Palace Revolution*, where they up-turned Police cars in St. Petersburg. Vorotnikov's wife and son were not detained but Sokol's ID card and passport were confiscated, preventing them from travelling or accessing healthcare. Vorotnikov and Nikolayev were released in March 2011 after Banksy raised their £80,000 bail money from an online auction of his work.[54] Vorotnikov subsequently skipped bail and managed to escape further imprisonment despite later being arrested for assaulting a police officer at a political rally. On July 2011 an international arrest warrant was issued for Vorotnikov, and subsequently for Sokol.[55]

Despite the unresolved arrest warrants, Voina co-curated the seventh Berlin Biennale (2012). Chief curator, Artur Żmijewski, organised political actions apparently supporting causes including freeing Belarus' political prisoners and the Occupy Movement: he invited Voina to co-curate. Voina were clearly cautious of being recuperated by the art world. They issued a statement clarifying that they would play no part in exhibition management, as they consider

exhibitions to be harmful to contemporary art.[56] They claim that artists are too infatuated with having exhibitions and therefore the fewer artworks there are in the biennale the better. They also stated that they would not leave Russia during the biennale, as that is where their 'front line' is.

In 2011 Voina won one of Russia's most prestigious art prizes: The Ministry of Culture and the National Center for Contemporary Art's 'Innovation award'. Voina's reception of the award was featured in *Flash Art* (July – September 2011). Voina did not attend the prize-giving and they later issued the following statement:

> We want to make a type of art that no longer inspires anyone to the idea of awarding us an art prize. But if the museums and institutions can't let go and continue to suggest us for their idiotic competitions, they are going to regret it.[57]

Since the biennale, Vorotnikov, Sokol and their son have fled Russia to Venice where, in July 2014, Vorotnikov was arrested. At the time of writing, reports have emerged that he has been bailed with the condition that he reports to the Venice Police twice a week. For now, he will not be extradited to Russia.[58]

Voina follow in the avant-garde tradition of resisting institutionalisation by producing politically inflected anti-art. For example, *Crazy Leo on top of Feds* (2010) follows in the Dada absurdist tradition. 'Crazy Leo' (Leonid Nikolayev) runs across a busy main road in Moscow with a blue bucket over his head. The bucket symbolises the total impunity enjoyed by anyone with a blue light on their car, which is used not only by police officers but also increasingly by VIPs.[59] Nikolayev 'crashes' into a Russian unmarked police car (identifiable by the light on the roof) and proceeds to run onto the roof. A secret service officer gives chase and removes the blue bucket, only to reveal another blue bucket underneath. Voina surely provides proof that, whether or not the historical avant-garde became institutionalised, its tradition can be continued and it is possible to return art to the praxis of life.

Etcétera and Voina both require the reaction of 'authorities' to validate their actions as politically potent. The police (on the street) and the media (online) confirm that, far from being recuperated, institutionalised or toothless, their actions make real interventions into everyday life. Oliver Johnson has noted that 'Voina's physical actions are the starting point for a networked performance that emerges from and depends on the mass participation of its

online audience'.[60] He deems Voina's physical actions a precursor for an open ended online participatory presence, 'a digital icon in an era of internet-based activism'.[61]

Gene Ray warns of the dangers when culture jamming and hacking become substitutes for 'the politics of the streets'.[62] However, the relationship between the streets and cyberspace is not so divided and online action can have real life effect. For example, Hacktivist group Anonymous (founded 2003) have attacked government, corporate and banking websites causing real disruption and damage to business. In 2011 they played a role in the Arab Spring by helping Tunisian agitators protect their Internet connections from government surveillance, while at the same time attacking the government website and taking it offline. In 2012 they retaliated against Israel's incursion into the Gaza strip by taking down hundreds of Israeli websites and most recently they have declared was against ISIS.[63] WikiLeaks also reminds us that national security is vulnerable at the level of a cyber-attack – especially now that armed forces are so heavily computerised. The US drone programme is particularly sobering in this regard. It is in such moments as the August Riots, the Iranian 'Twitter revolution', or the Tunisian 'WikiLeaks revolution' when the use of social media is manifested in actual physical action, that such digital tactics achieve their full political effect. It therefore stands to reason that avant-garde artists might also incorporate such methods.

Today's artists have at their disposal a range of tactics including: culture jamming, tactical media, hacktivism, subvertising, and brandalism that can have real effect. These tactics are all derived from Situationist *détournement* and have recently facilitated high-profile acts of playful subversion by groups such as The Yes Men and the Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination. The SI describe *détournement* as:

> Short for "détournement of pre-existing aesthetic elements." The integration of present or past artistic productions into a superior construction of a milieu. In this sense there can be no situationist painting or music, but only a situationist use of those means. In a more elementary sense, détournement within the old cultural spheres is a method of propaganda, a method which reveals the wearing out and loss of importance of those spheres.[64]

Simon Ford, in *The Situationist International: A User's Guide*, traces *détournement*'s legacy though punk to 'culture jamming'.[65] Culture jamming has been defined as when '"pranksters" deploy the tools of the mass media and marketing in order to take advantage of the resources and venues they afford' and as 'the act of resisting and re-creating commercial culture in

order to transform society'.[66] *Détournement*-derived tactics can now be implemented on the streets, online or a mixture of both.

The Yes Men employ a form of culture jamming, called 'identity correction', which they define as: 'Impersonating big-time criminals in order to publicly humiliate them, and otherwise giving journalists excuses to cover important issues'.[67] The public humiliation element in identity correction shares much in common with Etcétera's *escraches*. Like Etcétera and Voina, the Yes Men use humour, which could be mistaken for mere MTV-style pranks. In fact, upon closer inspection, they operate in the same mould as Dada absurdist performance and Surrealist tactics. Examples include the *Dow Acceptable Risk Calculator* (2005), 'a new industry standard for determining how many deaths are acceptable when achieving large profits...' and *Vivoleum* (2007), 'a new renewable fuel sourced from the [corpses of] victims of climate change' and the recycling of human waste to produce hamburgers.[68] Aside from being absurd products and services, the performances, presented to academic or corporate groups in deadpan and slick presentations, assume a surreal yet serious political edge. Elaborate props, such as the *SurvivaBall* (2006) marketed to Halliburton to protect managers from the effects of sudden climate change, are reminiscent of Dada puppetry.

The Yes Men pranks operate on the edge of legality, but they are carefully orchestrated with the intention of avoiding litigation. However, the fallout of one of their pranks caused actual fiscal harm. In 2004 the Yes Men impersonated the Dow Chemical Company by setting up a fake website: DowEthics.com. The BBC contacted them, asking for a representative to comment on the twentieth anniversary of the world's worst industrial accident: the Bhopal disaster (1984). Over half a million workers were exposed to dangerous gases and chemicals in Bhopal (India) with thousands of deaths and long-term injuries. Worse still, the ground and water supplies were contaminated – reportedly causing a further one death per day. The company that owned the plant, Union Carbide (purchased by Dow in 2001), refused to accept responsibility, instead settling out of court for $470 million dollars, which equates to $500, or one year's medical care, per surviving victim. A Dow spokesperson subsequently called the amount of compensation 'plenty good for an Indian'. Posing as a Dow representative, Andy Bichlbaum (one half of the Yes Men), announced live on BBC News 24 that:

> Dow will accept full responsibility for the Bhopal disaster, and has a $12 billion dollar plan to compensate the victims and remediate the site. (Dow will

raise the $12 billion by liquidating Union Carbide, which cost them that much to acquire.) Also, to provide a sense of closure to the victims, Dow will push for the extradition of Warren Anderson, former Union Carbide CEO, to India, which he fled following his arrest 20 years ago on multiple homicide charges.[69]

Dow stock subsequently plummeted by two million dollars and the company was forced to announce that they would not, in fact, be paying any compensation. A prank that can affect share value differs little from violence against property and in this regard the action should be considered militant. Next, the Yes Men issued the following statement, clarifying 'Dow's' position:

> Dow will NOT commit ANY funds to compensate and treat 120,000 Bhopal residents who require lifelong care.... Dow will NOT remediate (clean up) the Bhopal plant site.... Dow's sole and unique responsibility is to its shareholders, and Dow CANNOT do anything that goes against its bottom line unless forced to by law.70

The Yes Men humiliate, mock, and name and shame in order to expose contradictions and flaws in free market capitalism. They do not call themselves artists, but they clearly employ Situationist tactics, such as *détournement*, and one half of the duo, Igor Vamos (who works under the pseudonym 'Mike Bonanno'), has an MFA in Visual Arts from the University of California. Voina, Etcétera and the Yes Men all produce challenging, politically committed works that sit on the boundary of art and activism, which challenges traditional definitions of art. I have chosen these three collectives for this reason and because they have all recently won major contemporary art prizes.[71] To my mind there is little doubt that these art activists qualify as contemporary examples that follow the politically committed tradition of neo-avant-gardism set by groups such as Black Mask, Up Against the Wall Motherfucker and King Mob.

Conclusion

Let us return to Bürger's assessment of the neo-avant-garde. In 2010 he attempted to answer some of the criticisms of *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (English translation 2011). In section five, 'The Debate over the Neo-Avant-Garde', he provides a succinct summary of his original condemnation of the neo-avant-garde from 1974:

> The argument of *Theory of the Avant-Garde* runs as follows: the neo-avant-gardes adopted the means by which avant-gardists hoped to bring about the

sublation of art. As these means had, in the interim, been accepted by the institution, that is to say, were deployed as internal aesthetic procedures, they could no longer legitimately be linked to a claim to transcend the sphere of art.[72]

This summary of Bürger's misgivings with the neo-avant-garde differs from his original point which stated that, 'The neo-avant-garde institutionalizes the avant-garde as art and thus negates genuinely avant-garde intentions'.[73] So which is it? Have the means of the historical avant-garde been institutionalised in an interim period (before the neo-avant-garde came into existence), or is it the neo-avant-garde itself that institutionalises the historical avant-garde as art? That is to say, is the neo-avant-garde, in Bürger's eyes, to blame or is it a victim of circumstances? This point raises questions regarding whether we are to assess a kind of movement that Bürger has identified, or whether we are to assess a theory, against which we can pit counterexamples. I will address these two positions in turn.

If we accept that the neo-avant-garde was a movement characterised by Bürger – who decided which artists were to be included and excluded – we might accept his assessment: *that it was the neo-avant-garde itself that institutionalised the avant-garde as art*. Still, does this necessarily prohibit other artists from successfully continuing the avant-garde project? Can we not propose that there are different kinds of neo-avant-gardes, overlooked by Bürger, that are capable of institutional critique and praxis? The art collectives that I have described in this article cannot be said to institutionalise the avant-garde as art. Neither their intentions nor their actions institutionalise avant-garde objectives. On the contrary, they instigate institutional critic – sometimes even attacking art institutions. In this case my contention with Bürger's theory is sustained: his understanding of the neo-avant-garde is incomplete because he is unaware of the more radical and successful instances. This brings us back to Grindon's 'other neo-Dada' – that we might characterise as an 'other neo-avant-garde' – and to my point that Bürger is looking in the wrong place for politically committed artists who take up the mantle of the historical avant-garde.

In this first instance, Bürger's dismissal of the neo-avant-garde is based on a narrow conception of what constitutes the neo-avant-garde. I have argued throughout this paper that there are 'other neo-avant-gardes' that Bürger has overlooked: neo-avant-gardes that succeeded in merging art and life, that did have real social effects, beyond the art world. Bürger directly responds to accusations that he has a limited awareness of more radical practices. For example, Buchloh's allegation that he lacks knowledge of '1960s progressive

art' is swiftly disregarded as 'casually dismissive'.[74] Bürger tells us that, as he wrote a theory (not a history) of the avant-garde (including the neo-avant-garde), he answers to 'different criteria'. He does not state what these criteria are, but invokes Adorno (without citation) who apparently said that 'first-rate aesthetic theory could be developed at a great distance from the work as well as in close proximity'.[75] For me, this is at least equally 'casually dismissive'.

Alternatively, we could read Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* as just that, *a theory*. Bürger's clarification from 2010 is clear, before the neo-avant-garde even tried to 'transcend the sphere of art' it was doomed to fail because the means adopted by the historical avant-gardes had already been institutionalised. So here, for Bürger, all 'neo-avant-gardes' (all attempts to resurrect the avant-garde project) are futile. This thesis can therefore be disproved if we can find an example of a radical, politically committed neo-avant-garde capable of institutional critique and, in Bürger's own words, sublating art and life – by having social effects in the 'real world' outside of art, for example. This paper has put forward several such examples. My contention with Bürger's theory is sustained in this second instance in a parallel manner to the first – through counter-examples – only in this case rather than proposing an 'other neo-avant-garde' the examples serve to disprove the theory that the neo-avant-garde is necessarily a toothless version of its historical antecedent.

Bürger, however, is unperturbed by such counter-examples and he is happy to concede that there are examples of art, of which he is (or was) unaware, that are 'not covered' by his theory:

> I am happy to concede that not all artists who have endeavoured to resume the program of the avant-garde are covered by my polemically constructed concept of the neo-avant-garde (as Beuys essay tries to show). Whether there are more artists who elude my verdict is not a theoretical question, but a question of evaluating the artistic work.[76]

This paper contends that neo-avant-garde practices *per se* cannot 'be linked to a claim to transcend the sphere of art' asserting that there are indeed more examples from the 1960s, and from today, that do exactly what Bürger claims they are incapable of doing. This goes beyond 'a question of evaluating artwork' to reveal a serious hole in Bürger's theory. Bürger fails to acknowledge the neo-avant-garde examples from the 1960s and '70s laid out in this paper, even in his 2010 defence of *Theory of the Avant-Garde* in which he gives attention only to the kinds of neo-avant-garde examples proposed by Foster and Buchloh that I have

described above. A theory that is unaware of counter-examples that are capable of invalidating the theory is incomplete, to say the least.

Bürger calls for a clearer distinction between 'unconscious repetition and conscious resumption' of the avant-garde project.[77] This appears at odds with his call to ignore intentions and focus on actions of neo-avant-garde artists – or 'the status of their products'. Black Mask, UAW/MF and King Mob made performances, outside of the gallery system, that provoked the public and art institutions. Voina, Etcétera, and the Yes Men are contemporary collectives that have all made interventions into everyday life that have been acknowledged by the police and the media. Whether these examples are an 'other neo-avant-garde' beyond Bürger's awareness (which he would accuse of unconscious repetition), or whether they are a continuation of the avant-garde project (a resumption) makes little difference: either way, they raise questions that Bürger's theory is unable to answer.

Endnotes

[1] In *Avant-Garde and Kitsch* (1939), Greenberg cites artists such as Picasso, Kandinsky, Klee, Cézanne or Mondrian as avant-garde. He later refers to Abstract Expressionism as a post-war avant-garde. This is most definitely *not* what I mean by the neo-avant-garde.

[2] Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* [Theorie der Avantgarde], trans. Michael Shaw, Theory and History of Literature (Minneapolis MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984): 109, note 4.

[3] Ibid., 58.

[4] Hal Foster, 'What's Neo About the Neo-Avant-Garde?' *October*, no. 70 (1994): 11.

[5] David Hopkins, ed. *Neo-Avant-Garde*, Avant-Garde Critical Studies (Amsterdam; New York: Rodopi, 2006): 2.

[6] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*: 61.

[7] Foster, 'What's Neo About the Neo-Avant-Garde?': 14.

[8] 'Who's Afraid of the Neo-Avant-Garde?,' in *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge MA; London: MIT Press, 1996); Benjamin. H. D. Buchloh, 'Theorizing the Avant-Garde,' *Art in America*, November 1984; *Neo-Avantgarde and Culture Industry: Essays on European and American Art from 1955 to 1975* (Cambridge MA; London: MIT Press, 2000).

[9] Foster, 'Who's Afraid of the Neo-Avant-Garde?': 29.

[10] Benjamin. H. D. Buchloh, 'The Primary Colors for the Second Time: A Paradigm Repetition of the Neo-Avant-Garde' *October*, no. 37 (1986): 45.

[11] Gavin Grindon, 'Surrealism, Dada, and the Refusal of Work: Autonomy, Activism, and Social Participation in the Radical Avant-Garde' *The Oxford Art Journal* 34, no. 1 (2011): 95. There is no mention of these 'other neo-Dada' groups in Hopkins' compendium of the neo-avant-garde.

[12] Ibid., 96.

[13] Ron Hahne and Ben Morea, eds., *Black Mask & up against the Wall Motherfucker: The Incomplete Works of Ron Hahne, Ben Morea, and the Black Mask Group* (Oakland CA: PM Press, 2011). This publication made materials previously published by Unpopular Books (1993) more widely and readily available.

[14] Chris Gray, Dr. Zoidberg, and The Daybreak Collective, 'Black Mask & up against the Wall Motherfucker: The Story of a Small, Underground 1960s Revolutionary Group in New York City' (2001).

[15] Tom Vague, *King Mob Echo: From 1780 Gordon Riots to Situationists, Sex Pistols and Beyond: Incomplete Works of King Mob, with Illustrations, in Two Volumes* (London: Dark Star, 2000).

[16] Hari Kunzru, 'The Mob Who Shouldn't Really Be Here,' *Tate Etc.* , Summer 2008. Available: http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/articles/mob-who-shouldnt-really-be-here. [Accessed 24 January 2016]

[17] David Wise and Stuart Wise, 'A Hidden History of King Mob (Posters/Cartoons),' http://www.revoltagainstplenty.com/index.php/archive-local/128-a-hidden-history-of-king-mob-posterscartoons.html [Accessed 24 January 2016].

[18] David Wise, 'A Critical Hidden History of King Mob,' http://www.revoltagainstplenty.com/index.php/archive-local/93-a-hidden-history-of-king-mob.html. [Accessed 24 January 2016]; *King Mob: A Critical Hidden History* (Unknown: Bread and Circuses Publishing, 2014).

[19] The exhibition entitled 'If I Can't Dance to it, it's not my Revolution' (March-May 2014) was curated by Natalie Musteata at Cantor Fitzgerald Gallery, Haverford USA. See: Nadja Milner-Larsen, 'Black Mask: Revolution as Being,' (2014), http://exhibits.haverford.edu/ificantdancetoit/essays/black-mask-revolution-as-being/. [Accessed 24 January 2016].

[20] The exception is Hari Kunzru's article. Stewart Home's book T*he Assault on Culture* (1988) does refer to all three of these groups. Chapter 12 briefly mentions Black Mask and Up Against the Wall Motherfucker and Chapter 15 references David and Stuart Wise in his assessment of the influence that Situationism had on Punk. However, these groups are

peripheral to the book's main themes and the references are only in passing – there is no analysis.

[21] I acknowledge that Ben Morea and Ron Hahne were both members of Aldo Tambellini's "Group Center". While this was an art group it sought to display art from outside the mainstream. The fact that Morea and Hahne were members of an art collective (that was not gang affiliated) does not change the fact that Morea did not attend art school, but from the age of ten grew up among black and Puerto Rican street gangs in New York as they explain themselves:

> The two original animators of the group, Ron Hahne and Ben Morea, came straight from the streets, not middle class dropouts. Morea had been mixed up with the delinquent street gangs, been on H and done a stretch In Sing-Sing before he turned to painting and discovered the Futurists. Gray, Dr. Zoidberg, and The Daybreak Collective, 'Black Mask & up against the Wall Motherfucker: The Story of a Small, Underground 1960s Revolutionary Group in New York City' (2001): 2.

[22] Hahne and Morea, *Black Mask & up against the Wall Motherfucker: The Incomplete Works of Ron Hahne, Ben Morea, and the Black Mask Group*: 4.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Vague, *King Mob Echo: From 1780 Gordon Riots to Situationists, Sex Pistols and Beyond: Incomplete Works of King Mob, with Illustrations, in Two Volumes*: 104. First published in King Mob Echo 3 in 1969 these stories about Marinetti evolve into pure fantasy.

[25] Hahne and Morea, *Black Mask & up against the Wall Motherfucker: The Incomplete Works of Ron Hahne, Ben Morea, and the Black Mask Group*: 153.

[26] Ibid., 154.

[27] Gray, Dr. Zoidberg, and The Daybreak Collective, 'Black Mask & up against the Wall Motherfucker: The Story of a Small, Underground 1960s Revolutionary Group in New York City' (2001): 2.

[28] Hahne and Morea, *Black Mask & up against the Wall Motherfucker: The Incomplete Works of Ron Hahne, Ben Morea, and the Black Mask Group*: 157.

[29] Ibid., 80.

[30] Early UAW/MF members included those from Black Mask plus John Sundstrom, Alan Hoffman, Alan Phillips and Herbert Marcuse's stepson Tom Newmann.

[31] Original footage and discussions regarding the action can be seen on YouTube here: Up Against the Wall Motherfucker, 'Garbage,' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDic0pFoZh4. [Accessed 24 January 2016].

[32] Hahne and Morea, *Black Mask & up against the Wall Motherfucker: The Incomplete Works of Ron Hahne, Ben Morea, and the Black Mask Group*: 80.

[33] The original press release and wall texts can be seen online: MoMA, 'Dada, Surrealism and Their Heritage,' news release, 1968, https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press_archives/4009/releases/MOMA_19 68_Jan-June_0026_26.pdf?2010. [Accessed 24 January 2016].

[34] Gray, Dr. Zoidberg, and The Daybreak Collective, 'Black Mask & up against the Wall Motherfucker: The Story of a Small, Underground 1960s Revolutionary Group in New York City' (2001): 8.

[35] Hahne and Morea, *Black Mask & up against the Wall Motherfucker: The Incomplete Works of Ron Hahne, Ben Morea, and the Black Mask Group*: 164.

[36] Ibid., 13.

[37] Kunzru, 'The Mob Who Shouldn't Really Be Here.'

[38] Timothy Scott Brown, 'The Sixties in the City: Avant-Gardes and Urban Rebels in New York, London, and West Berlin' *Journal of Social History* 46, no. 4 (2013): 833; Kunzru, 'The Mob Who Shouldn't Really Be Here.'

[39] Brown, 'The Sixties in the City: Avant-Gardes and Urban Rebels in New York, London, and West Berlin': 832.

[40] Ibid., 823; Kunzru, 'The Mob Who Shouldn't Really Be Here.'

[41] 'The Mob Who Shouldn't Really Be Here.'

[42] Greil Marcus, *Lipstick Traces: A Secret History of the Twentieth Century* (London: Faber & Faber, 2011): 405; Sam Cooper, 'The Peculiar Romanticism of the English Situationists' *The Cambridge Quarterly* 42, no. 1 (2013): 25.

[43] The Tate Gallery would later purchase the same posters.

[44] The Emilia-Romagna Regional Government (Italy), in collaboration with LaRete Art Projects and La Pillola, created the biennial award in 2010. Pablo Helguera won the inaugural prize in 2011. e-flux, 'Etcetera Wins the International Award for Participatory Art,' *e-flux* (2013), http://www.e-flux.com/announcements/etcetera-wins-the-2013-award/. [Accessed 24 January 2016].

[45] At the Tate conference, Etcétera spoke of how the prize money enabled them realise their ambitions to travel and network in Europe.

[46] e-flux reviewed the group when they won the International Prize for Participatory Art (see footnote 43). The only scholarly work on the group that I have found is: Ana Longoni, 'Crossroads for Activist Art in Agentina' *Third Text* 22, no. 5 (2008). Since 2005 the group has dedicated its time to the *Internacional Errorista* movement that it co-founded.

[47] H.I.J.O.S. – *Hijos por la Indentidad y la Justicia contra el Olvidado y el Silencio* – Sons and daughters for identification and justice for the forgotten and silenced (my translation). *Mierdazo* can be translated literally from Spanish as 'big shit'. It has been referred to descriptively as 'poop attack' but I feel that 'shit storm' is more appropriate.

[48] Gray, Dr. Zoidberg, and The Daybreak Collective, 'Black Mask & up against the Wall Motherfucker: The Story of a Small, Underground 1960s Revolutionary Group in New York City' (2001): 8.

[49] Robert Klanten et al., eds., *Art & Agenda: Political Art and Activism* (Berlin: Gestalten, 2011): 146; Nato Thompson, ed. *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011*, Illustrated ed. (New York; Cambridge MA: Creative Time Books; MIT Press, 2012): 242. The entries in *Art & Agenda* and *Living as Form* both state that Voina were formed in 2007. Oliver Johnson, who has corresponded with Voina and translated many texts from the original Russian claims they were founded in 2005, see: Oliver Johnson, 'War on the Ru-Net' *Third Text* 27, no. 5 (2013): 591. The period between 2005, when Vorotnikov met Sokol, and

2007, when Voina first started their actions, has been referred to as their clandestine training period: Free Voina, 'What Is Voina?,' http://en.free-voina.org/about. [Accessed 24 January 2016].

[50] Thompson, *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011*: 242.

[51] Klanten et al., *Art & Agenda: Political Art and Activism*: 146. In November 2015 Voina reported that Leonid Nikolaev (Leonid Nikolayev) had died on 22 September 2015 at 31. See: http://en.free-voina.org/ [Accessed 17 January 2016].

[52] Alexei Plutser-Sarno, 'The Voina Art-Group («War»). Actions 2006-2012.' In *Plucer live journal*, 2012. http://plucer.livejournal.com/266853.html [Accessed 24 January 2016].

[53] ARTINFO, 'Police-Baiting Penis Graffiti by Radical Voina Collective Wins $14k Russian "Innovation" Prize,' http://uk.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/37437/police-baiting-penis-graffiti-by-radical-voina-collective-wins-14k-russian-innovation-prize. [Accessed 24 January 2016].

[54] Tom Parfitt, 'Banksy Pledges £80,000 to Russian Radical Art Group Voina,' *Guardian*, Sunday 12 December 2010. The BBC report that the figure was even higher, at £90,000 BBC, 'Banksy Supports Voina, Controversial Russian Art Group,' http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11982984. [Accessed 2 May 2016].

[55] ARTINFO, 'Russia Places Voina Member on International Wanted List,' *BLOUIN ARTINFO* (2011), http://blogs.artinfo.com/artintheair/2011/07/22/russia-places-voina-member-on-international-wanted-list/. [Accessed 2 May 2016].

[56] Voina, '7th Berlin Biennale: Statement by Voina,' http://en.free-voina.org/post/22267051835. [Accessed 24 January 2016].

[57] Ibid.

[58] Free Voina, 'Oleg Released!,' http://en.free-voina.org/post/94522307001. [Accessed 24 January 2016].

⁵⁹ Russia Today, 'Bucket Head Attacks a Vip Car on Kremlin Quay,' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xWtQDz-WIUM&feature=player_embedded. [Accessed 24 January 2016].

⁶⁰ Johnson, 'War on the Ru-Net': 591.

⁶¹ Ibid., 606.

⁶² Gene Ray, 'Art Schools Burning & Other Songs of Love and War' *Left Curve*, no. 30 (2006).

⁶³ Andrew Griffin, 'Paris Attack: Anonymous Launches 'Biggest Operation Ever' against Isis,' *Independent* 2015.

⁶⁴ Situationist International, 'Definitions,' in *Situationist International Anthology*, ed. Ken Knabb (Berkeley CA: Bureau of Public Secrets, 2006): 52.

⁶⁵ Simon Ford, *The Situationist International: A User's Guide* (London: Black Dog, 2005).

⁶⁶ Christine Harold, 'Pranking Rhetoric: "Culture Jamming" as Media Activism' *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 21, no. 3 (2004): 189; Jennifer A Sandlin and Jennifer M Milam, 'Mixing Pop (Culture) and Politics: Cultural Resistance, Culture Jamming, and Anti-Consumption Activism as Critical Public Pedagogy' *Curriculum Inquiry* 38, no. 3 (2008): 323.

⁶⁷ The Yes Men, http://theyesmen.org/. [Accessed 24 January 2016].

⁶⁸ Thompson, *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011*: 254.

⁶⁹ The Yes Men, 'Dow Does the Right Thing,' http://theyesmen.org/hijinks/bbcbhopal. [Accessed 24 January 2016].

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ The Yes Men, The Leonore Annenberg Prize for Art and Social Change (2009); Voina, the Ministry of Culture and the National Center for Contemporary Art's 'Innovation award' (2011); Etcétera, International Award for Participatory Art (2013).

[72] Peter Bürger, 'Avant-Garde and Neo-Avant-Garde: An Attempt to Answer Certain Critics of *Theory of the Avant-Garde*' *New Literary History*, no. 41 (2011): 707.

[73] *Theory of the Avant-Garde*: 58.

[74] 'Avant-Garde and Neo-Avant-Garde: An Attempt to Answer Certain Critics of *Theory of the Avant-Garde*': 707.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid., 713.

[77] Ibid., 710.